

CD Review: Caravan of Thieves' 'Bouquet'



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CARAVAN OF THIEVES *"Bouquet"*

Caravan of Thieves stole my heart.

There's something about the band's witty, spirited gypsy folk-jazz that is so new and yet so familiar all at once.

The band has been together only about a year, and yet its debut album, "Bouquet," belies the members' old souls and musical chops. Violin, upright bass, acoustic guitar and harmonious vocals blend into a sweet, melodic whirl of musical flavors.

Take "Zu Zu's Petals," which combines a wickedly exciting mix of stand-up bass and violin, defying one to listen without at least some foot tapping.

Or consider "Burial at Sea," with its strumming gypsy jazz strings wrapping around witty lyrics including: "It was tricky but we stowed your little buddy all tied up in the galley/Now it's true romance/So, here's a little shanty/Nothing fancy/Sung by Jack and Nancy Ketch/Go fetch your swimming pants/'Cause it's time to dance."

It's easy to see how this signature style can appeal to such a wide swath of fans. The band members obviously are masters of their respective instruments. That allows them to stretch musical boundaries with sounds that could emanate from France or Romania without tipping over the edge into farce.

The lovely melodies and harmonious vocals of Caravan of Thieves make "Bouquet" a sweet indulgence, indeed.

-- Nancy Dunham

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