

# Caravan of Thieves

## *THE FUNHOUSE*

### Biography

Like many families, this one started with a married couple- **Fuzz** and **Carrie Sangiovanni**, (guitar, vocals, various percussive “instruments”) writing and performing as a duo. “It started as a romantic, bohemian vision of a couple making music, performing on the road, in parks, venues, traveling around and avoiding responsibility as much as possible,” says Fuzz. “The first thing we discovered was we loved singing together, harmonizing our voices. Just seemed to click right away.”

In the spring of 2008, Fuzz and Carrie extended their family to include fiery violinist **Ben Dean** and double bass madman, **Brian Anderson** completing their colorful vision. Since then, the four of them ran away from home and never looked back.

Within that first year, the **Caravan of Thieves** began to win immediate praise for their unique blend of gypsy swing and popular music, inspiring them to record and release the debut full-length album *Bouquet* (2009). To accompany this collection of dramatic and satirical tales, they built an interactive stage set of percussive junk and the ragtag quartet took their newly animated show on the road, sharing stages with world renowned artists such as Emmylou Harris, Dan Hicks, Glen Campbell, Nanci Griffith, The Decemberists, Keb Mo, Tom Tom Club, Iron and Wine, Punch Brothers, Tony Trischka, John Hammond, John Jorgenson and many others. The Caravan successfully connected with audiences on each of these diverse bills, proving their act to be understood and appreciated by folk, pop, rock and jazz audiences of all ages.

“The years spent making music as an acoustic duo, alongside street performers, forced us to create a style of music we can present anywhere, anyhow, plugged in or not, a little wild and raw,” adds Carrie addressing the palpable troubadorian nature of Caravan Of Thieves, “And this seemed to be a characteristic of popular artists and performers who have developed their persona and style that continue to span generations.”

Driving gypsy jazz rhythms, acoustic guitars, upright bass and violin lay the foundation for mesmerizing vocal harmonies and fantastic stories. It’s theatrical and humorous. It’s musical and intense. It entertains, dazzles and defies classification while welcoming the spectator to join the band throughout the performance in momentary fits of claps, snaps and sing-alongs. If Django Reinhardt, the cast of Stomp and the Beatles all had a party at Tim Burton’s house, Caravan of Thieves would be the band they hired.

“This idea of bringing the street performance to the stage led us to gypsy music and the 1930's swing era as these are free feeling, charismatic performances by real entertainers. With this as the musical backdrop, combined with our fascination with macabre images and sharp-witted sarcasm, we began writing happy sounding pop songs with pretty harmonies, dark thoughts and creepy characters. This all seemed to be a suitable combination. And banging on buckets, frying pans and hubcaps were just crazy and human enough to fit too.”



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For Caravan of Thieves' next release, *Mischief Night* (2010), the band felt their sophomore effort would best be suited as a live recording due to their continuously evolving show and the response and energy they had been receiving from audiences far and wide. Captured from one sold out show in Fairfield, CT on May 1, 2010, *Mischief Night* highlights the first two years of their most outrageous and engaging on-stage antics, original composition favorites and a few selections from their list of unexpected cover song reconstructions.

In between their 2011 spring tour legs and stockpiling an ever-growing collection of sonic scrap metal, Fuzz, Carrie, Ben and Brian resided, for the most part, in the highly innovative and sought after Tarquin Recording Studios (The Swell Season, Interpol, The National).

Says Fuzz, "We had a concept going in, both from a sound and production standpoint, lyrically and thematically. A lot of crazy stuff happens on the road, and we took our experiences from on and off the stage, and brought them into the studio with us. Life is ridiculous, all our lives, like an amusement park ride. In this case, we picked a funhouse, since those are ridiculous too. And we wanted to expand the range of what we can do instrumentally but still keep it non electric so we added a few more gritty and twangy stringed instruments that were fun to spank, like banjos, resonator guitars and ukuleles, as well as an orchestra of kitchen appliances for some additional percussive bang."

The fruit of their labor, a diverse sonic festival of an album aptly dubbed, *The Funhouse*, is very likely Caravan Of Thieves' hands down best.

Channeling pop bliss through their trademark lock-tight, turn-of-the-century, bang out a beat on anything that can take it approach, *The Funhouse*, (operative word: fun) which is soon-to-be-released on United For Opportunity, is exemplary of a band on the high road to musical perfection. The listener closes their eyes and can taste the bacchanalia and join the fete. Tunes like "Raise The Dead," the record's single, drive the point home with impressive lift, powered by soaring crescendos and inspired gang vocals, not to mention a lyric that invites the deceased to join in the fun. "Mexico" is a dark road ramble that will, at the very least, make you wanna dance around the room, if not run off yourself. "Candy" betrays the writer's addiction to the sweet confections that sounds like Vaudeville, but feels like The Beatles' "Savoy Truffle." And on it goes—the perfect soundtrack for your trip through the tunnel and into the light. If this album can't raise the dead, nothing will.



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