

# Mp3 The Magic Square - Isn't Anyone Going To Stop Them?



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This is an album of Irish Traditional Music. 14 MP3 Songs WORLD: Celtic, FOLK: Traditional Folk Details: Almost all of us currently assembled for this recording ran into each other in Boston at some point (that towns legendary Irish music scene probably shortened our lives by several years). Dave, Ted, and I produced our first recording there in 2003 (Traditional Irish Music from Boston) with some of our many friends in town. On our previous recording effort we tried to capture the vibe we felt defined Boston at the time, for this one I dragged some new friends into The Laboratory to play some of the many tunes weve learned from them since Dave and I fled those New England winters. Teds from there so apparently hes immune. Dave went back to his native west coast and settled in Portland, Oregon where he met Johnny Connolly, an excellent accordion player originally from Dublin. I moved to Baltimore, Maryland and met a host of world class musicians, among them Eliot Grasso, deluxe piper and flute player. In my travels I also came across Aaron Olwell from Nelson County, Virginia; master flute maker, instrument repairman, fiddle, flute, and concertina player, and evil genius. We began this recording in Portland, Oregon in March of 2006 and finished in August in Boston. We hope you enjoy the fruits of our debaucherous labours, Dan Isaacson January, 2007

1) The Lark in the Morning/Hardimans Fancy/Francis Aucoin Dave Cory-bodhran, banjo, Ted Davis-guitar, Eliot Grasso-uilleann pipes, Dan Isaacson-flute, Aaron Olwell-fiddle Willy Clancys setting of a popular jig is followed by one of several tunes named after Hardiman, who was apparently a fiddler probably a generation or two before Coleman. This set ends with a more recently composed tune by Howie McDonald of Nova Scotia.

2) The Home Ruler/Ms. McClouds Dave Cory-banjo, Johnny Connolly-melodeon Dave and Johnny have their way with two classics, the first a hornpipe, the second a reel.

3 ) Imelda Rolands/The Maid I Neer Forgot/Fred Finns Dan

Isaacson-whistle, Dave Cory-guitar The first reel I learned in Boston from our friend Paul Groff, musician, concertina repairman, teacher and botanist. The provenance of this tune is under debate, Imelda was apparently somehow related to Raymond Roland, an accordion player who lived in London. The second tune I learned (thanks to Paul) from an out-of-print recording of Paddy Carty and Connor Tully, the third I learned from an Irish Tradition record called The Corner House. 4) Barrell Raffertys/The Highlander Who Kissed His Granny/The First Day of Spring Ted Davis-guitar, Aaron Olwell-fiddle, Eliot Grasso-uilleann pipes This is one of our favorite Baltimore session sets, worked out between Eliot, myself, and our excellent friend and killer fiddler Jim Eagan. The first we learned from Billy McComiskey, Baltimores Godfather of Irish Music. It was apparently a favorite of Mike Raffertys father who was also a flute player. The second is a Donegal tune whose name makes it Even Better, the last we learned from a recent Tim Collins recording. 5) Wednesdays at the Hon/Mick Flahertys Eliot Grasso, Dan Isaacson, Aaron Olwell-flutes, Dave Cory-bodhran and guitar The first of these two is one that Eliot made up and is dedicated to a session Jim Eagan and I still play with Sean McComiskey in Baltimore, the second is one I learned from Billy McComiskey. 6) The Echo/Unknown Ted Davis-guitar, Dan Isaacson-flute, Aaron Olwell-fiddle A hornpipe I learned from a Tommy Peoples recording, followed by one I learned from Aaron who learned it from Kevin Griffin, legendary banjo player from Doolin. We were unable to track down its origins. This selection is dedicated to my fiance Kelly Smit who has been an angel of patience and help throughout every step of the process of making this record. Her doctors say shes recovering nicely. 7) The Project/The Flooded Road to Glenties Dave Cory-banjo, guitar Dave brings us a hop jig by our friend Patrick Murray (piper and pipesmaker in Boston) and a reel written by Jimmy McHugh who was a fiddler originally from Tyrone. He spent most of his life in Glasgow where he was a pillar of the traditional music scene. Mr. McHugh wrote this tune in the late 1980s, late at night next to his broken down car which said flooded road had done a number on. He passed away several years ago. 8) Barlow Knife/Micho Russells Dave Cory-banjo and guitar, Eliot Grasso, Dan Isaacson, Aaron Olwell-flutes, Ted Davis-flute and guitar. This quirky selection starts with an old-time American tune which we learned from the Foghorn String Band of Portland, OR (we play it wrong but the boys were nice enough not to say exactly that). The second was apparently a favorite of Micho Russell, whistle player and singer from Doolin. I learned it from the first Mary Bergin album. 9) Shiela Coyles/ Paul O'Shaughnessys/The Four Courts Johnny Connolly-accordion, Aaron Olwell-concertina, Eliot Grasso-uilleann pipes, Dave Cory-banjo, Ted

Davis-guitar, Dan Isaacson-flute Three traditional reels. The second I learned from our friend and fiddler Triona Tammenagi who learned it from legendary Dublin-based fiddler Paul O'Shoughnassy. 10) Banchoic Eireann o. Dan Isaacson-flute I learned this air from a Tommy Peoples recording. The original song probably dates back to the famine, I've been told the words are an unfortunately familiar description of the times. The title translates as The Fair Hills of Ireland. 11) Pike St. Market/ Bonaparte Crossing the Alps Eliot Grasso, Dan Isaacson, Aaron Olwell-flutes, Dave Cory-guitar A march that Eliot made up, named after the famous Seattle landmark. The second tune is an old march that I learned from the playing of the late PJ Hayes, celebrated Clare fiddler and leader of the equally celebrated Tulla Ceili Band. 12) Hardiman the Fiddler/The Whinny Hills of Leitrim/The Humours of Whiskey Johnny Connolly-accordion, Dave Cory-guitar Three popular slip jigs. 13) Colonel Rodgers Favorite/The Happy Days of Youth/Unknown Aaron Olwell-fiddle, Dan Isaacson-flute, Ted Davis-guitar The first two of these tunes are commonly referred to as McKennas after John McKenna, flute player and fireman from Leitrim who recorded them in 1934 with the titles listed above. I was unable to unearth a name for the third tune, I learned it from our friend Helena Delaney in Boston. 14) The Spike Island Lasses/The Bunch of Green Rushes/The Commodore Ted Davis-guitar, Dave Cory-banjo, Aaron Olwell-fiddle, Eliot Grasso-uilleann pipes, Dan Isaacson-flute This set is dedicated to Billy McComiskey, local hero of the Baltimore Irish music scene. The first two tunes are traditional and we put them together because Billy does. The last tune is one that our illustrious professor co-made-up with fiddler Brendan Mulvihill back when they were causing more trouble together than they currently do. This is a recording which is most easily listened to. The music is full of lift and concentrates on the melody and thus focuses the ear to enjoy the central melody of each tune. The Magic Square is a breath of fresh air. Maith iad! Well done! Marcas Murch Raidio na Gaeltachta, RTE, Ireland ----- Produced by Dan Isaacson and Eric Merrill Engineered by Mike Kelly, East Side Studios Portland, OR, March 2006 and by Eric Merrill, Wellspring Studios Acton, MA August 2006. Mixed by Eric Merrill, Mastering by Dave Nchodsky, Invisible Sound Studios, Baltimore MD copyright 2007 Yah!Mule!Records, Manufactured by Merkin Records, Baltimore, MD Website (themagicsquare.com) by Kelly Smit, Dan Landau and Chris Undi. Photography by Nathan Labunski (Portland, OR - nathanlabunski.com) and Kelly Smit (Baltimore, MD) Aaron plays a flute he made and an E-flat flute by Bryan Byrne, Eliot plays a D flute by Patrick Olwell and an E-flat flute by Eamon Cotter, his uilleann pipes were made by Kirk Lynch, reeds by Benedict Kohler. Dan plays

Bryan Byrne flutes in D and E-flat, C flute by Patrick Olwell (headjoint by Aaron) and B-flat whistle by John Sindt.. Dave plays a Silver Bell banjo from the 1920s. Thanks first and foremost to The Band, Dave Cory, Ted Davis, Eliot Grasso and Aaron Olwell, my friends and compatriots, partners in crime and co-conspirators; Gentlemen, (Heres) To Evil! Extra thanks to Johnny Connolly for lending his own special brand of class to this project. Family Style Thanks to Eric Merrill whose studio skills, impeccable ear and good taste really made this record what it is. Mike Kelly at East Side Studios (Portland) was very kind to us, and Dave Nchodsky at Invisible Sound Studios is one of my own personal heroes. I owe a huge debt to John Williams, Myron Bretholz, Joannie Madden, Kathleen Boyle, Jerry Holland, Billy McComiskey, Brendan McHugh and Paul Groff who helped me track down tune names, authors, and stories. Thanks to Sara Cory for the album title and to Chris Undi for graphic design. Thanks also to: all the people who have taught us so much music over the years, Our Boston Friends (far too numerous to list here), Our Baltimore Friends, especially Billy and Sean McComiskey and Jim Eagan, not to mention all our session companions; Our Portland Friends, Cary Novotny and Johnny and Especially Dan Landau for the best kind of friendship, tour-guide skills, web-savvy and tacos. Our Nelson County Friends Rowena Olwell for all of her hospitality over the year, and Patrick Olwell for everything hes done for flute players and the music. Endless Thanks to Marcas OMurchu at RTE for the kind words and the airplay he gives us. Please tip your bartender! Please! Especially at The Moon and Sixpence (Portland) and at The Druid and Matt Murphys (Boston). Joseph Dr. FeelGood Byrne is the Patron Saint of Irish music in Baltimore and his pub (J. Patricks) is arguably one of the most wonderful places in the world. Thanks to Bill, Jason, Derek, Sammy, Jeff and Russ at Doughertys (Baltimore) and to Lisa Tough Crowd, (wheedlywheedly) Bryan (BRYAAN! AWESOOME!), Brandon, Esti, Tim, Kate and everyone else who has ever had to clean up after us at Bar Hon in Scenic Hampden (Baltimore). Thanks also to Denise Whiting for giving us a gig. Last but Never Least; blinding, unfathomable thanks are due to Kelly Smit whose sharp eyes and ears, optimism and trouble-melting smile were nothing short of a holy miracle of help to me while this project turned into a strange and unruly houseguest. Notes by Dan Isaacson, edited (surprise!) by Kelly Smit.

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