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Le Jazz Hot: How the French Saved Jazz

Written and Directed by Peter and Will Anderson

Off Broadway, Jazz Quintet/Play

Runs through 12.29.13

59E59 Theater, 59 East 59th Street

◆ **A THEASY BEST BET:**
HISTORICAL
INTEREST

(<http://www.theasy.com/bestbets.php>)

- ◆ Highly skilled jazz quintet
- ◆ Chock full of information about France's influence on Jazz
- ◆ Set up cleverly to emulate a jazz club
- ◆ 105 minutes with no intermission

by **Shoshana Roberts** (<http://www.theasy.com/About/staff.php>) on 12.11.13



Peter Anderson (clarinet), Will Anderson (sax), Luc Decker (drums), Clovis Nicolas (bass), and Alex Wintz (guitar) in LE JAZZ HOT HOW THE FRENCH SAVED JAZZ. Photo by Eileen O'Donnell.

BOTTOM LINE: This wonderful production wraps you in a cozy warm blanket of jazz history, humor, and live music that you'll love cuddling up in all night long.

As you step through the door frame into 59E59's Theater C you are transported into a makeshift Jazz club. Tables for four fill the room, and there is a small stage in the corner with instruments and music stands. Each red-clothed table has a faux flickering candle and a synthetic white rose. The walls are covered with racks of wine bottles, France's flag, instruments, and jazz musicians' posters. People sit with their drinks, which are allowed in the theatre, to add to the sultry nightclub feeling. The band takes their place and all you have to do is sit back and relax for a delicious meal of music and history that you can sink your teeth into.

With a large screen attached to one of the walls, the musicians utilize a projector with photographs and videos to educate the audience about the history of Jazz. From big band music to gypsy jazz there are countless musicians who traveled to France to cultivate their talents. So many famous names and brilliant musicians are discussed, including Sidney Bechet, Josephine Baker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Django Reinhart, just to name a few. These amazing men and women performed in the United States as well, but encountered racism and such difficulties here that the only reason jazz survived, at least according to Quincy Jones, was because of the French.

Peter and Will Anderson are two spectacular young men who perform with three other great musicians. Alex Wintz plays guitar, Clovis Nicolas is on bass, and Luc Decker takes care of the drums. They are a quintet that had me grooving in my seat the entire evening. Peter and Will are the stars though. They add their own twist and are true showmen. Witty and breathtaking at their craft, they even wrote a jazz version of classical musician Claude Debussy's "Clair de Lune" as a score for a section of the delightful silent





Tickets

\$25

www.59e59.org
[\(http://www.59e59.org/\)](http://www.59e59.org/)

movie, *The Red Balloon*. Not only are they extremely talented, but they certainly did their research to write this show. It is innovative and informative. The Anderson brothers even switch off playing different types of saxophones, clarinets, and a flute throughout the show. Yes, this is a theatre piece, but it is also a concert of incredible arrangements. In their set list they include classics that people might know like Louis Armstrong's "La Vie En Rose," but they also make sure people are having fun and are aware of their spot-on technique with pieces such as Bud Powell's "Parisian Thoroughfare."

Jazz can be a daunting genre, yet you can't help but smile watching and listening to this show. The Anderson brothers present a lighthearted evening as they provide new information to jazz connoisseurs and educate those who do not know as much on the subject. Somehow they manage to accomplish all of these feats with flair and well-placed humor. It turns out they regularly perform after productions at the 59E59 bar on Thursday nights and I am taking a brief pause from writing this review to pencil their next performance into my planner.

(*Le Jazz Hot: How the French Saved Jazz* plays at 59E59 Theater, 59 East 59th Street, through December 29th, 2013. Performances are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 7:30PM, Friday at 8:30PM, Saturday at 5:30PM and 8:30PM, and Sunday at 3:30PM and 7:30PM. Tickets are \$25.00 (\$17.50 for 59E59 members) and are available at www.59e59.org (<http://www.59e59.org/>).

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