



[Sounds Around Town](#)

By [Brooke Hoffman](#) | May 24, 2011 | [Arts, Business, Opinion](#)

Caravan of Thieves Steals the Hearts of Burlap and Bean

The band Caravan of Thieves had quirky covers, pots for percussion, gypsy guitars and perhaps a little more caffeine than the audience on May 20.



NEWTOWN SQUARE—The beige rug at local coffeehouse [Burlap and Bean](#), referred to as "the stage," will be retiring next week and this past weekend of shows definitely gave it a fond farewell.

Opener [Tony Halchak](#) brought the classic folksy Americana vibe the coffeehouse is known for, while headliner [Caravan of Thieves](#) played a set filled with more caffeine than a double espresso on Friday night. Their unique music and quirky stage show was a one-ring, Vaudeville-inspired circus with ringmaster and guitarist Fuzz orchestrating the show.

Halchak and his band opened up the night, in which Halchak has written approximately 200 songs last year. By the end of 2011, he will have released five EPs that showcase many of the songs and their collective themes.

Caravan of Thieves is the brainchild of singer/songwriting husband and wife duo Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni. When developing Caravan of Thieves, the couple knew they wanted to stay an acoustic act so they listened to various styles of acoustic music. Django Reinhardt's guitar work and "hot club" jazz from the 1930s really stood out for them. These styles combined with Sangiovanni and Fuzz's harmonies began the basis of Caravan's sound.

"We took some of those feels and textures, types of harmonies and mixed it in with our own music," explained Fuzz. The other two Thieves in the band include violinist Ben Dean and bassist Brian Anderson, who were recruited by Sangiovanni and Fuzz.

"The very first time we all got together at Brian's apartment, we played and rehearsed a few songs...it really clicked. There was a good chemistry there. They were on board from the get go," said Sangiovanni.

One of the unique things about a Caravan of Thieves show is their percussion. There isn't a regular drum kit. On Friday night, they took the stage with a resounding echo of pots, pans, wooden spoons and buckets.

Inspired by street musicians and *Stomp*, Caravan of Thieves incorporates found objects or what Sangiovanni lovingly calls "the junk on stage." The quartet wakes up the audience with sound and pulls them in with the creative uses of a paint bucket drum. They also have been known to use a wheelbarrow and a stool. The couple admits getting a few odd looks when "testing" instruments at the local Goodwill, but one time they did find a new fan and started a mini jam session.

Caravan of Thieves can really bring the sizzle and the steak. While the live performance is visually energetic and overwhelming, you still have to notice the music. There is a method behind their metallic kitchenware drum line of perfectly executed chaos.

Fuzz's guitar work is fast paced while Sangiovanni's harmonies have their own sense of gorgeous comedic timing which works with their style. The lyrics are perfectly stylized after the genre, but have a strong connection between rhythm and clever rhymes.

An accurate statement about the description of the band is written on their website bio which says, "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."

Early in the show Caravan got the audience hissing for their song, "Rattlesnakes." Sangiovanni and Fuzz led the audience in a mad libs routine where they would ask the audience to fill in the words to a kind of limerick.

The performance was mainly original music, but they did cover several songs like The Talking Head's "Psycho Killer" which sounded like a Romanian hootenanny, if such a thing existed. "Bohemian Rhapsody" is dynamically difficult to cover. Anyone remember Axel Rose and Elton John's version? Even P!nk took a stab at it on her last tour, but no one does it like Caravan of Thieves. Dean did some of the guitar solos on his violin while Sangiovanni's vocal capabilities were really showcased as she harmonized one second and hit those high notes the next.

After taking a bow, the Thieves decided to do one more song. They unplugged their instruments, pulled the audiences to the center of the coffee shop, and preceded to teach them a song. Within minutes, the whole cafe was stomping, clapping and singing along. When the house lights finally came on, almost everyone from the audience wanted to spend a little time being a part of the Caravan.

Were you able to experience the Caravan on Friday night? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

Link:

<http://marpleneatown.patch.com/articles/caravan-of-thieves-steals-the-hearts-of-burlap-and-bean>