



Skyscraper Magazine – June 2009



CARAVAN OF THIEVES

Bouquet CD - Caravan of Thieves

On debut album *Bouquet*, acoustic swing quartet Caravan of Thieves perform a brew of up-tempo, gypsy-styled folk-pop that has a pendant charm akin to Squirrel Nut Zippers mixing it up with DeVotchKa. Underneath the amiable double harmonies, gypsy violin, acoustic guitar strums, and plucky double bass, however, is a somber world filled with femmes fatales, carnival freaks, spouses with secret homosexual trysts, insanity masquerading as vampirism, murder at sea, and other dark anecdotes. Hubby and wife James and Carrie Sangiovanni have obviously dove deep into Django Reinhardt's swing jazz, European string bands, and bright pop music, and instrumentally the result is compelling and colorful. One of many sunlight-and-shadow highlights includes the noir-ish predator narrative "The Butcher's Wife," with the apt warning, "If you care not to tango with a knife / Then don't get friendly with the butcher's wife." Another memorable tale is the cheater's double-take "Bar Isole," where the narrator discovers what (and who) her husband does during his nightly walk: the surprise answer involves the male bartender the wife is attracted to. There's even a timely allegory, "Angels In Cages," where the entertaining pigs and diversionary clowns that are in charge allude to contemporary Madoff-esque current events.

(Doug Simpson)

Link:

<http://www.skyscrapermagazine.com/features/rev-CaravanOfThieves.html>