

## Prepare for a unique sound, but your wallet is safe

Bill Kramer • columnist • February 3, 2011



**It won't be a conventional** concert at the Mockingbird tomorrow evening when the Caravan of Thieves take the stage. Rather, it will be a kind of performance art where the artists transform inanimate objects on the stage from props to instruments, and engage the audience from passive listeners to active participants.

There are few bands that have the approach of this one. Led by husband-and-wife team Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni, who both sing and play guitar, the quartet also includes Ben Dean on violin and Brian Anderson on double bass. Carrie and Fuzz took time recently to discuss the Caravan's unique way of making music.

"A short and fun description we sometimes use for our music is 'The Beatles meet Django Reinhardt at Tim Burton's house.' Our stage persona is that of four, rag-tag animated characters who share clothing from the Victorian era, 1930s formal and somewhat Gothic outfits. We all play acoustic instruments with enthusiasm and at times, reckless abandon, often emitting sounds of Eastern European and Klezmer influence and we litter the stage with various junk that we drum on with a passion.

"So in that sense, yes, 'gypsy' isn't a bad word, but to take it one step further, we can describe it as 'gypsy swinging serenading fire-breathing circus freaks,'" Carrie said.

After Fuzz left the band Deep Banana Blackout, he and Carrie formed a duo and developed a vision of where their music could go. Then they recruited Deale and Anderson to join in on the fun and help deepen the sound and possibilities. Carrie said their contributions and their spirit of adventure make them kindred spirits.

"Brian and Ben definitely share our out-of-the-box idea of musical performance. Most other players would have said, 'No way, I'm not doing that. I just want to play my instrument and look cool.' So we feel lucky to have talented, fun and adventurous musicians to share this with."

The group's latest CD "Mischief Night" soon will have a follow-up release. Fuzz said that the difference in recording in a studio and performing on stage result in two different, but equally satisfying experiences.

"There will always be differences between studio and live performances because in the studio there simply is not audience there to reciprocate the energy back and forth with," he said. "And our show contains so much of

that interplay and the interactive element plays a big role so they are really two different worlds. We wouldn't try to approximate that element in the studio, so we treat them as different processes and art form. The show is in the moment for that audience, that one time, and the albums are a listening experience that we hope many people would enjoy repeatedly over a long time."

The live shows certainly offer the Caravan of Thieves the chance to unleash their full musical and theatrical personality, often attended by those who have heard their studio releases but haven't seen the band live.

"Most often when we show up to a completely new room in a new town, it will be full of people excited for the show and ready for anything. I've definitely heard a few people say that they had heard the music on CD first and enjoyed it, but when they finally got to come out to a show and experience, that was when they really 'got it'. Either way, we're not shy and by the end of the show, the audience isn't either," noted Carrie.

Interaction has now become a buzzword in today's world, where computers and television have broken down barriers, but for the Caravan of Thieves, interaction is an integral part of their show and they have as much as the audience.

"Yes, we definitely have fun and we find that is contagious with everyone in the room. All of the songs are rehearsed because they have pretty intricate arrangements but we do leave some room for chance and improvisation in the music, mainly the solo sections and some open-ended segments. It's the interactive moments with the audience that are most left to chance. Putting myself out in one of the seats for a moment, I'd like to think our show is what you make of it and what you put into it as an audience member. So with enough encouragement, we would be happy to take you to the moon and back," said Fuzz.

If You Go!

**what:** The Caravan of Thieves in Performance

**when:** 8:30 p.m. Friday

**where:** The Mockingbird

**tickets:** \$10 advance; \$12 at the door

**more info:** [www.themockingbird123.com](http://www.themockingbird123.com); 213-8777

Link:

<http://www.newsleader.com/article/20110203/ENTERTAINMENT/102030303/1040/Prepare-for-a-unique-sound--but-your-wallet-is-safe>