



Out & About: Music from exotic to classical



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There's an intriguing array of musical choices coming up in Portland and environs. In the city, Caravan of Thieves, a string band with an exotic look and (sometimes) an eerie sound, motors into One Longfellow Square on Friday. This Connecticut-based foursome has been touring North America for the past three years and become very popular at the venue.

Caravan of Thieves



Photo: *Michael Weintrob*

Caravan of Thieves, an ensemble with an exotic look and (sometimes) eerie sound, will visit One Longfellow Square in Portland this Friday.

Caravan of Thieves

Banging on trunks, garbage cans and even a kitchen sink, Caravan of Thieves likes to push creative and performance envelopes. Exotic costuming and on-stage shenanigans are twin shticks of the Connecticut-based string band (loosely defined) that deftly crosses normal boundaries between genres and always adds elements of the unexpected to their high-energy live performances.

Sometimes the ensemble's sound is downright eerie. Wearing an incongruous assortment of costumes, the foursome channels spirits from the graveyard and transform musical performances into an extravagant visual-aural display.

Specializing in original tunes, with a smattering of covers from all over, Caravan of Thieves is centered around a husband-wife duo of singer-songwriters. Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni say they draw inspiration for their songs by walking through a graveyard that's close to their home in Bridgeport.

Their musical medium harks back to long-dead artists, especially the "gypsy jazz" string stylings made famous by Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli of the Hot Club de France from about 80 years ago. One recent appearance at One Longfellow Square included an arrangement of a toccata by Johann Sebastian Bach plus highly stylized covers of songs by John Lennon, Talking Heads and Queen.

It's definitely not highly homogenized McMusic, says Fuzz Sangiovanni, and lots of others nod heads in agreement.

"If you're weary of the heavily manufactured sounds and slick production values that dominate mainstream music today, then Caravan of Thieves promises to at least provide a satisfying alternative," writes Philadelphia Intelligencer reviewer Naila Francis. "These songs are soaked in a melange of influences, that while obviously steeped in gypsy swing, bear elements of everything from chamber pop and 1920s hot jazz to vaudeville, folk and bluegrass."

Catch Caravan of Thieves at [One Longfellow Square](#) (corner of Congress and State in Portland) at 8 p.m. Aug. 11. Call 761-1757.

Link:

<http://www.theforecaster.net/news/print/2012/08/06/out-about-music-exotic-classical/131613>