

From RealDetroitWeekly.com

## EAR CANDY

### Ear Candy (July 30, 2008)

By  
Jul 29, 2008, 09:24



## Swing With Me

★★★1/2

**Hot Club of Detroit**  
*Night Town*  
Mack Avenue Records

Hot Club of Detroit offer up a brand of tightly-knit French Gypsy swing that I find excruciatingly nostalgic — taking me back to a time and place I've never lived or visited.

With Evan Perri on lead guitar, Paul Brady holding down six-string rhythm, Shannon Wade adding the backbone bass and Julien Labro offering up the most melodic accordion these ears have ever heard, Hot Club of Detroit sizzles. Their most recent release, *Night Town*, also features the recent addition of Carl Cafagna on saxophone, who, as we hear on the first cut, "I Want To Be Happy," adds a welcomed nuance to the vivacious vintage jazz soundscapes that Hot Club so (seemingly) effortlessly create.

*Night Town* swings wide open with the aforementioned Irving Caesar classic; jumping right into the action on note one, Cafagna, Perri and Labro get things hot and bothered in the best of ways. Right away I'm ready to put on my tweed three piece, throw some pomade in my hair and rip up the floor at Cliff Bell's.

The Dino Oliveri cut made famous by Django and Grappelli, "J'Attendrai," comes next. It's a mellow, night sky dream, it's a cigarette smoking, beer-sipping break — most importantly, it's beautiful and shows that this Club, who are hot indeed, knows how and when to cool it out.

With a small handful of Django tracks mapped about the record, I was most surprised to find a Hot Club cover of Miles Davis' "Seven Steps to Heaven," a cut that really gives Cafagna some room to play with. The sax is both scorching and sweet — Cafagna really shines and lets us all in on just why he's a card carrying member of the Club. "Seven Steps ..." is a tight, upbeat track carrying mood morphing capability in every note the group lets out.

Founding member Evan Perri penned a couple originals for the record as well. Perri's no slouch on the six-string — internally he's like a gypsy jazz animal, but plays the smooth criminal on the outside. "Two Weeks" is the first of his we encounter on *Night Town* and, while a solid tune, it doesn't really do anything for me, not as much as the title cut does anyway. "Night Town" is painted with shades of smoke and midnight mystery, of playful romance on the shores of Monte Carlo.

While there's no "Swing One" on *Night Town*, we do get to sway along to "Swing 05." It's the last cut and penned by Perri. It's HOT. Flirtatious at the beginning, it builds up speed and by the minute and a half mark, we're in full swing.

All in all, *Night Town* is an evolutionary record for Hot Club that features a whole lotta saxophone. Maybe even a bit too much, but the technique is all there as is the free play and gypsy rhythm I just can't get enough of. So, Evan, can we get a violinist for the next record? — **Travis R. Wright**

## Fandango

★★★★★

The Oscillating Fan Club