

Gypsy-jazz locals record live album at FTC's Stage One

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Putting its own unique spin on gypsy jazz, Caravan of Thieves took time out from a lengthy national tour to record a live album on [Fairfield Theatre Company's](#) Stage One Saturday night.

The band's front man, Fuzz, and wife [Carrie Sangiovanni](#), both electric acoustic guitarists, recruited violinist [Ben Dean](#) and [Brian Anderson](#), a double bass player, and Caravan of Thieves played its first gig at the Fairfield venue two years ago.

"This is where we started," Carrie said. "It's fitting that we record our first live record here."

Enthusiastically applauding -as well as singing, clapping hands, foot stomping and finger snapping, when asked to do so, Saturday's audience obviously enjoyed being part of the live recording.

Welcoming the sold-out crowd at the start of the show, Fuzz said, "We're so excited to be here making our first live record with you and we're so happy that you're here to help us do it. You're all going to be part of this."

He said that eight microphones were discreetly placed throughout the intimate performance space.

Performing at Stage One of the Fairfield Theatre Company was not just a professional homecoming-it's also where the band members reside. Carrie and Fuzz, along with Anderson, live near the Fairfield and Bridgeport border, and Dean resides a few miles north in New Haven.

Fuzz said that although Caravan of Thieves is a "touring band," its fan base largely remains in Fairfield County.

In fact, it was the audiences' overwhelmingly positive responses in the past year that prompted their decision to record a live album. "One of the main things we were looking to capture on this record is the audience's reaction," Fuzz said.

Fuzz explained that while they were performing throughout the United States this past year, they continuously heard that although fans enjoyed the group's debut CD, Bouquet, which was released last year, they missed some of what was present during the band's live performances.

"It's been great because people are taking a chance on us," Fuzz said. "We've created something that is interesting at first glance so that people are willing to check us out."

Since 2004, Fuzz and Carrie have worked together, creating different types of music. However, it's obvious that the mix of gypsy jazz rhythms and vocals is attracting audiences of all different ages.

"What we do has been so well received, and this really motivates us to keep on making music and writing songs and getting out there and performing," Carrie added.

A mix of original tunes about a wide assortment of topics-including love and relationships, bugs and ghosts-are not performed in any sort of traditional manner.

Intricate harmonies, blending seamlessly with upbeat tempos, combine with witty and often sardonic lyrics. The songs are performed dramatically and humorously so that Caravan of Thieves sometimes more aptly resembles a comedy troupe rather than the classically trained musicians that they are.

In more than one instance, the quartet begins or ends the song sitting, kneeling and even lying down on the stage floor, all while playing their instruments. Fuzz's fun-filled, easy banter with the audience and his fellow musicians lends to a feeling of intimacy and joviality.

Undoubtedly, they have put their own mark on the style of gypsy jazz. Carrie said that they didn't want to "just get up and sing our songs."

"We wanted to create a whole show," she added.

With lively, swinging instrumentals executed by fast-fingering guitar, violin and bass playing, and using metal milk buckets, pans and a hubcap as percussive instruments, Caravan of Thieves does, indeed, have its own sound and look.

Fuzz said that the band will spend about a month in the recording studio with the sound engineers as they fine-tune tracks for the live album, which is slated to be released this summer. Then they are off on the road again.

Describing Fairfield Theatre Company as the town's "best kept secret," audience members Ned and Gwen Beaver, of Fairfield, enjoyed listening to Caravan of Thieves Saturday night. Ned said that he went to the band's Web site after receiving an e-mail notification about the upcoming concert. "I listened to a few of their recordings and told Gwen to make us reservations," he said. "We're so lucky to have these kinds of artists come to Fairfield."

John and [Terry D'Ausilio](#), of Easton, have also liked hearing different musical acts at the Fairfield Theatre Company.

John said that this is the "third or fourth time" that he's seen "Caravan of Thieves" perform. "I like gypsy jazz but not many people can play it well," he said.

For more information about the band and upcoming performance dates, go to caravanofthieves.com. The Caravan of Thieves will perform locally in New York City on Wednesday, June 23 and at the Gathering of the Vibes Festival in Bridgeport on Friday, July 30.

Link:

<http://www.greenwichtime.com/entertainment/article/Gypsy-jazz-locals-record-live-album-at-FTC-s-477638.php>