

Dropkick Murphys in Cleveland to celebrate new album

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The Chronicle-Telegram

No one is more surprised by the success of the Dropkick Murphys than its singer/bassist Ken Casey.

Formed just over a decade ago with no intention of becoming a full-time musical project, the Boston-based act quickly found a strong and loyal audience that could relate to its unique sound. The act combines the Celtic rock heritage of The Pogues with the punk sensibility of Rancid.

Fan favorite albums includes 2001's "Sing Loud Sing Proud" and 2003's "Blackout."

"I think it's the nature of the music, that it's aggressive punk rock that kids can be into, but it had enough of a melody and a message behind it that a lot of kids' parents can be like, 'This ain't bad,'" said Casey, calling from his home just

WHO: The Dropkick Murphys with Horrorpops and Everybody Out!
WHEN: 7:30 p.m. today
WHERE: Agora Theatre, 5001 Prospect Ave., Cleveland
TICKETS: \$25 through Ticketmaster
INFO: (216) 241-5555 or www.ticketmaster.com

outside Boston.

Sure, we've heard this before. Heck, that's what was said about the Dave Matthews Band, that the alt kids loved it, but so did their baby boomer parents. However, the Dropkick Murphys stand out because its music has lifestyle connotations that contain not only the Irish element, but the punk rock mindset to boot.

"It's also that people feel a part of the band," Casey said. "When we got our song in 'The Departed,' which

won the Academy Award, we got e-mails from fans who said they felt so proud when they saw that song in the movie. That's kind of wild to say that they felt so proud of this, as if they were related to us.

"I think that sums up how the people who listen to the band feel, as if they're along for the ride and it's their success as well."

Success is something the Dropkick Murphys have been enjoying boatloads of recently. Already revered as an elder statesman act on the Vans Warped tour based on its studio efforts, the inclusion of the band's song "I'm Shipping Up to Boston" (which appears on its 2005 album "The Warrior's Code") in "The Departed" only upped the band's popularity.

Including a Dropkick Murphys song in a movie about Boston gang-



BOB PERACHIO / BDP PHOTOGRAPHY

The Dropkick Murphys

sters was really a no-brainer.

"What's cool is that (director Martin) Scorsese knew that," Casey said. "To know that he needed a band from the local landscape was

another kind of point of genius to him. I could see a lot of directors just missing that point."

Casey admits the band could have turned on the promotional machine in relation to "The Departed" exposure. Instead, the group retreated to the studio and recorded its hardest album to date, "The Meanest." The album is due out today, just as the band returns to Northeast Ohio for a show tonight at the Agora Theatre.

"I think our goal is to be the AC/DC of Celtic punk rock," Casey said. "The worst thing we can do to the local fans who have stuck with us is to all of a sudden try to be Fall Out Boy with bagpipes. We don't sell millions of records, but we have a niche. And that niche supports everything we do. That's the way it needs to be for this band."

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