

People weekly

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Picks & Pans



Larry Kirwan (front and center) and his mates roar through Celtic-colored anthems.

Song

Trouble in the Land

Black 47 (Shanachie)

These Manhattan Irish-pub rockers are back with another cycle of front man Larry Kirwan's angry, mournful and hilarious drinking songs. Founded by Kirwan, former New York City cop Chris Byrne and a group of their fellow Irish expatriate

pals in 1989, the band has won a rabid and rowdy cult following with a hybrid sound that intertwines Celtic music (provided by Byrne's tin whistles and uilleann pipes) with a pounding punk-rock guitar attack. Kirwan, who writes plays and poetry when he's not strumming his guitar onstage, shouts his story songs over the mix. On tunes like "Bobby Kennedy," he offers listeners bits of Irish-American oral history. And on a ribald ditty about James Joyce, he sends up a nicely wrought bit of blarney.—S.D. **Bottom Line:** Sing along, drink along and be merry