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## Live shows, some Irish tunes and more

This week's Sound Check features a live show from Dinosaur Jr. filmed at a formerly familiar location for yours truly.

A career-spanning collection from Clannad, a thirty-fourth anniversary DVD from Athens party-masters The B-52s and a compilation of songs that influenced pioneering punk godfathers The Ramones wrap up this St. Paddy's edition.

### **'Live at the 9:30 Club: In the Hands of The Fans,' Dinosaur Jr. (MVDvisual, HHH1/2)**

This Feb. 21 DVD/Blu-ray release presents Dinosaur Jr. performing their 1988 "Bug" album live for a packed house at Washington, D.C.'s popular 9:30 Club in June 2011. Six fans (Jeriamy Vann, Edwin Samuelson, Strider Jordan, Greg Dalton-Kay, Matt Moffatt and Nate Rhodes) were the primary camera operators for producers Dave Markey and Devin Dehaven.

Band members guitarist/vocalist J. Mascis, bassist Lou Barlow and drummer Murph played very well with JM's vocals intentionally lower than guitar level, revealing extremely tight guitar/bass/drum stuff with impressive guitar work. Highlights other than that include guest vocalist Jeremy (maybe the camera guy) on the last song. He's more audible than JM, maybe because he was away from the guitar amps. After the "Bug" songs, they took requests.

The bonus interview with Henry Rollins, which took place right before the show, explains a lot about the band's sound then and now. Dinosaur Jr. fans and curiosity seekers will enjoy this fine feature.

### **'The Essential Clannad,' Clannad (RCA/Legacy Records, HHH)**

This two-CD March 6 release is a great pre-St. Patrick's Day introduction to an Irish band that I'd never heard from thus far. There are movie songs, duets and a guest vocal by former Journey man Steve Perry.

I enjoy Celtic/Irish music as much as anyone else, but this one may be more of a mood-music piece for most folks. Charter members Pdraig and Noel Duggan were fans of the harmonies of the Beach Boys and Mamas & Papas, as were their relatives the singing/songwriting Brennan siblings (Moya, crystalline lead vocals and harp; Ciaran, piano, guitar and bass; and Pol, tin whistles and flutes).

Highlights from disc one include the atmospheric duet with Bono, "In a Lifetime," the '80s-ish "Almost Seems (Too Late to Turn)," the beautiful harmonies throughout and the percussion-powered "Let Me See."

Disc two's top tunes include unpronounceable (for me) titles, such as "Ri na Cruinne," the Druid-sounding "Caislean Oir" and the tuneful "Newgrange."

In other words, I don't really get it; but fans of lavishly-produced Celtic music will love this one.

### **'With The Wild Crowd-Live In Athens, Ga,' The B-52s (Eagle Rock Entertainment, HHHHH)**

This March 20 DVD/Blu-ray is the visual version of the CD I enjoyed so much last year. It was filmed and recorded February 2011 at Athens' Classic Center to celebrate the 34th anniversary of the "World's Greatest Party Band."

It's extremely entertaining; with classics, such as "Rock Lobster," "Private Idaho," "Mesopotamia," "Roam," "Love in the Year 3000" and the immortal "Love Shack;" plus a whole lot more.

All the elements that make The B-52s so unique are present: the surf-flavored guitar of Keith Strickland, the constantly pumping drums of Sterling Campbell, the unique vocal blend of Kate Pierson and Cindy Wilson, the energetic emceeing of Fred Schneider, the dance-driven bass of

Tracy Wormworth and the important additions from keyboard/guitarist Paul Gordon. The bonus interview with the original four members explains a lot about their history, unique composing process and career.

**'Deep Roots Of The Ramones,' Various Artists (Sireena Records, HHHH)**

This CD came along with the Dinosaur Jr. DVD and was recently released by Sireena as a way of drawing attention to the often-overlooked influences of what most agree is the first punk rock band, The Ramones. Even the average listener is familiar with some of the rockabilly (Carl Perkins, Roy Orbison), surf guitar (Link Wray), garage band (The Troggs, MC5) and NYC proto-punk (New York Dolls, Johnny Thunders & The Heartbreakers) bands that appear on this wide-ranging collection.

Highlights include the Flamin' Groovies classic "Shake Some Action," Wray's rowdy "Rawhide," Jack Scott's "The Way I Walk," The Stooges' "I Got a Right," and other tunes.

This is a good one for fans curious about where Johnny, Joey, Dee Dee and Tommy (who appears on the cover along with his replacement, Marky) drew inspiration from.

Ricky Flake, a former punk rocker and current music fan, lives in Biloxi.