



f.l.t.r.: Pitz Weiss, Uwe Schwidewski, Mic Oechsner, Traubeli Weiss. Photo from 1997 by SZ Garching

GRAPPELLISSIMO! - 30 years of Gipsy Swing

These days **Gipsy music** sounds a little different. Having its roots in the tradition of „Sinti“ and „Roma“ people, it today draws a bow much further than the European borders: Long this myth has reached other continents and foreign cities - such as the Big Apple - Jazz goes Gipsy!

Unforgotten the times of „**Hot Club de France**“, unforgotten Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli. But time does not stand still. Today's frontiers are open, worlds meet, cultures get mixed - a fact that has an enormous creative capacity.

Nevertheless traditions always need to be handled in a sensitive way.

At **GRAPPELLISSIMO!** we are aware of this, tastily mixing, spicily flavouring and competently serving. The recipe was made by chefs of improvised music, a skilful blend out of Eastern Europe fire and jazzy coolness, a deep bow in front of the tradition and an ingenious love for the present.



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Since he was a boy the Munich born jazz violinist **Mic Oechsner** was fascinated by the music of Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli: When he heard a recording of the famous Frenchmen for the first time, there was no more discussion, in which direction his musical career should go and he finally said goodbye to classical violin playing soon after.

Back home in Bavaria he met the German Sinti guitarists **Traubeli** and **Pitza Weiss** in 1993 and at once started a quartet – the famous **OECHNSER-WEISS ENSEMBLE**, which should be touring for more than 15 years all over Europe and recorded a CD in 1997, praised by European press and international radio stations.

Moving to Austria in 1996 and a few years later Traubeli passing away, Oechsner founded an Austrian version of his project: GRAPPELLISSIMO! Meanwhile his son Gidon had turned into a quite good solo player, and Mic formed a new band with the Viennese Sinti musicians **Joschi Schneeberger** and **Striglo Stöger**. As there were not many people playing this music in Vienna back then, the band soon had many fans in the country. Later on bass player Daniel Schober joined the quartet that played concerts in German and Austrian clubs and at international festivals.

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In 2012 **Martin Spitzer** joined the group – beginning as a guest musician, but soon held his position as a fine soloist and sensitive accompanist. In 2019 the quartet recorded “Gipsy Christmas”, a fine compilation of international Christmas songs, which Oechsner had arranged for Gipsy Swing quartet.

Everything changed in spring 2024, when Martin Spitzer passed away unexpectedly. Mic was thinking a lot concerning the future of the band and first decided to reduce to trio, using his Munich companion **Alex Haas** as a bass player again. Finally - in January 2025 - the German gipsy guitarist **Nando Reinhardt** joined the group and made it a quartet again.

