

Blog Community

Expert advice and insight into topics that matter most to you

Enter 'The Fun House' with Caravan of Thieves

By Charlene Peters / cpeters@wickedlocal.com



Caravan of Thieves

Truth be told, I'm not a fan of folk music, and admittedly become antsy sitting through a concert.

My first coffeehouse experience occurred over 20 years ago, before I lived or worked in Marblehead. Back then, I recall round tables where you could sit, munch on snacks and drink tea or coffee comfortably while a performance was held on stage. I was there with a small group who wanted to hear **Chris Smither**, a folk music singer whose song, "Love You Like a Man" was covered by the famous Bonnie Raitt (changed to "Love Me Like a Man") in 1972, as well as "I Feel the Same" in 1973.

The experience was fun, especially when you get to listen to a top grade performer such as Smither, who, to date, repeatedly visits the **me & thee coffeehouse**.

Following that Smithers' concert so long ago, once I moved to Marblehead, I attended a few more folk concerts that honestly didn't strike a chord with my musical palate. But I am well aware that many people love to head out on Friday

evenings to me & thee coffeehouse to catch a show that showcases talent like Smither, or local talent such as Hayley Reardon, or this Friday's Marblehead crooner, Kat Quinn.

Today's coffeehouse concert at me & thee offers seats in the pews at the Unitarian Universalist Church, with intermission between acts, at which time you can purchase snacks and drinks while standing and socializing. I missed those round tables on Feb. 24, when I ventured out to try again and take a listen to the gypsy swing/pop hybrid band, "**Caravan of Thieves**" perform songs from their "Enter the Funhouse" tour.

I was smitten. Just watching this band having so much fun with each other is contagious, and the audience couldn't help but be entertained.

In costumes that reflect the image of a band of carpetbaggers, the Caravan of Thieves are full of big talk, great harmony and some interesting instruments. The band began in 2008, when Fuzz and Carrie Sangiovanni, (guitar, vocals, various percussive "instruments"), a married couple who wrote and performed together, extended their duo to include violinist Ben Dean and double bass madman, Brian Anderson.

Says co-founder Fuzz of the new LP, "We had a concept going in, both from a sound and production standpoint, lyrically and thematically. A lot of crazy stuff happens on the road, and we took our experiences from on and off the stage, and brought them into the studio with us. Life is ridiculous, all our lives, like an amusement park ride. In this case, we picked a funhouse, since those are ridiculous too."

The song, "Love Has Made a Monster Out of Me," is sure to give the giggles to anyone who has ever been in a bad relationship. The lyrics are entertaining and without one ounce of sadness. More of the band's newest recordings are performed, including "Ms. Priscilla Pumpkin," to which they admit is a Halloween-inspired song, but the band will not limit themselves to performing it in the fall.

What really rocked the house is when the band covered disco songs "Staying Alive" and "I Will Survive" in a mash-up, followed by the famous Queen tune, "Bohemian Rhapsody." The gypsy-folk rendition of all three were superbly performed, and these three songs alone would make me want to watch this band every time they're playing on the North Shore.

All four in the band are involved in the banter and high jinx on stage. At one point, bassist Brian Anderson picked up the large instrument and tured it on its side to strum it like a guitar. Comic elements persisted throughout the evening, and there was time allowed for Carrie Sangiovanni to present a sort of Mad Libs portion of the evening, when she announced she would create a love story, and it would be up to the audience to fill in the blanks.

Catch the Caravan of Thieves this spring on the "Enter the Funhouse" Tour, May 3, at Club Passim, Cambridge and May 4, at Iron Horse Music Hall, Northampton.

Link:
<http://www.wickedlocal.com/amesbury/blogs/shorelines/x186776441/Enter-The-Fun-House-with-Caravan-of-Thieves>