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Spotlight | Fairfield

For Halloween, Something Twisted

By [TAMMY LA GORCE](#)

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Caravan of Thieves — a Bridgeport-based band made up of Ben Dean, violinist; Brian Anderson, double bassist; and the singing, acoustic guitar-slinging spouses Carrie and James Sangiovanni — doesn't mind if you leave its live shows wondering whether the band is as sketchy as its name suggests.

Its music, a cross of [Django Reinhardt](#)-inspired gypsy jazz and slightly twisted lyrics, is deliberately stewed in mystique.

“We have a little bit of an interest in the afterlife — spooky things,” said Mr. Sangiovanni, nicknamed Fuzz for his unruly hair. “And that’s worked its way into some of our songs.”

Take the lyrics from [“The Butcher’s Wife,”](#) off the Thieves’ recent self-released debut album, “Bouquet”: “If you care not to meet the afterlife/Then don’t get friendly with the butcher’s wife.”

The Thieves, who will play two [Halloween](#)-themed shows on Friday and Saturday at the Fairfield Theater Company, formed in early 2008. Mr. and Mrs. Sangiovanni had been playing together in the alternative rock band Rolla, and found that audiences were responding favorably to them as an acoustic duo.

“We could just feel people were connecting with us. And we felt more comfortable in that setting,” said Mr. Sangiovanni, who, at 39, is the senior Thief (Ms. Sangiovanni is 28; Mr. Dean, of New Haven, is 24; and Mr. Anderson, of Bridgeport, is 31).

When the Sangiovannis added the other two, they were able to broaden and texturize their music; their live shows have since been winning praise from Connecticut to California, where they recently performed, although the band usually plays no farther west than Chicago.

Mr. Sangiovanni said part of the quartet’s appeal is its chemistry with a range of audiences. “We’ve had little kids, college kids, hipster kids, older folk-type crowds,” he said. “Some places we go they’ve never heard of us,

but then you see the transition on their faces. It's mostly a little shocked to, 'Whoa, this is interesting,' to 'This is awesome.' ”

Audience participation is also big: For the Halloween shows, the band will ask fans to dress as a favorite character from one of their songs. Connecticut audiences, Mr. Sangiovanni said, are more likely to play along than those they have played for elsewhere.

“People in Connecticut have had a chance to get used to us,” he said. “We also have a history with other bands here, so it's not like, 'Who are these guys?' It's very much our home base — our strongest, most loyal fans are here.”

Caravan of Thieves will play two all-ages shows at the Fairfield Theater Company, 70 Sanford Street, Fairfield, at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 30 and 31; doors open at 7 p.m. For tickets, which range from \$12 to \$17, and further information: fairfieldtheatre.org or (203) 319-1404.

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