

Gypsy Jazz for Ghosts and Hipsters: An Interview with Caravan of Thieves

Posted by [Arin Greenwood](#) on Apr. 8, 2010 at 09:44 am

The members of Bridgeport, Conn.'s [Caravan of Thieves](#) say their influences include **Queen** and **Tim Burton**, but what you'll hear most of in their music is a hipster take on [Gypsy jazz](#)—think **Django Reinhardt** with a master's in American Studies.

Oh, and a ghost helps write their songs. More on that in a moment.

Fuzz Sangiovanni and **Carrie Sangiovanni** play acoustic guitars and sing. **Ben Dean** plays violin and **Brian Anderson** plays double bass. The group plays Iota tonight at 9 p.m. \$10.

Washington City Paper: What is alt-Gypsy?

Carrie: Everyone's always like "what is your music?" "It's alternative Gypsy swing" is kind of what we've been saying. It's not really Gypsy jazz, per se, though it does have some roots in that. But it's not Gypsy jazz. And it is swinging. And it's alternative because I guess the whole concept behind Caravan is a little bit wild and a lot of songs are stories with characters.

Fuzz: Labels in general are always really hard to deal with as an artist, but that was the best we could come up with.

WCP: What kind of costumes can people expect from you here in D.C.?

Carrie: I guess a little bit old fashioned. Like a bunch of hobos or vagabonds that got dressed up for a night out.

Fuzz: We mix a few different time periods. We like the thirties era as the heyday of swing.

Carrie: The Victorian style, too.

Fuzz: The Victorian thing. It's got kind of a hobo thing to it, too.

WCP: Is that how you dress at home? What are you wearing now? *[Note: This question did not sound creepy at the time.]*

Fuzz: Right now we're in T-shirts and sweatpants.

WCP: I read in one of your interviews that there's paranormal activity in your apartment and that's been part of the inspiration for your music.

Fuzz: Yeah. In the past we hit a wall with writing, you know, we felt like we were getting a little dry with our ideas. And then one day we felt like we were getting sort of possessed, and the ghost was feeding us song ideas, essentially. Something like that.

WCP: Is that the first time that kind of thing has happened?

Fuzz: Yes.

WCP: Has it happened again?

Fuzz: It continues to happen.

Carrie: The ghost gives us these wacky, wild ideas for the music, and stories, and characters.

Fuzz: It is a form of possession.

WCP: It's lucky to have this ghost.

Fuzz: The ghost has been good to us. The first song on the album is about the ghost. It's called "Ghost Writer."

WCP: What are you working on now?

Carrie: We've got a couple of things in the works. On May 1, we're going to record a live record at the [Fairfield Theater Company](#). We're also going to the studio in the late summer, early fall.

Fuzz: We're planning for a 2011 studio album release. We've put it on hold because we want to get this live album out this summer. We do a lot of stuff during the show that we think is worth capturing right now. We're kind of at a moment in time when we've constructed a lot of fun things for the show.

Carrie: To really get fully what we're doing, the show is where it's at. So many people have said, "Until I saw you live I didn't fully get it."

Link:

<http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/artsdesk/music/2010/04/08/gypsy-jazz-for-ghosts-and-hipsters-an-interview-with-caravan-of-thieves/>

