

# Mp3 Harmonious Wail - Gypsy Swing



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Reminiscent of Django Reinhardt's distinct style with smoldering vocals laced among the jazzy mandolin and guitar; an infectious blend of continental jazz, swing, gypsy music 18 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Swing/Big Band, JAZZ: Jazz Vocals Details: Rick's Caf February 13, 2004 Volume 2, No.2 rickscafe.org

Musicianship: \*\*\*\* Composition: \*\*\*\* Lyrics/Interpretation: \*\*\*\* Production: \*\*\*\* Packaging: \*\*\*\* Gypsy Swing, the latest release from Harmonious Wail, proves that certain artists' work is like fine wine: it merely gets better with age. Harmonious Wail has been performing together for fifteen years at this point and it shows in every aspect of Gypsy Swing. Recorded in Verona, Wisconsin at Shady Bend Studios, the album delivers the goods on all fronts: performance, production, design and songwriting / arranging.

While the majority of the tunes are traditional pieces and standards rather than wholly original works, they are beautifully interpreted in such a manner as to render them completely fresh and compelling. Gypsy Swing is named after a unique flavor of European jazz music created and heavily influenced by the work of legendary guitarist Django Reinhardt and his longtime collaborator Stephane Grappelli. This expressive and decidedly European form of jazz features expressive and heavily melodic guitar and fiddle in a string band context: very seldom do traditional brass and woodwinds appear in this style. As the genre evolved, elements of traditional eastern European folk music began to play a heavier role in the style as well.

Highlights of the album include a beautiful arrangement of the traditional Russian folk number "Dark Eyes" and a wonderfully expressive version of "Minor Swing" by Django. Harmonious Wail's rendition of "Czardas", another traditional piece, features some absolutely stunning mandolin work by Sims Delaney-Potthoff. Guitarist Tom Waselchuk's playing throughout the album is especially masterful. The album is a must-have for any fan of guitar and mandolin based music, jazz or not. When Stephane Grappelli. himself says "This is my music they are playing" and Bela Fleck states that "this is a goooooood

band," you know that we're talking about the real deal. Now stop reading and go buy the album. You won't be disappointed. [wail.com](http://www.wail.com) [naxosworld.com](http://www.naxosworld.com) Stephen Ellestad

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Gypsy Swing features well-known standards such as "Minor Swing," "Sheik of Araby," "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows," and "St. Louis Blues." Harmonious Wail founder and leader Sims Delaney-Potthoff studied for seven years under Jethro Burns and cites among his other influences Reinhardt and his cohort Stephane Grappelli, as well as David Grisman and Louis Armstrong. Along with vocalist Maggie Delaney-Potthoff and guitarist Tom Waselchuk, Harmonious Wail has achieved an immense local following and has received strong praise throughout the Midwest. "They have a great feel for the vintage swing material, and manage to remain true to the spirit of the originals while infusing the songs with contemporary chops and energy." -Dirty Linen Gypsy passion and romanticism are very much in evidence, along with a sizable French cabaret vibe and the adventurousness of recasting familiar American songs ("Chasing Rainbows," "Sheik of Araby," etc.) in Gypsy jazz style. The presence of a mandolin as the frequent lead instrument and some very tart violin playing bring a degree of bluegrass as well (this is an American band, after all). It's mostly snappy instrumentals, but a few smoky vocal selections add variety and color to the mix of covers and originals. A generous running time of 76 minutes allows this charmingly infectious music to work its way into you cool and slow

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