

Mp3 The Gnomes - To The Dance Floor



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Celtic and World Music to move and groove to. 10 MP3 Songs WORLD: Celtic, FOLK: Modern Folk
Details: From MOTIF MAGAZINE August 2-15, 2006 (motifmagazine.net) In The Groove Gnomes come up big with first CD By: Don DiMuccio There is little more satisfying to a musician, painter, or any true lover of the arts than to see master craftsmen celebrating their skills. For those of us willing to listen, the experience can be humbling in its sense of joy and learning. Recent memory precludes me from recalling a more graphic example of such a full musical expression than the new CD To The Dance Floor by a group with the unlikely name The Gnomes. With a designate like that, I was half-expecting garage-destined punk rockers perhaps a testament to how myopic I've become. However, what I found were five seasoned musicians pouring the collective essence of their very souls into beautifully arranged instrumentals, most with a distinct Celtic flair. The band clearly dips into a well of life experience to cull such convincing performances of Scandinavian, Eastern European, and general World Music. The Gnomes are made up of Irish-born Phil Edmonds on button accordion and whistles, acclaimed violinist Cathy Clasper-Torch, percussionist Ron Schmitt, staple on the New England scene bassist Peter Breen, and producer/musician extraordinaire Otis Read on guitar. Though these musicians regularly turn up on projects with Joyce Katzberg, Atwater-Donnelly, and other regional regulars, To The Dance Floor serves as the assembled lineup's first recorded project. Though many of the traditional songs herein contain instantly recognizable classic melodies, it's the original compositions by Phil Edmonds that spotlight the proficiency of this unusually gratifying group. The title track is, as described on the CD's liner notes, a fusion of Irish and Cape Verdean-influenced music. Moreover, it's a catchy number that astutely utilizes some superb percussion work by Schmitt. Another highlight is For Those No Longer With Us, a moving albeit uplifting musical homage, paying tribute to the loved ones lost over the years with much grace and

reverence. One of the unexpected gems on this disc came in the form Roy Rogers Comes To Killaloe a bit of comedic relief which accomplishes the almost-impossible task of fusing Celtic with Cowboy. Inspired by a trip to Ireland by Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, a young Phil Edmonds was transfixed by the couple's roping and bullet catching tricks, and years later said inspiration makes for great music. And therein lies the greatest strength of The Gnomes and all those who toil to the same end as they. Pulling memories, inspiration, life events, and deep emotion into song is why Stradivari made violins, Les Paul makes guitars, and God made music. To The Dance Floor is an instrumental celebration to which all music lovers are invited. -Don DiMuccio

The Gnomes play an energetic blend of Celtic and World Music featuring Cathy Clasper Torch, Phil Edmonds, Otis Read, Peter Breen, and Ron Schmitt. All the band members have performed and recorded with several Rhode Island ensembles over the years and are well-known throughout the region. Instrumentation includes: fiddle, whistle, accordion, guitar, bass, percussion, vocals. . Their music features a wide range of styles - Celtic, Scandinavian, eastern European, and original. Cathy Clasper Torch has been 'fiddling around' since she was 10, playing violin, piano, and later, the Chinese erhu. With a background in classical violin and jazz piano, she brings a spirit of improvisation and love of harmony to her fiddling. She teaches piano and violin with the Wheeler Conservatory in Providence. Besides The Gnomes she currently performs with the Atwater Donnelly Trio, the Red-Tide Ramblers, and Joyce Katzberg the Katz' Meow. Phil Edmonds, a native of Killaloe, Co. Clare, Ireland, learned to play the tin whistle in a place where he says, "The backyard was the fields." When he was 14 years old, Phil, along with his family, emigrated to America and settled in South Providence, where he still lives. Phil presently plays whistles and button accordion in several Rhode Island ensembles including The Providence Wholebellies, Killaloe, and Joyce Katzberg The Katz' Meow, He also performs with Triple-Decker which is a narrative by Marc Levitt accompanied by musicians from six different countries. Otis Read is the musician who conceived and produced The New England Christmastide recordings, and as a behind the scenes producer of different local music projects. In the late 90s. Otis lived in Umbria, Italy where he performed extensively and concentrated on writing music. He returned to Rhode Island in 2001 to produce a jazz Christmas CD for North Star Records, and has been performing in local clubs and coffee houses since. Otis, Phil, and Cathy recorded the acclaimed instrumental CD, Under The Arch , in 2003. Ron Schmitt has been a dance accompanist for Rhode Island College, Brown University and several other private studios in the Rhode Island and Boston areas since

1987. He has also composed, performed and recorded music for dance as well as for several bands of varying style including jazz, world music, and rock. Rons style of percussion is world beat. Peter Breen began his musical career at age four as a Suzuki violinist. Moving to guitar at age twelve and then to bass at age fifteen, Peter studied the music of the Beatles and Bob Marley and has since enjoyed a stellar career both here and in the Caribbean. The Gnomes To The Dance Floor Review by Arthur Ketchen, Celtic Beat Magazine. There are some works of art and music that just stand out, not by their ability to sensationalize, or to excite, but merely on a masterful and unique vision conveyed with superb craftsmanship. The Gnomes(formerly the Lucky Band) release To The Dance Floor is one such example. Here is a love of the music as music. Whether playing to an audience or by themselves what the members of The Gnomes do is way above and beyond the call of just good music. To The Dance Floor is for starters the Gnomic meld of Celtic(Irish, Highland Scots), Scandinavian(Finnish particularly), Eastern European and Latino styles and traditions,but that is just the beginning. The music here is by turns gentle, ecstatic, sad and elegaic, and always intriguing. The Gnomes don't need sturm and drang to draw you in, they just draw you in by the beauty of what they do. Their intensity is not that of screaming guitars, it is far more powerful. A big part of this is the work as a composer that Phil Edmonds does, he is both equally at home in the Cape Verdean-Latino music around him in Rhode Island and southern Massachusetts and in the Irish tradition he grew up in. The title cut "To The Dance Floor" is an outstanding case in point. As is his counterpoint to the Celtic Tiger-"The Celtic Lamb." If anyone can make a poetic statement with music, and one that is at times gentle and subtle and still will get to you, it is Phil. Add the excellence of the instrumentalists here: Besides Phil on accordion and flute and whistle, here are the virtouso skills of fiddler Cathy Clasper Torch, guitarist Otis Read, bassist Peter Breen, and percussionist Ron Schmitt. There is not a tune here that you do not feel like playing again after you've heard it. There is something here that covers human thought and emotion in every walk of life. From "Kilda's March" /"Kilda's Wedding"/"Tam Lin"/Rolling In The Rye Grass" by turns happy and jaunty, then dour, to Phil' Edmond's elegaic remembrance "For Those No Longer With Us" this music will catch you up in it's mood, or intensify the one you already have. I first saw The Gnomes at Bright Night Providence 2006. I realized then that on whatever level of musical universe a new threshold had been crossed whether the whole world knew it or not. And this CD just confirms that I was right. -AK CD liner notes: TO THE DANCE FLOOR TWO FINNISH TUNES - These traditional tunes were given to us by violinist Michelle Levy

GOTTA DANCE --There is so much joy, freedom, and community in dancing. This tune has an eastern European flavor to it. ST. RUTHS REEL (traditional) - Otis found this reel from a book of Irish tunes compiled by Steve Kaufman. THE EVERYDAY REEL - Phil wrote this tune to remind people (and himself) to notice the beauty around us in our daily lives: when we look at the sky, a tree, a flower, a person, to really look and enjoy them. TO THE DANCE FLOOR This original tune by Phil is a fusion of Irish and Cape Verdean-influenced music. We invite you feel the rhythms and to dance in your own way. You can see that The Gnomes are adding more world music to its Celtic repertoire. CANTARES de MI TIERRA (traditional) - This lovely Mexican waltz was first introduced to us by our friend Isabel Barten, who found it in Peter Barnes wonderful collection of "A Little Couple-Dancemusik. A FINNISH FLING - this is a traditional Finnish tune which we changed quite a bit and also added parts. Ron really loves this one. Here, he has room to showcase his percussion skills. THE CELTIC LAMB -- The Celtic Tiger is the term referring to the system of economics and way of life in Ireland for the past several years. While it has resulted in much wealth for many people (not all), the Celtic Tiger is devouring Irish culture. Wherever money and material possessions become a priority, the quality of life decreases. Phil wrote this air, The Celtic Lamb, hoping that Ireland, and all of us, will move towards a more sustainable and gentler lifestyle. DUNKELD HERMITAGE/ROSCOMMON HUNT (traditional) Two more tunes from Steve Kaufmans compilation that Otis brought to The Gnomes. ROY ROGERS COMES TO KILLALOE Phil composed Roy Rogers Comes To Killaloe to memorialize the time when the cowboy Roy Rogers came to his hometown of Killaloe when Phil was a young lad. The show included rope tricks, "shooting" out candles, and Dale Evans "catching" bullets in her teeth. As Phil says, it was the most exciting thing to happen in town up until then...or since! FJALLNAS (traditional) - Cathy brought this one to the band. This lively Scandinavian tune accompanies a couple-dance called the Hambo. We thank Peter Barnes for this rendition. MANGO TANGO On most Friday evenings you can come hear a few of us from The Gnomes perform at India restaurant in Warren, RI. Sometimes the full band performs upstairs at Nirvana Lounge which has a dance floor. Youve got to try their mango ice-cream!! FOR THOSE NO LONGER WITH US -- Phil composed this tune, not as a sad tune, but as one to remember the lives of our loved ones who are no longer with us. THE TWO KILDAS (traditional) - Cathy learned these two Hebridean tunes ("Kilda's March" and "Kilda's Wedding") from a folk CD she found in the St. Andrew's Public Library in Scotland. TAM LINS/ROLLING IN THE RYE are traditional Irish tunes we play in our own style.

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