



MICHAEL JOSEPH HARRIS

522 Chestnut Hill Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21218

(443) 844-2123

Email · mjhmusic@gmail.com

Michaeljosephharris.com

“Michael’s music brings the swinging manouche-style bang up-to-date while remaining true to the roots of Gypsy Jazz.” *Ken Avis, Baltimore Jazz Alliance*

“One of the most talented musicians on the Baltimore scene.” *Marc Shapiro, Baltimore Style Magazine*

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts In Philosophy, George Mason University

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2018 - Michael performs at Preston Jazz and Improvisation Festival in the UK with Ultrafaux and guest violinist Daniel John Martin.
- 2018 - Hot Club of Baltimore invited to second appearance at Napa Valley Jazz Society for a sold-out show with vocalist Alexis Tantau.
- 2018 - Ultrafaux tours Northern California with violinist Evan Price.
- 2018 - Ultrafaux and Hot Club of Baltimore perform for the second time at Midwest Gypsy Swingfest.
- 2018 - 3rd Year of sold-out crowds for Django Fest at Creative Alliance in Baltimore, Maryland

THE JOURNEY

Michael Joseph Harris began playing guitar at the age of 12 and quickly became skilled in jazz by age 16, winning accolades as guitarist with the Downbeat Magazine award-winning Chantilly High Jazz Band and with his own band Diverse Variations. Harris learned many styles of guitar, playing by ear and through private instruction with guitarist Rick Whitehead of the Airmen of Note during high school, then later with the legendary Jazz educator Jack Petersen at North Texas State University. The young guitarist favored learning by experience to the structure of formal education and soon began performing non-stop with his own projects in various styles including straight ahead jazz, original rock, funk, fusion, blues, Latin, Brazilian, and African music, specifically in the style of Congolese guitarist Franco.

Harris founded the Afro Latin Jazz group Bossalingo in 1996 and worked as a freelance guitarist in the DC area until moving to Baltimore in 2006. Bossalingo began as a trio with drummer Tom Barrick and bassist Eric Leifert and then quickly expanded to include various percussionists such as Alejandro Lucini, Rene Ibanez, Jose Lopez, Bruno Lucini, Alfredo Mojica, bassist Leo Lucini, Jake Leckie, drummer Mike Kuhl, and finally added Cesar Orozco on piano.

The guitarist became a father to his daughter Lotus in 2008, then finally returned to the recording studio in 2011 to produce Steps Beyond, an instrumental jazz recording of Cuban-inspired originals. The highlight of the Steps Beyond Tour was a sold out set at Blues Alley in 2011 which included Grammy-winning guest pianist Arturo O’Farrill. The success of the show and the tour launched Harris onto the path of performing exclusively his own compositions.

In 2012, Michael began studying and playing the music of legendary French Manouche guitarist Django Reinhardt which led to his creation of Hot Club of Baltimore later that same year. Harris then founded Ultrafaux in 2014 to perform his original compositions in the style commonly known as Gypsy Jazz. A popular self-produced YouTube concert video from that same year titled **Ultrafaux & Friends** helped to create a worldwide audience with over 60,000 views to date.

Michael has self-produced six full-length Django Reinhardt-inspired recordings with both groups representing over 30 original instrumentals. Harris’ song **Latcho Dromo** was chosen to be included on an International compilation of the best gypsy jazz from all over the world produced by Jon Larsen called Django Festival #9. Hot Club of Baltimore’s recording of **Place de Brouckere** was included on Django Festival #10 the following year.

MICHAEL JOSEPH HARRIS

Page 3

Ultrafaux has done successful tours of the U.S., Europe, and Canada including performances at Festival Django Reinhardt in Fontainebleau, The Kennedy Center, Charm City Django Jazz Festival, Django by the Sea, Django-A-Gogo in New York, The Midwest Gypsy Swing Festival, Napa Valley Jazz Society, 1st Annual Baltimore Jazzfest, and the IMT Folk Series.

Harris, named one of the top ten musicians in Baltimore by Baltimore Style Magazine, has been featured on the front page of The Baltimore Sun Weekend Section, on CBS News, WYPR, WPFW, WTMD, KPIG, KVMR, and WDVX Blue Plate Special multiple times. He is founder and artistic director for the popular Charm City Django Jazz Festival which happens annually during the last weekend of February at The Creative Alliance in Baltimore. This event set records for the last 3-years selling out every year.

Michael has been principal guitarist in theater productions such as Slam! and Next To Normal and has performed with some of the best musicians in the world including Olli Soikkeli, Stephane Wrembel, Olivier Kikteff (Les doigts de l'homme), Jason Anick, Jake Leckie, Arturo O'Farrill, Marian Badoi, Warren Wolf, Lee Pearson, Jeff Reed, and Cesar Orozco, to name a few.

SKILLS

- Award-winning Guitarist
- Teacher from beginning to advanced
- Mentor and organizer
- Encourages artistic expression anywhere and everywhere

ACTIVITIES

Wrote and produced 8 full-length CD's and one Vinyl Record

Founder and Artistic Director of Charm City Django Fest, a 2-day sold-out event for the last three years in Baltimore