



For Immediate Release:

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**INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN ULTRAFaux BAND BRINGS GYPSY JAZZ AND SWING TO THE
MAINSTAY WITH SPECIAL GUEST VIOLINIST NATALY MEREZHUK**

“Ultrafaux breathes new life into jazz.” - Sam Sessa, WTMD 89.7 FM

“Ultrafaux stands out from all of the other Django Reinhardt-inspired bands because they perform original material: strong tunes played by a hot band.” - Tom Cole, WPFW 89.3 FM

Inspired by the legendary Django Reinhardt, guitarist **Michael Joseph Harris** recently released *Tangent*, his fourth album of original music. His efforts have yielded rave reviews internationally and numerous invitations to perform in the U.S. and abroad.

One of the world’s most prolific composers of Gypsy jazz, the Baltimore bandleader stretches the boundaries of the genre. His music encompasses elements of folk, world, and jazz and the new sound appeals to listeners who enjoy fast picking, solid melodies, irresistible rhythms, and exciting solos. Says popular Canadian journalist Raul da Gama, “One can’t help but wonder what this prodigiously gifted musician will do next!?”

With Ultrafaux (and his more traditional group Hot Club of Baltimore), Harris has appeared in concert halls, clubs and festivals such as Festival Django Reinhardt in France, Preston Jazz and Improvisation Festival in England, Djangoary Soiree Festival in Virginia, Django by the Sea in Maine, Midwest Gypsy Swing Festival, and Charm City Django Jazz Festival. (He is artistic director and founder of the latter event.) Reaching new audiences with his expanded sound, he was featured at Charm City Bluegrass Festival and the Folk Alliance International 2020 conference.

Ultrafaux comes in many shapes and sizes from trio to large ensemble. Every performance offers something new along with a consistent level of artistry and innovation. This riveting performance will feature four versatile players: rhythm guitarist Kristoffer Belgica, acoustic bassist Shawn Simon and **Russian violinist Nataly Merezhuk**.

Merezhuk attended the Moscow Conservatory, then headed to the U.S. where she earned a bachelor of music in violin performance from the Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University. Formerly an artist in residence at Strathmore Music Center in Bethesda, she is a busy orchestra musician and educator in the area. Influenced by the sounds of Stephane Grappelli and Svend Asmussen, she brings her beautiful classical tone to the world of jazz and swing. She has played such venues as Keystone Korner in Baltimore, Le QuecumBar in London and la scène des luthiers of the Samois Django Reinhardt Festival near Paris.

Listeners will enjoy originals from the hot new album along and tunes from earlier recordings. The program also includes covers by familiar names such as Charles Trenet, Duke Ellington, and (of course!) Django Reinhardt. Even ardent music lovers may be surprised at new inclusions by Henry Salvador and Tchan Tchou Vidal. Most will recognize “Sweet Georgia Brown” and “Claire de lune,” but sweet surprises await. WTMD’s Sam Sessa advises, “Just when you think you've got this band pegged, they surprise you. This is some of their most adventurous and beguiling music yet.”

The Mainstay is located at 5753 N Main Street, Rock Hall, MD 21661 (410-639-9133). Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. Visit instantseats.com and select The Mainstay:

<https://www.instantseats.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.event&eventID=D51EADF2-C7A3-2F92-B34AA7C0774D45B2>.

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