

## SWING CARAVAN

### Modern and Playful Acoustic Alt-Jazz

Swing Caravan is a toe tappin', finger snappin', get it down deep in your soul kind of group. Their music is rooted in the great acoustic Gypsy Jazz tradition of Django Reinhardt from France in the 1930s and 40s. Based in Northampton MA, the group is rapidly becoming known for bringing this traditional jazz style to new life with a modern sound that is all their own. They play Reinhardt compositions, American jazz standards, original compositions, and some other eclectic surprises. Swing Caravan manages to open up the idea of jazz as a popular music to a broad acoustic music audience.

Lead guitarist and vocalist Matthew Ruby Shippee, rhythm guitarist Jack Brown, double bassist Michael Dunning, and "kitchen percussion" player Dave Nelson form a solid improvising quartet adept at nuanced interplay. Together, they fluidly lead listeners through a wide range of musical textures, moods and emotions. Their sound ranges from uplifting and blazing fast swing rhythms to heartfelt, sparse ballads with vocals.

Swing Caravan performances are considered special because of the fun, spontaneous playfulness that the group shares with audiences. The group has a reputation for a special personal chemistry that can brew up fun, positive energy in any venue. Their concerts, always drawing regular fans, display their deep commitment to playing in the moment, keeping the music fresh.

In ever growing numbers, Swing Caravan is appreciated by acoustic music connoisseurs for playing the 'hot jazz' style with the kind of spontaneous and sensitive playfulness that spawned the music decades ago.

### Why alt-jazz?

Swing Caravan began using the term alt-jazz (borrowed from the well established alt-country scene) as a short-hand way to reflect how they are updating this traditional acoustic jazz style with modern jazz and non-jazz influences and attitudes; That they are having fun creating traditional-based music with liberally added doses of everything from Coltrane to Grisman, Cassandra Wilson to the Beatles, Willie Nelson to Ray Charles and Radiohead. Swing Caravan doesn't sound exactly like the tradition or like mainstream jazz...they are an alternative. That's probably why so many of their fans never considered themselves jazz fans before hearing Swing Caravan.