



# SWING DREAMS are made of these A LESSON in gypsy jazz

**D**jango Reinhardt's playing, and Gypsy guitar in general, is a mother lode of inspiration for pickers of all persuasions. When I'm stuck in a solo, I think, "What would Django do here?" Inevitably, I find something to help me along, no matter what music I'm playing.

Two years ago, while at the Django Reinhardt Memorial Festival in Samois-sur-Seine, France, I met Andy MacKenzie, a great jazz guitarist from Manchester, England. He too is an aficionado of Gypsy guitar. We've written this lesson to introduce

you to Django's rich style, which, thanks to many modern players, is alive and evolving.

—JOHN JORGENSON

portant to get a foundation in the unique harmony and driving four-to-the bar rhythm that's at this music's core.

Because of his hand injury, Django could not play full six-string chords. Instead, he relied mainly on triads and intervals to imply a tune's har-

**The rhythm method.** Though it's tempting to launch straight into Gypsy jazz solos, it's im-

**Ex. 1**

♩ = 220

1 D7 G7

7 C7

13 F Gm6 Abdim F Eb7 D7

19 G7

25 Dm6 A7 Dm6 A7

29 F E Eb D Db C F

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# GYPSY LESSON

G using hammers and pulls. Recorded in 1934, this lick has been used by many guitarists, in-

cluding Jeff Beck.

Ex. 6 picks up the chorus at bar 12. Here against D7, Django punches out the 9 with a unison E played on the second and first strings. He releases this tension in the next bar.

Next is the solo's bridge played in octaves (Ex. 7). This predates Wes Montgomery's lush sound by some 30 years. How Django fingered this with his deformed hand is a mystery. Note the descending glissando in bar 3—another

Django trademark.

Ex. 8 heralds the solo's final eight bars. Here Django repeats a flashy triplet lick using hammers, pulls and open strings. How many times have you heard this?

To dig deeper into Django's style, study his influences—including Louis Armstrong—and those who carry the flame today: Stochelo Rosenberg, Romane, Jimmy Rosenberg, Bireli Lagrene, Rafaël Faÿs and other Gypsy jazz masters. ■

**Ex. 6**  
♩ = 220  
D7

T  
A  
B

**Ex. 7**  
♩ = 220  
Bridge

etc.  
even gliss

T  
A  
B

**Ex. 8**  
♩ = 220

etc.

T  
A  
B

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