



CARAVAN OF THIEVES

The Funhouse

(UNITED FOR OPPORTUNITY)

Had the Beatles' "White Album" been recorded at turn-of-the-century Coney Island, the result may have been something like this. Combining early Alice Cooper-inspired freak show imagery with Old Crow Medicine Show instrumental sensibility, the New England-based throwbacks take pop through the looking glass with Vaudevillian showmanship, classical shades and Sgt. Pepper-influenced songwriting eccentricity.

Written by real-life husband/wife team and lead vocalists Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni, the album is at once an overwhelming, uncertain musical shadow, and a sweet, almost music box-like crystalline experience. The stomping rhythms of the fiddle-driven "Live Forever" recall Springsteen's Seeger Sessions while maintaining a healthy sing-along chorus. A beautifully orchestrated ensemble of ukulele and concertina, "Raise The Dead" celebrates a supernatural convergence of past and present by "raising the dead," asking them to "join in the feast."

A trip through Dickensian times, "Sister Went Missing" tells a soot-covered tale of slightly creepy finger-pointing, a wouldbe Victorian crime drama. A well-crafted standout, "Haunt Me" swells from a simple vocal/guitar minor-key dirge, dreaming of a "breathless kiss," into a burst of Americana instrumentation. Never lacking for ideas, the band's vivid portraits take us on a constant thrill ride.

The Lennon/McCartney of P.T. Barnumtinged acoustic burlesque, Caravan of Thieves carves out a unique niche in 21st century roots music.

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