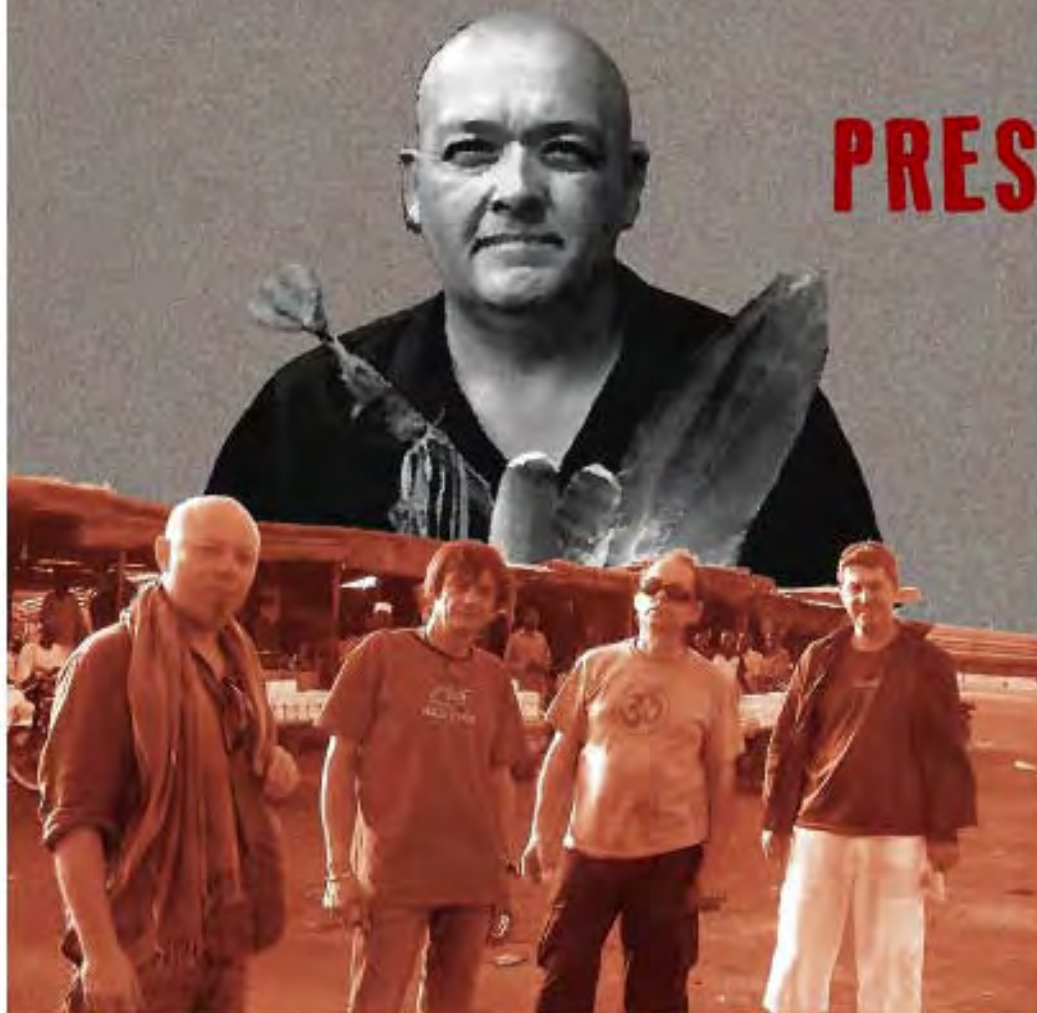


Treize Lunes

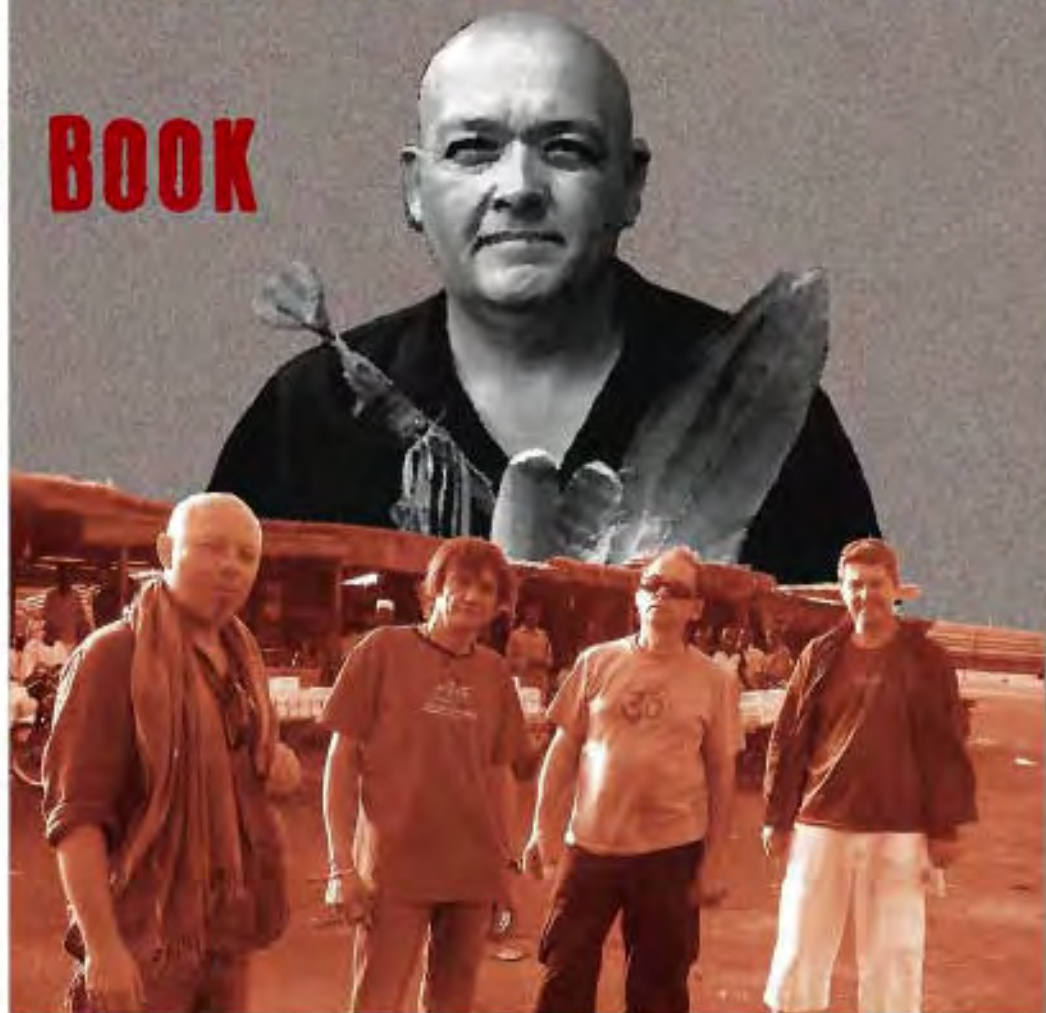
Grayhawk Perkins (usa)
& Mezcal Jazz Unit (France)

PRESS BOOK



Thirteen Moons

Grayhawk Perkins
feat. Mezcal Jazz Unit (France)





GRAYHAWK PERKINS, chanteur et batteur américain d'origine indienne, invité par le groupe montpelliérain Mezcál Jazz Unit, pour la création de *Treize Lunes*, vendredi 22 au théâtre Béranger-de-Frédol à Villeneuve-lès-Maguelone. Lire Agenda.

Grayhawk Perkins Sur la piste des Indiens

Grayhawk Perkins fait partie des tribus indiennes Choctaw et Houma basées en Louisiane et dans le sud des États-Unis. Il est musicien : chanteur et batteur dans un groupe de blues-rock à la Nouvelle-Orléans. C'est là qu'il a rencontré le groupe de jazz montpelliérain, *Mezcál Jazz Unit*, dirigé par le bassiste et compositeur Emmanuel de Gouvello. Ensemble, ils créent *Treize Lunes* au théâtre Béranger-de-Frédol, après avoir tourné en juin en Louisiane. "Grayhawk Perkins est très attaché à la défense de sa culture, explique Emmanuel de Gouvello. Il a écrit treize chansons en "mobilian", un langage intertribale utilisée autrefois pour le commerce entre Indiens. Ces treize chansons correspondent aux treize lunes du calendrier indien." Les musiciens de Mezcál Jazz Unit ont l'habitude des créations et des rencontres

cosmopolites : ils sont déjà allés au Vietnam, en Inde, au Laos, en Chine, au Nigéria, en Amérique du Sud, en Russie... Ils n'ont pas toujours les moyens de faire "rapatrier" leurs productions en France, mais après Tim Gio, création franco-vietnamienne, *Treize Lunes* est la deuxième création qu'ils ont l'occasion de montrer dans la région. "Pour Grayhawk, notre rencontre était comme un retour aux sources : les retrouvailles entre les Indiens de Louisiane et les Français, anciens colons qui avaient appris leur langue. Ses chansons sur ce thème étaient assez simples, accompagnées seulement par des tambours. J'ai composé des arrangements et une orchestration, et le résultat est finalement plus blues-funk que jazz."

GHISLAINE ABBA-LAYFONT

*Christophe Astma (saxophone), Vivian Peris (batterie), Jean-Marie Frédéric (guitare).

"Treize lunes", un spectacle qui rend hommage à la culture indienne

Dans le cadre des manifestations proposées par la mairie, un concert jazz sera donné à la Passerelle, ce soir, à 20h30. *Treize lunes* est né de la rencontre musicale originale de Grayhawk Perkins, musicien de la Nouvelle-Orléans, et de quatre musiciens de jazz montpelliérain, le groupe Mezcál Jazz Unit. Ensemble, ils ont travaillé autour d'un projet qui rend hommage à la culture indienne et évoque les treize lunes du calendrier des *native-américains*.

Grayhawk Perkins est un Indien d'Amérique de la nation Muskogee, des tribus Choctaw et Houma qui vit à Mandeville en Louisiane. Ses spectacles intègrent des histoires à des compositions, et à des chansons traditionnelles scandées en mobilian (langue véhiculaire parmi des groupes amérindiens le long du Golfe du

Mexique, du temps de la présence européenne, qui facilitait le commerce entre les tribus indiennes parlant des langues différentes et les colons européens).

Emmanuel de Gouvello, bassiste et compositeur français, amène pour sa part son univers personnel à travers ses arrangements et les apports harmoniques et rythmiques propres au monde du jazz. Choisir de mettre ces chansons écrites dans une langue dont la fonction première a été d'abattre les barrières de la communication, avec des musiciens de cultures et d'univers musicaux différents, est un parti pris délibéré, un hommage à la culture indienne et une démarche cohérente pour des musiciens de jazz, habitués au mélange et au respect des influences des musiques du monde.

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CULTURE

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Rencontres entre musiciens français et amérindiens à La Nouvelle-Orléans

AFP
18 juillet 2012

Pour un musicien, se rendre à la Nouvelle-Orléans "c'est comme aller à La Mecque pour un musulman". Et quand des musiciens français et amérindiens s'y rencontrent, ils ressuscitent une vieille langue utilisée à l'époque des trappeurs.

Pour Emmanuel de Gouvello, compositeur et bassiste du groupe français Mezcal Jazz Unit, originaire de Montpellier, "New Orleans" était un passage obligé. Avec ses acolytes, il s'est donc envolé il y a un an en Louisiane pour son tout premier - et trop "bref" à son goût - pèlerinage en ces terres musicales, françaises de 1718 à 1803.

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Un voyage productif, car un attaché du consulat général de France sur place, bien au courant de l'intérêt de ces artistes pour les musiciens indigènes, leur a présenté Grayhawk Perkins. Cette institution de la scène musicale de Louisiane, fier représentant des tribus indiennes Choctaw et Houma, parcourt avec son groupe depuis des années les routes du Sud des États-Unis, faisant raisonner sa voix et ses percussions porteuses des traditions de ses ancêtres autochtones.

Les musiciens de Mezcal Jazz Unit avaient déjà collaboré avec des populations indigènes à travers le monde, du Nigeria au Vietnam. Avec à chaque fois pour objectif de comprendre la culture de ces populations, puis d'y ajouter leur propre "couleur" afin de préserver et compléter la musique traditionnelle, explique Emmanuel de Gouvello. "Nous voulons créer quelque chose qui n'est pas commun, qui ne consiste pas simplement à insérer une batterie ou de l'électronique", indique-t-il. "Nous devons respecter la tradition, mais faire aussi quelque chose de tout à fait nouveau par-dessus".

Treize lunes

De son côté, Perkins mélangeait déjà, au sein de son groupe Grayhawk Band, des chants indigènes avec de la musique moderne - essentiellement du blues et du funk - mais il souhaitait ajouter à son répertoire une touche d'influence française. Nouvelle-Orléans oblige. "C'était très intrigant pour moi de le voir de Gouvello débarquer et dire - Salut, je voudrais prendre ce son traditionnel et voir ce que je peux en faire", raconte-t-il.

La collaboration transatlantique entre Grayhawk Perkins et trois des musiciens de Mezcal a porté ses fruits grâce à internet. Perkins envoyait par fichiers audio des chants a cappella en mobilian - langue véhiculaire qui facilitait autrefois le commerce entre tribus indiennes mais également avec les colons européens - à Gouvello, qui les réceptionnait et s'attachait à créer la partie instrumentale. L'ensemble a pris le nom de "Thirteen Moons" ("Treize Lunes") en référence au calendrier des tribus amérindiennes. Le nouveau groupe a ainsi composé 13 chansons qui sont autant de contes pour chaque lune.

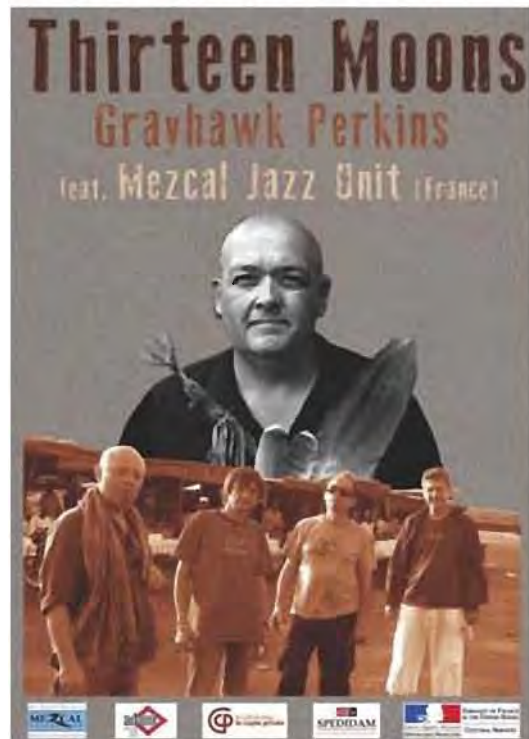
L'une d'elles, "Chestnut Moon", relate l'histoire des musiciens noirs et autochtones de la Place Congo, où esclaves et hommes libres se réunissaient dans la Nouvelle-Orléans d'avant la guerre de Sécession pour inventer de nouveaux morceaux. Le groupe a entamé une tournée en juin dans tout le sud-est de la Louisiane et un album est en discussion. "Mon objectif, plus si secret que ça, serait d'emmenner Grayhawk en France", confie Elizabeth Riley, qui gère le groupe.

En bon natif de la Nouvelle-Orléans, où les musiques d'Afrique, des Caraïbes, d'Amérique et d'Europe se sont de tout temps mélangées, Perkins dit apprécier l'ouverture et la variété de Mezcal. Mais sa plus belle surprise a été cette possibilité de faire revivre le mobilian, vecteur de communication et dans le même temps d'unification des cultures. "Nous nous retrouvons à faire exactement ce que nos ancêtres faisaient il y a 300 ans. C'est vraiment génial, c'est un moment historique".



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THIRTEEN MOONS



A musical project between Grayhawk Perkins & French band Mezcal Jazz Unit New Orleans - June 2012

June 15 at 9:00 PM

Thirteen Moons is an original musical project featuring New Orleans musician GrayHawk Perkins, a Native American of the Choctaw and Houma Nations, and Mezcal Jazz Unit, a French Jazz quartet from Montpellier.

At the heart of this collaboration is a unique collection of chants in the Mobilian trade language composed by GrayHawk and arranged by Emmanuel de Gouvello (band leader of Mezcal Jazz Unit.) The songs refer to the thirteen moons of the traditional Native American calendar.

The music resulting from this unique collaboration takes the audience by surprise; incorporating the Native American chants into the diverse musical realms of the artists.

Following the Thirteen Moons project, Mezcal Jazz Unit will also play at Snug Harbor in New Orleans (Saturday 16 at 8 pm)

Consulate General of France in New Orleans 1340 Poydras Street - Suite 1710 / New Orleans LA 70112
Tel: (504) 569.2870 / Fax : (504) 569.2871 info@consulfrance-nouvelle-orleans.org <http://www.consulfrance-nouvelleorleans.org> <http://twitter.com/FranceLouisiana>

Thirteen Moons

A musical project between Grayhawk Perkins & French band Mezcal Jazz Unit
New Orleans - June 2012

This project begins with a residency at the Musicians Union Hall in June 2012 which will result in a series of concerts at Café Istanbul in New Orleans (Friday 15 at 9 pm), Cité des Arts in Lafayette (Sunday 17 at 7 pm) and Dew Drop Jazz and social hall in Mandeville (Monday 18 at 6:30 pm)

New Orleans, LA
USA **2012**

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- Jun 06 Moutin Reunion Quartet
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- Jun 07 Michaela Harrison
- Jun 07 Cliff Hines Band
- Jun 08 Linda Aubert
- Jun 08 The New Orleans Loving Festival

[View full schedule](#)

GALLERY



The beautiful Chaka Khan at Cafe Istanbul.

April is Jazz Appreciation Month. Committed to presenting the highest quality New Orleans music, Café Istanbul presents five great nights of Jazz starting this Wednesday, April 11.

- Wed. 4/11 (8pm) Leroy Jones Quintet
- Thurs. 4/12 (8pm) Michaela Harrison : Celebrating the Ladies of Jazz
- Fri. 4/13 (8pm) Stephanie Jordan CD Release, A Tribute to Lena Horne

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June 6, 2012



It what promises to be one of the area's most intriguing musical collaborations in some time, a jazz quartet from southern France will team up with Mandeville area Native American musician/educator Grayhawk Perkins Monday (FYI, June 18) at the Dew Drop Social and Benevolent Jazz Hall.

Together the five musicians representing diverse cultures and musical orientations will present a north shore premiere performance of GrayHawk's original composition called "Thirteen Moons."

The event, from 6:30-9 pm, hosted by Friends of the Dew Drop, is being sponsored by the French government through the French Consulate in New Orleans. Admission is \$10 at the door.

The Dew Drop performance will culminate four days of concerts featuring the Mezcal Jazz Unit of Montpellier, three of those in concert with Grayhawk. Those will be on June 15 at Cafe Istanbul in New Orleans, Cite des Arts in Lafayette on June 17 and the Dew Drop on June 18. The French jazz quartet will do a straight jazz set at Snug Harbor in New Orleans on June 16.

The venue's were organized through Ellizabeth Riley of Paris, with Mezcal Productions, and Beatrice Germaine, cultural projects manager for the French Consulate in New Orleans. While in south Louisiana, the French musicians are being provided residency at the Musicians Union Hall in New Orleans.

"Thirteen Moons," researched and composed by Perkins, a Native American Houma and Choctaw, celebrates the thirteen moons of the Native American calendar. He has written a series of musical chants honoring each of the moons and done so in the Mobillan trade language dialect. In his research Perkins has discovered that several Native American tribes traversing the southern coastal regions of the United States, developed a shared common trade language around the time of initial European settlements in the region that facilitated trade among tribes speaking a diverse range of dialects and facilitated trade with Europeans at the time. It has come to be known by scholars as the Mobillan trade dialect. Perkins and the French jazz musicians have found innovative ways to integrate these early Native American chants in the musical language of improvisational jazz. Perkins is regarded as one of the major Native American educators and historians in the country, adept at lecturing, writing, music, storytelling, educating, film acting and advising, and annually coordinates the Native American section at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Ironically, he test recorded some of the initial compositions for "Thirteen Moons" more than a year ago at the Dew Drop which is in the 400 block of Lamarque Street near where Perkins has documented Native American camps along what is now called Little Castine Bayou. He also lectured on Native American area influences three years

ago during a Friends of the Dew Drop lecture series funded by a state grant.

The Mezcal Jazz Unit, proficient in a variety of European and American jazz styles, is composed of Emmanuel de Gouvella, on bass, who did special arrangements on several GrayHawk compositions; Cristophe Azaema, saxophones; Vivian Peres, drums; and Jean Marie Frederic, guitar. They are in great demand across Europe having performed in France, Austria, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Morocco and in the US, Central America, India, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and scores of other countries.

The Dew Drop, built in 1895 and on the National Register of Historic Places, is owned by the City of Mandeville and is regarded among jazz fans worldwide as one of the most important still standing virtually unaltered rural jazz dance halls in the world.

Notes From New Orleans

5:53 PM THU JUNE 14, 2012

For Mezcal Jazz Unit, Collaboration is the Key

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Mezcal Jazz Unit riding an elephant on one of their trips around the world. [Enlarge image](#)

By SHARON LITWIN

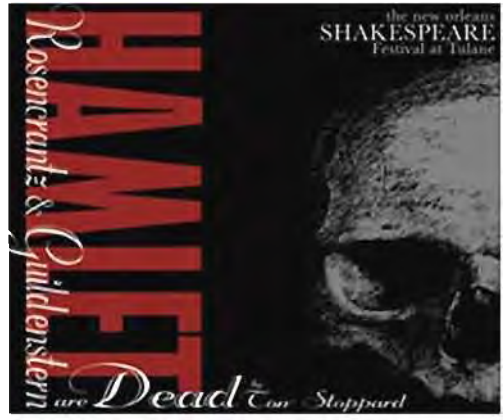
Listen 04:38

Jazz has evolved into a genre of music that incorporates many distinctive styles since it began on the streets of New Orleans a hundred years ago. Often, the key to its evolution is cross-cultural cooperation. On this week's Notes from New Orleans, we'll hear from the leader of a French jazz group that has returned to Louisiana in pursuit of his persistent desire to collaborate.

To read a related article written by Sharon Litwin, visit [Nolavie.com](#).

TAGS: [Mezcal Jazz Unit](#) [Emmanuel de Gouvello](#) [Sharon Litwin](#) [Notes from New Orleans](#)

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A collaboration of French jazz and the Choctaw Nation

By Sharon Litwin



Mezcal Jazz Unit from France meets the Choctaw nation at Cafe Istanbul.

Jazz takes on new meaning this week with an unusual collaboration between two unlikely sources: GrayHawk Perkins of New Orleans and the [Mezcal Jazz Unit](#) from France. The end result of a week of rehearsals between GrayHawk, a Native American of the Choctaw and Houma Nations, and Emmanuel de Gouvello and his group from Montpellier in the south of France, will be presented at [Café Istanbul](#) in the Healing Center on Friday night at 9 p.m.

Emmanuel has long been known for his fascination with other cultures and his ability to blend their unique qualities into his compositions. He has worked with musicians as varied as Nigerian folk singers and Eastern European jazz performers. The New Orleans project, called Thirteen Moons, focuses on GrayHawk's compositions based on a series of traditional Native American chants, and refers to the 13 moons of the traditional Native American calendar.

Introduced to each other first by members of the French Consulate in New Orleans, GrayHawk and Emmanuel continued their communications largely through Skype. Somehow working out international time zone issues, they discussed the project and shared examples of each others work over many months.

For Emmanuel, the word jazz means openness to numerous influences and trends. Working cross-culturally is, he says, his European approach to this admired American music form; it's one he hopes creates a unique musical language, breaks down barriers and fosters understanding.

The Thirteen Moons concert will take place at [Café Istanbul](#) on Friday, June 15 at 9 p.m.; [Cite des Arts](#) in Lafayette on Sunday, June 17 at 7 p.m.; and at the [Dew Drop Inn](#) in Mandeville on Monday, June 18 at 6:30 p.m.

The Mezcal Jazz Unit will perform a separate concert of their own works at [Snug Harbor](#) on Saturday, June 16 at 8 p.m.

Sharon Litwin is president of NolaVie.

French, New Orleans musicians revive colonial language

New Orleans, LA
USA 2012

AFP

By Molly Kramer | AFP - 21 hrs ago

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Drummer Grayhawk Perkins (C), a ...



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With furrowed brows and fervent nods, the French and native American musicians were introducing a new form of jazz to [New Orleans](#) centered on a colonial trade language used by their ancestors.

There were no furs or beads on the table. Instead, the musicians were exchanging traditions to create a unique sound that hops from jazz standards to blues, to reggae to mellow, cymbal-heavy lounge music.

Holding it all together were the soulful chants of ancient folk tales and more modern stories told in Mobilian, a language once used by tribes across the Gulf of Mexico to communicate with each other and with the French traders.

The collaboration began a year ago after the Montpellier-based [Mezcal Jazz Unit](#) got a gig in the Big Easy.

"It's like for a Muslim to go to Mecca," Emmanuel de Gouvello, the band's bass player and arranger said of his first -- and too brief -- visit to the birthplace of jazz.

An attache at the French consulate knew of the band's interest in working with indigenous musicians and introduced them to [Grayhawk Perkins](#), a staple of the Louisiana music scene and a member and historian of the Muskogean nation.

Mezcal has collaborated with indigenous musicians all over the world, from Nigeria to Vietnam.

They aim to first understand the culture of their collaborators and then add their own "color" to it in a way that complements and preserves the traditional form, de Gouvello said.

"We have to do something that is not usual world music, you know, just putting some drums or electronics on it," he told AFP. "We have to respect the tradition, but do something new."

Perkins already blends modern music -- mostly blues and funk -- with indigenous chants in his [Grayhawk](#) Band and was eager to add a French influence to his repertoire.

"It was really intriguing for me to have him come in and say 'Hey, I'd like to take that traditional [sound] and see what I can do,'" Perkins said.

"I can feel that French jazz style to it, which I don't get here. I get more of that [New Orleans](#) jazz-funk style when I do my music."

The cross-Atlantic collaboration blossomed with the help of online video chats and e-mail. Perkins would send a capella tunes as audio files, and de Gouvello would work on the instrumentation.

The ensemble settled on the name 13 Moons in a nod to the Muskogee calendar and created 13 songs which tell the tales of the different moons.

"Turkey Moon" tells how the spirits of elders are celebrated through a process similar to the Mexican Day of the Dead.

"Chestnut Moon" is about Native American and black musicians collaborating at Congo Square, a site where slaves and freedmen gathered in pre-Civil War New Orleans to create the sound that has evolved into contemporary regional music.

A few days before their first performance, they finally met in person and rehearsed intensely at a house Mezcal had rented on a grassy canal in New Orleans.

The current tour takes them across southeast Louisiana -- 160 miles (250 kilometers) west to Lafayette, then across Lake Pontchartrain to a rural area known as the North Shore.

"My not-so-secret goal is to bring Grayhawk to France," said Elizabeth Riley, who manages Mezcal Jazz Unit.

An album is also under discussion, but the future of 13 Moons is uncertain, depending largely on funding.

The three French band members play fretless bass, saxophone and a traditional drum kit. Perkins plays a handmade trio of canvas drums, brightly decorated with a water spider and other traditional symbols. Mark St. James of the Grayhawk Band lends them a psychedelic rock vibe with his guitar.

Most audience members will only recognize 13 Moons as jazz during the occasional drum or saxophone solo by Vivian Peres and Christophe Azema. But the band also employs jazz's characteristic resistance to a traditional rock or blues structure.

Perkins appreciates that variety. He grew up in New Orleans, where the music of Africa, the Caribbean, America and Europe has always collided in an unusual way.

The biggest thrill of this collaboration, for him, was the opportunity to revive the Mobilian language as a vehicle to unify cultures.

"Here we are, doing almost exactly what our ancestors did 300 years ago. It's pretty cool," Perkins said.

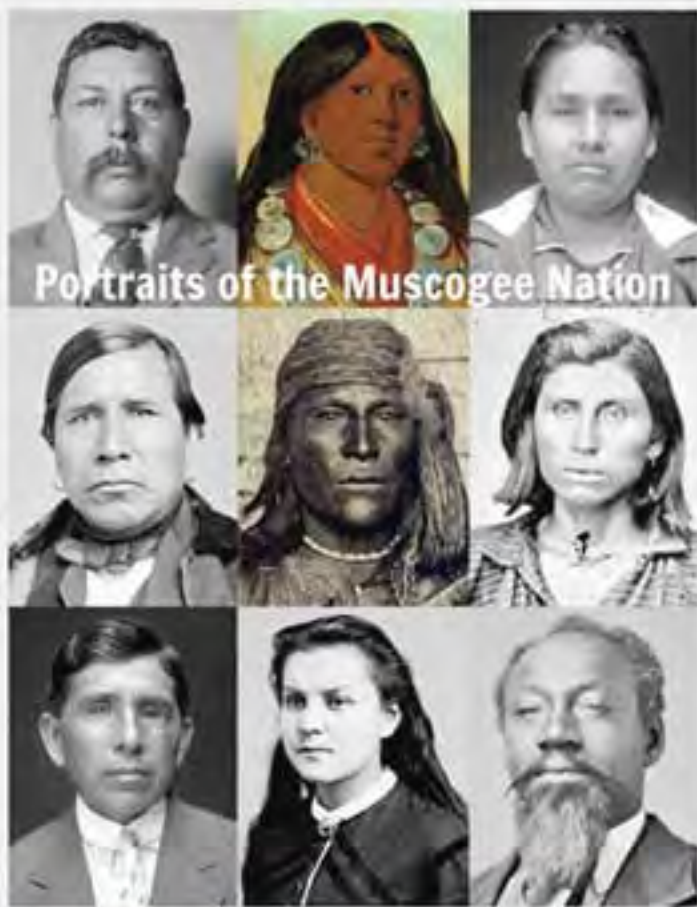
"It's definitely a historic moment."

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LANGUAGE TRANSLATION QUOTE FOR TRANSLATION

A Lost Language, Set to Music

by ALISON KROULEK on JUNE 27, 2012



Portraits of the Muskogean Nation

New Orleans has always been a melting pot for different cultures. A prime example is this interesting musical collaboration, featured on [The Raw Story](#), between French jazz ensemble Mezcal Jazz Unit and the Native American blues/jazz-influenced Grayhawk Band. Grayhawk Band is headlined by Grayhawk Perkins, a historian for the Muskogean Nation, and the Mezcal Jazz Unit makes a point of seeking out indigenous artists from around the world to collaborate with.

In the article, Mezcal Jazz Unit bassist Emmanuel de Gouvello explained his group's approach:

"We have to do something that is not usual world music, you know, just putting some drums or electronics on it. We have to respect the tradition, but do something new."

The two bands collaborated on songwriting long-distance, then met up in New Orleans to practice before touring the state. The result was a one-of-a-kind sound. Perkins said,

"It was really intriguing for me to have him come in and say 'Hey, I'd like to take that traditional [sound] and see what I can do...I can feel that French jazz style to it, which I don't get here. I get more of that New Orleans jazz-funk style when I do my music."

Called "3 Moon" after the Muskogean calendar, the band's songs are based on Muskogean folklore and traditions. Even more intriguing: they are all performed in Mobilian, a pidgin language that different Native American groups used to communicate hundreds of years ago.

Nobody's sure how long Mobilian was in use. Some scholars say that the tribes used it to communicate before Europeans arrived on the continent, and that influences from French, Spanish and English were incorporated later. Others say that it arose as a response to European settlement. Either way, it's been extinct since the 1960's. If you want to get a feel for it, I found a tutorial for you below. Hearing it set to music must be pretty cool. As Perkins described it,

"Here we are, doing almost exactly what our ancestors did 300 years ago. It's pretty cool. It's definitely a historic moment."

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