

## 10/27: Caravan of Thieves bring gypsy folk to MIM



Caravan of Thieves, coming to the Musical Instrument Museum on Oct. 27, 2012. Credit: Michael Weintrob.

Handout

### RELATED INFO

**Caravan of Thieves**

**When:** 7 p.m. Saturday.

**Where:** Musical Instrument Museum, 4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix.

**Admission:** \$22.50-\$27.50.

**Details:** 480-478-6000, themim.org.

By **Michael Senft**Special for the Republic | azcentral.comTue Oct 23, 2012 4:38 PM

Gypsy music is all the rage today, thanks to such bands as DeVotchKa and Gogol Bordello. But Caravan of Thieves, which returns to the Musical Instrument Museum on Saturday, is taking the Romany energy of those alternative faves back to its acoustic roots in the Hot Club de France.

Led by husband and wife Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni, Caravan of Thieves has been wowing audiences at festivals and concerts across the country with their giddy, theatrical shows, featuring an inspired blend of folk music, rhythmic percussion and gypsy jazz a la Django Reinhardt.

We spoke with Fuzz and Carrie as they were driving through Georgia to get to a show in Kentucky.

**Question:** With the name Caravan of Thieves, it's appropriate we're speaking while you're on the road.

**Carrie:** We're never in one place too long. For the next seven weeks, this van is our home.

**Fuzz:** We do have a home when we're not on the road though, in Connecticut. But we spend about half the year on tour, so we don't see it that often.

**Carrie:** It's been an incredible four years, we just keep getting busier and busier.

**Fuzz:** We're doing around 140 shows this year.

**Q:** You're celebrating this tour with a pair of charity singles.

**Carrie:** Yes, because we're going to be on the road during the holiday season, we're calling this our Homeless for the Holidays tour. That got us thinking about people who really are homeless during the holiday season, not by choice. So we've recorded a pair of "twisted" holiday songs that we're offering for download on our website ([caravanofthieves.com](http://caravanofthieves.com)). We're asking for a suggested donation of 99 cents each, but you can give as much as you want. Half of the proceeds will benefit the National Alliance for the Homeless. The first song, "Ms. Priscilla Pumpkin" is available now, we'll be releasing a Thanksgiving-themed song in November.

**Q:** Fuzz, you got your start in the jam band Deep Banana Blackout; how did you go from New Orleans funk to Hot Club gypsy folk?

**Fuzz:** I really needed a serious break — I had to get away from the horns and funk thing. I was getting burned out on it. I didn't want to get stuck in a creative loop artistically. I liked the feel of acoustic music; it's quieter, more focused around singing together. Carrie and I had started working as a couple playing acoustic folk music; it seemed as far away from funk as possible. I really just wanted to do something completely different from Deep Banana Blackout!

**Q:** How did your acoustic folk duo evolve into Caravan of Thieves?

**Fuzz:** A friend introduced me to Django Reinhardt's music and I was hooked. It is so much fun, so full of joy. We were already playing acoustic music, it wasn't far to stretch to start incorporating gypsy jazz into the mix.

**Q:** But you're not exactly playing gypsy jazz — there's much more to your sound.

**Carrie:** It's eclectic. And that has served us well. We've been able to play with bands like the Decemberists and Emmylou Harris. We fit comfortably in college theaters and folk festivals — it's attracted audiences of all ages and really broadened our appeal.

**Fuzz:** I like to describe it as gypsy-folk swing. But that doesn't really do it justice, there are so many influences mixed into our sound from the obvious of Django Reinhardt to the Beatles. I really think any band that features harmony vocals like ours have to acknowledge the Beatles.

**Carrie:** But what makes us unique is the way we blend those influences. Other bands are taking the gypsy sound and going in completely different directions with it. It's funny, people compare our sound to bands that we've never even heard of.

**Q:** To what do you credit this widespread response your band generates in such diverse crowds?

**Fuzz:** I think there is a definite acoustic-music revival going on right now. I see it as a response to all the electronic music of the past several years. It's like the move away from processed food. People are now looking for something more organic.

**Carrie:** The Internet has helped as well. People are looking for more unusual music, and the Internet has made rarer music more accessible. People are discovering more and more music.

**Fuzz:** That's how I discovered gypsy jazz — I never would have heard of it if a friend hadn't played me something he found on the Internet.

**Q:** What's the attraction to gypsy jazz?

**Carrie:** You listen to it and you can't hate it. It's fun, driving, catchy music that just makes you happy to listen to it.

Link:

[http://www.azcentral.com/things/todo/music/articles/20121023caravan-of-thieves-mim-musical-instrument-museum%20.html?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.azcentral.com/things/todo/music/articles/20121023caravan-of-thieves-mim-musical-instrument-museum%20.html?nclick_check=1)