

# Black 47 & CELTIC CRUSH

## Newsletter

ST. PATRICK'S DAY MESSAGE

On one day a year, they congregated outside St. Patrick's Cathedral off Prince Street in New York City and marched in celebration. To some of these immigrant Irish and their American born children it was a religious occasion, but to most the gathering was an affirmation of their right, not only to survive but to thrive in their adopted country. That's what I sense on St. Patrick's Day - an echo from a time when the Irish were despised outsiders. And that's why I go along with the raucous energy, the excitement and even the green beer, the plastic shamrocks and the ubiquitous leprechaun.

I didn't always feel that way. When I arrived from Ireland, these manifestations of Irish-America were at best embarrassing. Back home, our own celebrations were rigid and religious; we did sport actual sprigs of shamrock but there was no beer, green or otherwise on this gloomy church holiday. The Parade up Fifth Avenue and the ensuing bacchanal seemed downright pagan by comparison.

I had other immigrant battles of my own ahead. Black 47 was formed to create music that would reflect the complexity of immigrant and contemporary Irish-American life and to banish *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling* off to a well earned rest at the bottom of *Galway Bay*. This idea met with not a little resistance in the north Bronx and the south sides of Boston and Chicago; but when irate patrons would yell out in the middle of a reggae/reel "Why can't yez sing somethin' Irish?" I would return the compliment with, "I'm from Ireland, I wrote it! That makes it Irish!"

With time and familiarity, Irish-America came to accept and even treasure Black 47, probably more for our insistence that each generation bears responsibility for solving the political problems in the North of Ireland, than for recasting Danny Boy as a formidable gay construction worker. I, in turn, learned to appreciate the traditions of the community I had joined along with the reasons for the ritualized celebration of our patron saint. And now on St. Patrick's Day, no matter what stage I'm on, mixed in with the swirl of guitars, horns, pipes and drums, I hear an old, but jarring, memory of a people rejoicing as they rose up from their knees.

Our battles, for the most part, have been won; indeed, one has to search an encyclopedia for mention of the Know-Nothing Party or various 19th Century nativist politicians and gangs. Anti-Irish sentiment, not to mention Anti-Catholicism is a thing of the past. Might it not be time then that our New York St. Patrick's Day Parade broadens its parameters to celebrate all Irishness no matter what religion (or lack thereof), sexuality or political conviction? It's a broad step, I know. But with the makings of a just peace finally taking seed in the North of Ireland, might we not some day witness Peter Robinson, Martin McGuinness and various members of the Irish Gay community walk arm in arm up Fifth Avenue. Impossible? Times change and with them tactics and even treasured principles!

Whatever about Parade pipe dreams, we still must honor the memory of those who paved the way for us. Part of that responsibility is that Irish-Americans should never forget the new immigrants from other lands, legal and otherwise. Many, like our forebears, are fleeing tyranny and are striving to feed and educate their families. It would be the ultimate irony if an Irish-American were to look down upon the least of them; for, in my mind anyway, there is no place in the Irish soul for racism, sectarianism, homophobia or even dumb old Archie Bunker type xenophobia.

I once heard Pete Hamill ask: "What does the Pakistani taxi driver say to his children when he gets home after 12 hours behind the wheel?" I can't answer for certain but I'll bet he echoes many of the sentiments of those Irish who gathered outside St. Patrick's Cathedral so many immigrant tears and years ago.

**Black 47 will appear on The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon on March 17<sup>th</sup>, and on VH1 at 10am with Nick Lachey on Morning Buzz. SiriusXM will broadcast the Black 47 St. Patrick's Day show live from BB's at 7:30pm on Ch. 28, The Spectrum.**

**Transport, written by Tom Keneally & Larry Kirwan, continues its run at The Irish Repertory Theatre in NYC until April 6<sup>th</sup>. Get your ticket now at [www.irishrep.org](http://www.irishrep.org)**

**All the best,**

## BLACK 47

**25th. and FINAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY SHOW IN NYC**

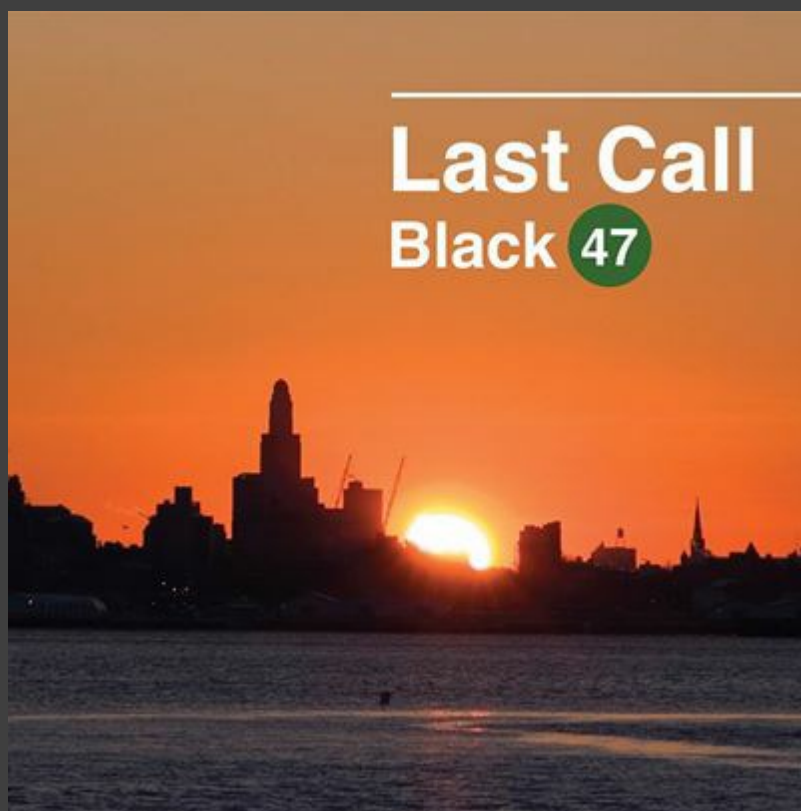
BB KING's, 42nd Street/Times Square

March 17th - Show 7pm, Doors 5pm (Right after the Parade)

Tickets on sale now at the club or <http://www.bbkingblues.com/bio.php?id=3374>

ALL AGES - BRING THE KIDS

"I'll love you forever on St. Patrick's Day"



LAST CALL is Black 47's final album. You can buy the CD or download the 13 tracks at [http://www.themelbook.com/black47/black47\\_index.cfm](http://www.themelbook.com/black47/black47_index.cfm) You may also find the lyrics, chord charts, stories, pictures of players and guests at [www.themelbook.com/lastcall/](http://www.themelbook.com/lastcall/) LAST CALL is on sale at all Black 47 gigs.

★★★★ On "Last Call," Black 47 serves a 200 proof cocktail made with a shot of funk and two fingers of Irish malarkey thrown in for good measure. Larry Kirwan saves the best for last, using roots, rock, and reggae to bring the final curtain down on the most influential Irish American band in history." Mike Farragher/Irish Voice

*All Black 47 CDs/DVDs/T-Shirts/Hoodies/and Larry Kirwan Books/CDs available  
[Black 47 Online Shop](#)*




Written by Thomas Keneally of Schindler's List fame, Transport tells the story of four Irish women deported to the Australian penal colonies in 1838. With an original score by Black 47's Larry Kirwan Transport reveals a forgotten, but vital, footnote of the Irish experience. At the Irish Rep, 132 W. 22nd St., NYC Wed-Sun until April 6.

For songs, action and commentary: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2jK96XOL2w>

Buy Tickets Now at <http://www.irishrep.org/> or call 212-727-2737

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## Upcoming Shows

March 17  
BB Kings  
New York, NY

March 21  
Bridge Street Live  
Collinsville, CT

March 22  
Shamrock Fest  
with Dropkick Murphys  
Washington DC

April 4  
Berlind Theatre  
Princeton University, NJ  
(Free Show! Call 609-258-2787 for reservations)

April 12  
Albertus Magnus High School  
Bardonia, NY

April 19  
Stage One  
Fairfield, CT

MAY 10  
Connolly's  
New York City

MAY 17  
TBA  
Wisconsin

MAY 24  
Blackthorn  
E. Durham, NY

MAY 25-26  
CHICAGO GAELIC PARK IRISH FEST

FOR FULL LIST OF SHOWS [www.black47.com](http://www.black47.com)

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## LARRY KIRWAN'S TRIP TO IRELAND 2014

This ramble is booking up fast!! Don't leave it too late!  
Nov. 18-23, Galway, Donegal, Derry, Belfast, Wexford Dublin  
For a brochure call Hammond Tours 866-486-8772 or email

[jwasserbach@hammondholidays.com](mailto:jwasserbach@hammondholidays.com)

Listen to Larry Kirwan host **Celtic Crush** on SiriusXM  
The Spectrum, Ch. 28, Saturdays 7-10amET, Tuesdays  
11pmET & ON DEMAND  
For full details [www.black47.com](http://www.black47.com).



*"In the dark and deadly days of Black '47"*



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