

Caravan of Thieves marvelously macabre at Winchester Music Hall (review)

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Fuzz Sangiovanni performs with Caravan of Thieves at Winchester Music Hall in Lakewood on Nov. 28, 2012. Emmet Smith, The Plain Dealer
Caravan of Thieves wrapped up their Wednesday night show at the [Winchester Music Hall](#) in Lakewood by leading the crowd to the back of the room for an unmiked performance of fan-favorite ["Raise the Dead."](#) With just a scant few feet of air separating the band from the audience and nothing in the way of amplification, it was a charmingly unorthodox finish to a charmingly unorthodox show.

That show was part concert, part Vaudeville, part musical theater and entirely enjoyable. The Bridgeport, Conn. 4-piece gypsy-folk outfit is anchored by the charismatic husband-wife duo of Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni. Their showmanship and spot-on harmonies hold the eclectic act together — which is no small feat. This is an act, mind you, that includes a percussion section that most closely resembles the long-forgotten corners of your garage with its discarded pots and pans, old 5-gallon buckets and a hub cap. The songs were just as heretical. "Candy" is an ode to the band's sugar addiction. "Freaks" pays homage to the fringe amongst us. Covers of the Talking Heads' "Psycho Killer" and especially Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" came off especially well when heard through Caravan of Thieves' gypsy filter.

In most cases, this would be a recipe for the ridiculous. But the masterful Flamenco-inspired guitar work of Fuzz and madman the violin of Benjamin Dean make it clear: This is no mere freak show. It's a tight, working band that can hang with just about anyone.

And that's the old thief's trick that Caravan pulls off. They get you looking one way with their theatrical performance, their period dress and their slapstick. And once you're distracted, it's all over. By the time you think to try to make sense of what it is you're seeing, you've already been pulled into their wonderful, macabre world.

Link:

http://www.cleveland.com/popmusic/index.ssf/2012/11/caravan_of_thieves_marvelously.html