

Anything Phonographic – (In *The Groove* magazine)

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Steve Ramm, 420 Fitzwater St., Phila., PA 19147 (e-mail: Stevenramm@aol.com)

Released in Europe by the Quantum Leap label – and distributed in the US by Music Video Distributors – *Django Reinhardt: King of The Jazz Guitar* is a creatively produced documentary on the jazz guitarist, who was born in Belgium but who moved to Paris in the 1930s to become a major jazz legend. Writer/Director Jordi Vall Escru knew that there is almost no performance footage of Reinhardt so he crafted his 108-minute documentary around still photos, images of record labels and some “recreations”. The special effects swirl and move about the screen in time to the many recordings (beautifully transferred) of Reinhardt throughout his career. The narration is in English and read by Sterling Jones. The selection of records includes those made with the Quintette as well as American violinist Eddie South and Duke Ellington and his Orchestra. Sometimes the clever effects become too much so, but the major weakness in this disc is the lack of indexing and chapter stops. Even though this film was made in two parts, the DVD is one long 108-minute track. You cannot revisit a recording, or even stop the film and return to that point at a later time. Someone really dropped the ball on this one. Still, the amount of work that Escru put into this effort should be commended. (Available at most music stores.)