

# THE BELLEVILLE OUTFIT

[www.bellevilleoutfit.com](http://www.bellevilleoutfit.com)

With a tight, seamless sound — a mix of gypsy swing, big band, jazz, country and cross-genre Americana roots music, original songs and clever covers — the astonishing six-piece belies the 20-something ages of its members and its vast experience garnered swiftly after its union around Merlefest 2007 in Wilkesboro, N.C.

In fact, in less than two years, the band has played for more than 15,000 people; ridden in a van-with-trailer to get to shows from Texas to Nashville to the Carolinas; sold out shows throughout Texas and along the East Coast; shared stages with the likes of Lyle Lovett, Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, The Del McCoury Band, and Mark O'Connor; and recorded a full-length debut album with producers John Rees and Bil VornDick, the independently released WANDERIN' (February 2008), which reached #10 on the Americana album chart.

It has spent the past months touring from coast to coast behind WANDERIN,' racking up new fans and critical acclaim. At the same time, new songs have been pouring forth from singer-songwriter-guitarist Rob Teter and vocalist-violinist Phoebe Hunt; the band will be working in the studio this winter on a follow-up disc due out in 2009.

The Belleville Outfit came together in response to a slot at Merlefest 2007 offered to Spartanburg, S.C., band The DesChamps, a group inspired and influenced by Uncle Walt's Band and member Champ Hood, which had included singer-guitarist Marshall Hood (nephew of Champ), Teter and upright bass player Jeff Brown. Teter, Hood and Hunt met Brown, drummer Jonathan Konya and pianist Connor Forsyth in New Orleans, and after two days of marathon rehearsals, the band was ready for its first shows together — complete with a one-of-kind sound that mixes members' Appalachian roots with the best of jazz, swing, blues, country, soul and gypsy music.

Teter, Forsyth and Konya had been studying music and business at Loyola for two years, and Hunt had earned a degree in history at the University of Texas at Austin while learning to play the fiddle in a local folk trio. Brown had joined the military. Hood was playing gigs for Austin's Toni Price and Warren Hood and the Hoodlums. But after Merlefest, each decided to give the band their all. Its name ("belle ville" means beautiful town in French) honors New Orleans and the dramatic influence Hurricane Katrina had on the city and the Loyola trio. And "Belleville" is a Django Reinhardt song the band plays, which exemplifies a great portion of its sound.