

# Dropkick Murphys rock harder with latest CD

People who listen to the band's music share its success, Ken Casey said.

By JOHN BENSON  
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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. In a nutshell, the act combines the Celtic rock heritage of The Pogues with the punk sensibility of Rancid. The list of 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 located just outside of Boston.

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

"It's also people feel a part of the band," Casey said. "When we got our song in 'The Departed,' which won the Academy Award, we got 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 like, as if they're along for the ride and it's their success as well."

## Popularity

Success is something the mem-



**COMING TO AGORA:** The Dropkick Murphys will perform at the Agora Theatre in Cleveland on Tuesday.

bers of the Dropkick Murphys have been enjoying boatloads of recently. The group is already revered as an elder statesman act on the Vans

Warped tour based on its studio efforts, and the inclusion of the band's song "I'm Shipping Up to Boston" (which appears on its 2005 album

## IF YOU GO

**Who:** The Dropkick Murphys with Horror-pops and Everybody Out!

**When:** 9 p.m. Tuesday.

**Where:** Agora Theatre, 5001 Prospect Ave., Cleveland.

**Tickets:** \$22 advance/\$25 day of show at Ticketmaster outlets.

"The Warrior's Code") in "The Departed" only upped its popularity among the mainstream.

The interesting thing about the selection of a Dropkick Murphys song in a movie about Boston gangsters is that it 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 Tuesday — the same day The Dropkick Murphys return to Northeast Ohio for a show 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."

"To be honest, if we have something happen where we blew up to 2 million records, I don't know what would happen. Unfortunately, I don't think there are 2 million people out there that hear what we have to do and what we have to say. It's unfortunate in a sense that there are not enough cool people in the world. I just goes over a lot of people's heads."