

# LE DAUPHINÉ LIBÉRÉ

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## Savoyard, he became a musician in California

It was like going back to basics. With music as a hyphen. The American group The Vignatis performed at the l'Estanco in Bassens in mid-December for their first concert in Europe since 2019, and a unique date in France. A moment rich in emotions for its co-founder, Fabrice Vignati. Born in Aix-les-Bains, he grew up in the Minguettes district, in the southern suburbs of Lyon, before leaving to live his "American dream". With an instrument of music for metronome: "I started the guitar at the age of 8, in Aix. It is an intense passion, which has taken my whole life: I wanted to listen and learn, intensely. I worked on everything, self-taught, I took lessons to be at self-level: I wanted to be comfortable in all styles," he explains while on vacation in the spa town.

In California where he settled, Fabrice Vignati met the one who became his companion in the city as on stage: Tracy Todd, jazzwoman, clarinetist, pianist, and composer. By combining their respective cultures and musical inspirations (gypsy jazz and rockabilly for Fabrice, jazz and country for Tracy), the Angeleno duo created Gypsybilly in 2007 and published four composition albums between 2009 and 2019. The texts, very neat, of their songs slalom between English and French (Tour Eiffel, Je ne suis pas comme toi, Aix-les-Bains...), on various themes (travel, nuclear...). "We have stories to tell," testifies the couple. Hailed by critics (a journalist from Vintage Guitar Magazine wrote that it is about the meeting between Django Reinhardt and Scotty Moore, the guitarist of Elvis Presley), this extraordinary duo are members of the Recording Academy, voting members of the Grammy Awards. "We are very diverse. In Los Angeles, you always have to be on your A Game. We work very hard", say Fabrice and Tracy. But in the highly competitive American musical universe, these followers of Japanese Buddhism keep their feet on the ground. "Our music has no market, but who cares. Our mission is to show that music is humanism. Before being musicians, we are first human beings," they insist. Their fifth album was released in the spring of 2022 and offers covers of great musical standards from the last five decades in their "Gypsybilly sauce". The couple, who offer a podcast every month called "Rock your life show", have just won a bronze W.A.M. Award.

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