



In cooperation with the San Francisco Silent Film Festival

Imagine yourself in the idyllic French countryside; it is the mid-twentieth century. Sometime before dark, a gypsy caravan sets up camp in an unused field outside of town. The locals find themselves drawn to the scene, knowing that these visitors are always good for an evening's entertainment. What they find is an impromptu screening of rare silent films, perhaps thrown on the side of a barn by a battered old projector. As the images flicker to life beneath the stars, gypsy musicians play their instruments, matching every scene with characteristic virtuosity, passion and humor. On this night, the very same scene may be repeated at a hundred such campsites scattered across Europe, each tribe with its own small collection of discarded films, perhaps never to be seen anywhere else again.

Reviving this lost tradition, The Hot Club of San Francisco presents *Silent Surrealism*, an evening of silent films accompanied live by the group's original gypsy jazz scores. The films, made between 1912 and 1930, cover a wide range of styles and moods. Whether comedy, art film, or simply affecting and uncategorizable gem, the four films all represent early attempts to portray fantasy on screen, often achieved with alarming ingenuity. From Charley Bowers' tall tales of gun-toting mice and metal-eating birds to the brooding Cubism of Watson and Webber's *Fall of The House of Usher* to the bittersweet story of a street urchin's first glimpse of the countryside, *Silent Surrealism* will transport you to all-but-forgotten realms of fancy and imagination.

The Hot Club of San Francisco is an ensemble of accomplished and versatile musicians celebrating the music of Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli's pioneering Quintette du Hot Club de France. The ensemble borrows the all-string instrumentation of violin, guitars and bass from the original Hot Club, but breathes new life into the music with innovative arrangements of classic tunes and original compositions from the group's superb lead guitarist, Paul Mehling. Hearing the ensemble live, or on any of their twelve albums, carries the listener back to the 1930's and the small, smoky jazz clubs of Paris or the refined lounges of the famous Hotel Ritz. Often called 'gypsy jazz', the music of The Hot Club of San Francisco has entranced audiences around the globe for over 18 years. Critics have hailed the group's playing as "intricate, scorching and often brilliant..." (*Acoustic Guitar*). From festivals in Mexico and France to concert halls across North America, The Hot Club of San Francisco keeps this historic music fresh and alive.

Film Titles:

It's a Bird, Charley Bowers (1930)

Now You Tell One, Charley Bowers (1926)

The Fall of the House of Usher, James Sibley Watson and Melville Webber (1928)

The Land Beyond the Sunset, The Edison Company (1912)

