

# Brattleboro Reformer

## Give Thieves a chance Alt-gypsy Caravan rolls into Hooker-Dunham on Friday

By DAVE MADELONI

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BRATTLEBORO

All it took was a two-minute video "teaser" at the homepage of [caravanofthieves.com](http://caravanofthieves.com) to motivate me to check out the Connecticut-based band when it brings its highly theatrical, high-energy, "alt-gypsy" act to The Hooker-Dunham Friday night.

It featured pulsating performance clips -- including a short segment of an all-out percussive attack on a wheelbarrow, garbage can and wooden trunk, along with a couple of exhilarated, sweaty fan testimonials.

After just a couple of years together, Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni (guitars, harmony vocals), Ben Dean (violin) and Brian Anderson (acoustic bass) have generated quite a buzz on the acoustic music circuit with their infectious performances, which beside some strong musicianship, include playful stage antics and crowd-pleasing covers.

"We are always trying to achieve the same thing, whether in the studio or on stage and that's creating music with substance, music for people to really sink their teeth into," explained Fuzz. "But live, we are always looking for new ways to make the show more visual, interactive and fun for the audience, and we do have an interesting mix of covers from artists you wouldn't expect us to cover like Queen, Talking Heads, Dr. Seuss, Michael Jackson, Bach, etc. It's our challenge to make these covers fit in the set and we have completely rearranged them to do so."

Whether they are playing their originals or interpreting pop songs, the sound of Caravan of Thieves is a result of the chemistry of the players. Carrie explained how COT came together and grew into what it is today and what each player brings to their musical mélange.

"It began as a duo with just us (Fuzz and Carrie), and as we were adding more and more swing and energy into what was a fairly standard pop acoustic sound, we started to imagine the textures, rhythms and harmony of the early gypsy jazz 'hot club' recordings meshed into our songs. The gypsy jazz in turn, inspired lyrical ideas that we thought would complement the music and in our minds it called for comical, fantastic and at times morose settings. The warm melodic male/female harmony vocals seemed like the perfect counterpart to this jagged music and lyrical content.

"It was around this time that we started playing with Ben Dean, our violinist and his classical background, familiarity with the gypsy jazz players and other improv styles made him the perfect addition. And once we teamed up with upright bassist, Brian Anderson, who we knew was a very energetic player with a great feel, we had the push the band needed to make this style of music we had been imagining and put a really fun live show together."

COT is touring in support of "Bouquet," its first full-length CD, which according to Fuzz, tries to capture the intense-but-fun vibe of their live show.

"It was definitely a blast recording 'Bouquet,' and overall it ran very smooth, even with all the absinthe present in the studio! Our goal was to capture the live feel and energy of the band as it sounds when we perform in a room. We also wanted the recording to sound almost 'timeless' so we used vintage gear and instruments to sound like a band recording in the 1930s and '40s. All in all, our goal with this first record was to capture the image in our minds of this wild yet classy bunch of street musicians who have but one purpose: to let loose and make music for the love of it."

Caravan of Thieves have aspirations to add even more theatricality to their already over-the-top performances.

"Our goals are not to play football stadium rock concerts as you would imagine, but we would like to move to larger theaters eventually," explained Carrie. "In a perfect COT world, the room is small enough that we can still converse with audience members yet big enough that we can put on a full production that may include more musicians and possibly some circus performers. Maybe even team up with symphony orchestras, Cirque Du Soleil, Tim Burton? Hey, you never know."

Link:

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