

THE BEST CDS OF 2007

Scott Alarik

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Robert Plant and Alison Krauss, "Raising Sand" Bluegrass's best vocalist meets legendary Led Zeppelin singer. Their voices close-dance provocatively, like honey and whiskey, innocence and sin.

Trio Mediaeval, "Folk Songs" Singing folk songs of its native Norway, the classical vocal ensemble tenderly melds the raw beauty of tradition with the pristine precision of classical technique. The harmonies are both earthy and ethereal, full of chill Scandinavian darkness and the huddling warmth of a shared song.

Beoga, "Mischief" At once gentle and sly, this young quintet from County Antrim is as innovative as Celtic mavericks like Solas and Lunasa. Something about the tinkly interplay of piano and two concertinas, however, makes their revolution feel more like a wink than a wallop.

Martin Simpson, "Prodigal Son" It's not clear if Simpson intended to produce a study on the European roots of American music, but he did. One of England's finest guitarists, he moves from British ballad to juke-joint blues, Vermont lament to Appalachian banjo frolic, tracing the transatlantic veins beneath the skin of our music.

Uncle Earl, "Waterloo, Tennessee" It's hard to think of any ensemble, past or present, that so invisibly seams old and new, traditional and modern. Or has so much darn fun doing it.

Levon Helm, "Dirt Farmer" Who says trad can't boogie? Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Helm pays tribute to his Arkansas folk roots. Sinewy, snarling, pounding with furious ebullience, like Saturday night in a hard-times town.

Nerissa and Katryna Nields, "Sister Holler" Not since the McGarrigles have folk-rocking sisters aged so beautifully. They offer surefooted, oval melodies beneath lyrics full of eye-blinking imagery and mature, useful wisdom. Their harmonies have never been so hug-tight and celestial.

Tom Nelligan, Massachusetts - Dirty Linen Magazine: The Reel World

"My Top Ten 2007 releases, listed alphabetically."

Beoga - Mischief

One of the best young Irish bands I've heard in a long time, and I loved their Steely Dan cover.

Eilen Jewell - Letters from Sinners and Strangers

Her songwriting skills have finally caught up with her wonderful voice and classic American roots sound.

Lucy Kaplansky - Over the Hills

Mostly songs about a loving family, current and remembered, from one of my favorite American writers.

The Kennedys - Songs of the Open Road

An affectionate, harmonious tribute to classic folk and country rock of the 1960s through the 1990s.

Jez Lowe - Jack Common's Anthem

No British writer since Ewan McColl has told the stories of working people as well as Jez.

Robert Plant & Alison Krauss - Raising Sand

Who could have thought that such an unlikely collaboration would work out so well?

Poor Man's Fortune - In Good Time

A trio from Austin, Texas, that performs Irish, Scottish, and Breton music with a rich and highly melodic sound.

Martin Simpson - Prodigal Son

A splendid return to form for one of England's best acoustic guitarists.

Uncle Earl - Waterloo, Tennessee

Fun, lively neo-old-time mountain music from an all-female quartet.

Women In Docs - Red Wine and Postcards

Energetic folk/pop with catch choruses from two delightful Australians.

(And as a bonus disk, Annie Gallup's *Half of My Crime* would have been on my 2007 favorites list too except that it came out in 2006 and I was a little late. Like all of her work it's vivid, intelligent, complex, and downright sexy.)

THE IRISH AMERICAN NEWS

January '08

Well, we really like Beoga, and here comes the group with their second album. No, actually-- their first. Well, it IS the second, but, in a Zen way. It all depends. We'll explain.

The group is from Northern Ireland. Antrim. Quintet. Quartet. We'll explain. We reviewed and loved the group's first album *we knew about* last April. It is called *Mischief*, and we adored it. We also really enjoyed the group at Irish Fest in Milwaukee last August. Fun show. We played a lot of selections from the album on our weekly Public Radio program. Terrific and original arrangements, a great singer and fiddle player in Niamh Dunne. Unique sound in that there are two button box players, Sean Og' Graham and Damian McKee, joining Eamon Murray on bodhran and pianist, Liam Bradley. They were nominated by Irish Music Magazine for Newcomers of the Year. We agree. Driving, staccato rhythms are joined to unique arrangements and a fab take on the music itself. A lot of the arrangements show a real sense of humor, and there are subtle and nuanced timings and phrasing, aplenty. These guys and gal clearly go way beyond the typical, crank-'em-up and flog it pub groups who all sound alike. In many ways, this is highly sophisticated, musically.

So, here is the "new" album, which is not new. We'll explain. The group's first album was called, *Beoga*. First albums are usually self-titled in groups' determined bids to get noticed, at all. Key point here. Niamh Dunne was not with the group when they recorded the first album. So, here we are, doing the radio show, when partner Shay pulls out the album and plays a track. SCOOP! ANNOUNCEMENT!! Niamh Dunne has left the group! She is not on ANY of the cuts! She is not in the group picture! Why? Why would she leave? What happened? So, we proceed, after playing a wonderful track off the album, *Funk in Class* to inform the listener that she has gone! In Irish music, this is what passes for a major story, indeed! So, we proceed to ramble on and on about this. You know the bit. The inevitable and frequent turnover in Irish groups. The temporary nature of existence. Our relative position in the biosphere. That sort of thing. While playing the next tune, we were called by the redoubtable and bearded, Jack Baker of The Rampant Lion. For those of you who don't know, The Rampant Lion is in Villa Park, and has every Irish/Celtic album ever recorded in the history of humankind. "Oh, no," says Jack, "this is their *first* album, before Niamh joined them! Isn't it great?" We quickly hung up on him and began to ponder other questions of the Universe.

Here is the main ponder that now informs and mystifies our times in 21 st Century America. Compass Records is distributing this, *Beoga's* first album. The one we are discussing now. Compass is the 900- pound gorilla in Irish music now. No question. Huge. HUGE! So, why would this label choose to distribute a "new" album that does not have all the current group members on it, and thereby confusing the fans? Hmm? We don't know. Seems odd. Seems like a mistake. But Garry West and Compass are not known for making many mistakes. But, let's face it, this *is* odd. Would you do it? At the end of the discussion, after Jack Baker's call, Shay and I decided it is all a rent in the fabric of an ever-changing state of being. We knowingly winked at each other, without knowing what it was we were winking about. The matter was settled. An odd mistake.

What is NOT a mistake is this album. Because there is no Niamh and there are no vocals, a very different side of the group is presented. All of it is filled with a marvelous energy. At least one person in this group really, really knows his music. This is the freshest take on the tradition in 2007. It is a wonderful, wonderful album. If you insist on us making one small suggestion, it would be that some of the tunes change so often, or take off in new directions that it can become distracting. Mind you, we love it. But, there are also straight-ahead tunes with no frills. However, to be fair, that is not *Beoga's* thing. They seek to be different, and they are. Not in a cheap or easy way. They are different because they have their own unique gig going. Oh, they have surely been influenced by the likes of The David Munnely Band and Flook, but this is their own thing. And, it is all theirs. No one else sounds like this. BTW, they also can play a beautiful air, always the sign of a great group.

Since *Beoga* also gives an entertaining live show, their success and longevity is assured. Compass' decision to release and market this album is "interesting". But, far more importantly, this group is interesting. Energy, drive, intelligent creativity, wit and real musicianship. All in one group. At the end of it all, we guess the harmonious and efficacious thing is to do is simply thank Compass for making more *Beoga* available. No matter when they were recorded.

RELEASES OF THE YEAR

88.7 FM-Spindale 100.3 FM-Charlotte 97.3 FM-Greenville 92.9 FM-Boone
WNCW is a broadcast service of Isothermal Community College
P.O. Box 804, Spindale, NC 28160

Scroll down for the lists of your favorite regional, bluegrass, reggae, celtic and blues releases of the year.

CELTIC

Rank CD

- 1 Gaelic Storm- Bring Yer Wellies
- 2 Enter the Haggis- Northampton
- 3 Loreena McKennitt- Nights From the Alhambra
- 4 Battlefield Band- Dookin'
- 5 Old Blind Dogs- Four on the Floor
- 6 The Tannahill Weavers- Live & In Session
- 7 Burning Bridget Cleary- Catharsis
- 8 Butch Baldassari & John Mock- Music of O'Carolan
- 9 Beoga- Mischief**
- 10 Cady Finlayson- Irish Coffee
- 11 Athena Fergis- A Letter Home
- 12 Robin Bullock- Rosewood Castle
- 13 Paddywhack- Live at the Vault
- 14 Smithfield Fair- 20420
- 15 Eamonn Coyne & Kris Drever- Honk Toot Suite
- 16 The Muses- Live! 2007
- 17 Robin Laing- One For the Road
- 18 Hugh Morrison- Under a Texas Skye
- 19 Various: Celebration: 25 Years of the Charlotte Folk Society
- 20 Martin Simpson- Prodigal Son

Awards received by Beoga in 2007

Live Ireland Music Awards 2008: Instrumental Cut of the Year

German Music Awards: 3rd place in folk category

Irish Echo Top Ten: No 4 (Earle Hitchner)

Boston Globe Best cd's of 2007

Folk Alley: Best of 2007

WVIA-FM 'Mixed Bag': Best of 2007 Albums (selected by George Graham)

Philadelphia City Paper: Top 10 Roots Albums of 2007 (selected by Mary Armstrong)

WNCW FM: Top 10 Celtic Albums of 2007

Dirty Linen Magazine: Top 10 2007 releases (selected by Tom Nelligan)

Hot Press Magazine: Top Albums of 2007

Live Ireland Music Awards 2008

Instrumental Cut of the Year : Beoga – Jazzy Wilbur

Beoga's, *Mischief* was one of our favorite albums of the year, and was a major contender for Vocal/Instrumental Album of the Year. One of the tunes that made us fans forever is a particular bit of brill called, *Jazzy Wilbur*. Brilliantly arranged and played, it shows this multi-talented group at its best. Real energy---plus a refreshing and much needed thing in trad music, a sense of humor. The first time we heard, *Jazzy Wilbur*, we laughed out loud. Very, very special. We are fans of Beoga—big time. *Jazzy Wilbur* is just one reason---and there are several more, including a great singer, Niamh Dunne (also fab on fiddle) this group is going to be around and really successful a long, long time. Wonderful pieces of music like *Jazzy Wilbur* are a big part of the reason why. There could have been about six other tunes of theirs that would have won this Award—all perfect—and, all different. We had to pick one. We listened to *Jazzy Wilbur* the most. Reason enough!!

Philadelphia Citypaper Top 10 Roots of 2007

Mary Armstrong picks the year's best roots albums

7. Beoga *Mischief*

(Compass) All the usual suspects are here — accordion, fiddle, bodhran, various guitar-y things laid on traditional Irish tunes — but if you're looking for tunes for your trad dance class, forget it. For those with broad tastes, this rhythm-oriented contemporary reworking of heritage is unbeatable.

Irish Echo Top 10 Albums of 2007

Launched as a quartet of Antrim and Derry instrumentalists after a night of music at Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann in 2002, Beoga defied custom for a non-ceili band by featuring two button accordionists: Damian McKee and Sean Og Graham. With Liam Bradley on keyboards and Eamon Murray on percussion, Beoga (Irish for "lively") released their debut album, "A Lovely Madness," in 2004 and immediately established themselves as a group second only to Lunasa for all-instrumental inventiveness and dexterity combined. The quartet became a quintet when Niamh Dunne (daughter of Limerick uilleann piper Mickey Dunne) came on board, and "Mischief," the band's second album, retains the earlier instrumental boldness but adds something more: superb singing and fiddling from Dunne. Her renditions of "Dirty Work" and "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone," as different as two songs can get, stand out equally. "Mischief" catapults Beoga into the upper stratum of trad bands from Ireland today

[Published on January 23, 2008, in the IRISH ECHO newspaper, New York City. Copyright (c) Earle Hitchner. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of author.]

The Boston Globe: Best cds of 2007

Mischief: "...this young quintet from County Antrim is as innovative as Celtic mavericks like Solas and Lunasa."

Scott Alarik

Folk Alley Best of 2007

A quirky, odd, and completely original Celtic band that sounds like no other group in Irish music.

Jim Blum, Folk Alley

Where has this group been hiding? County Antrim in Ireland, apparently. They've toured Germany with Solas, and they now have an American release on Compass (and you know how picky CEO Alison Brown is). Beoga does not eat at ordinary Irish restaurants with apologies to the potato. Sean Og Graham and Damian McKee add spice with dual accordions, and guests surprise with a touch of hot sauce in the form of trumpet or flugelhorn - just enough to add flavor without overwhelming you. Fiddler and singer Niamh Dunne has joined them, recreating "Factory Girl" and surprising us with Steely Dan's "Dirty Work." Four-time all-Ireland bodhran champ Eamon Murray and pianist Liam Bradley round out the group. This is how Irish music should taste!

June 2007

Earle Hitchner, The Irish Echo

"...a heady, virtually head-spinning sonic blend stamping Beoga as perhaps the most audacious Irish band rooted in trad today. For finesse, fire, and flirtatious fun, this album is an overflowing treat, and among Irish bands launched in this new millennium, Beoga joins Grada as two of the most promising to watch."

Read the full review [here](#)

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May 2007

Cindy Reich, The Celtic Connection (Colorado)

When Beoga released their first album "A Lovely Madness" in 2002, it became my favorite album of the year. It was quirky, innovative and darn good fun! Additionally, this Antrim based band are all extremely talented musicians. Beoga are now back with "Mischief" and I'm delighted to say that this new release is as good as, and dare I say it--even better than the first.

The title track lives up to its name with its fast paced pair of tunes penned by button accordion player Damien McKee. This is one of the great attractions of this new CD--the amount of great new original tunes penned by the band.

"Mischief" is followed up with a jazzy little set called "Kick'n the Box" which is made up of "Luka's wake/Kick'n the box". Lest fans of Luka Bloom become unduly worried, the Luka in question was fiddle player Niamh Dunne's pet mouse. The saxophone work by David Howell is superb as is the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra which joins Beoga on several tunes. In fact, this cut is one of the standout tracks of the album and a good example of what makes this band so amazing. Beoga's innovative use of outside elements such as the Prague Philharmonic or sax or flugelhorn could be a disaster in the wrong hands. However, Beoga are dead to rights in their musical taste and usage and as a result have produced a sound that is unique, addictive and unbelievably fun. This doesn't mean they can't do the trad thing as well. A good example is "Ryan's Air"--which although you might be confused to find is in fact a jig--is dedicated to a "certain" airline which smashed Sean Og Graham's guitar.

Songs abound on this release and reflect the eclectic taste of the band with the American ballad "The Factory Girl", Steely Dan's "Dirty Work" and a gorgeous song by Johnny Duhan (best known for his song "The Voyage") called "A Delicate Thing". In a recent trend seen by Kris Drever and North Cregg, songs from the 1920's are coming back in vogue and Beoga have included a ragtime version of "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone" in this collection.

The majority of tunes on this release are all originals penned by various members of the band. For musicians seeking out the very latest and best of new material--give a listen to "Cu Chullain's Despair", "Trolleyed", "Jazzy Wilbur" or "Mickey The Pipes".

The whole thing winds up with the lovely, soft "Another Journey" composed by Sean Og and dedicated to all good friends and musicians he has met along the way. "Mischief" is well on the way to being my favorite album for 2007. It could be yours as well. Check it out at:

www.beogamusic.com

Copyright © 2007 Bill Cindy Reich, The Celtic Connection

April 2007

Bill Margeson: The Chicago Irish-American News / Live Ireland.com

Beoga is from Northern Ireland (Antrim) and is a stunning band. They are going to be at Irish Fest this summer, and we cannot wait. The album is entitled, *Mischief*. The group is Liam Bradley on piano, Niamh Dunne on vocals and fiddle, Eamon Murray on bodhran, Darrian McKee on button box and Sean 'Og Graham on button box, guitar, bouzouki and mandolin. We have been playing them regularly on the radio show since they sent us this new album. It is one of the best this year. Super vocals, a terrific staccato beat to the rhythm with a real sense of style and wit. This is a major, major band to be reckoned with. On several occasions during the early listens, we actually found ourselves laughing out loud to some of the musical inventiveness on tunes such as Jazzy Wilbur and songs like Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone. Emotional resonance in songs like Love is a Delicate Thing meets surprises like the inclusion of the old Steely Dan favorite, Dirty Work. Power and nuance, humor, talent aplenty. Get ready for a long run for Beoga. We love this group and we love this self-produced and distributed album. Rating Four Harps

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April 2007

Irish Music Magazine

In Beoga the Irish music world gained another prodigy, a term not lightly used nor given without credit... the band whose debut album carried the torch for experimentalists don't look as if they are going to stop there. *Mischief* is definitely a coming of age... the miracle-dust must have been sprinkled by the bucketful during recording with the finished article already emerging as a contender for album of the year. The twelve tracks (*Mischief*, *Kick'n The Box*, *Factory Girl*, *Jazzy Wilbur*, *Ryan's Air*, *Dirty Work*, *Trolleyed*, *A Delicate Thing*, *Mickey The Pipes*, *Please Don't Talk*, *Cu Chullain's Despair* and *Another Journey*) are a homage to the talented five-piece. Hard work and smart moves are the order of the day for soon to be supergroup Beoga...

From Irish Music Magazine, Read the full article here...

Eddie Creaney, Copyright © 2007 Irish Music Magazine

April 2007

Living Tradition

On their second CD, Beoga have added singer and fiddler Niamh Dunne to the original line-up of box-players Sean Og Graham and Damian McKee, bodhránist Eamon Murray and keyboards-player Liam Bradley. Niamh delivers four songs here, all loosely modern, ranging from the traditional American *Factory Girl* to the Steely Dan polemic *Dirty Work*. She has a fine voice which suits some songs better than others. I particularly liked *Please Don't Talk About Me*, a wry 1920s ditty played in period style.

Mischief extends the prodigious range of Beoga's debut album to include jazz and classical tracks. *Jazzy Wilbur* is just what it says, and *Mickey The Pipes* pays homage to the likes of Shaun Davey and Bill Whelan. For some reason *Kick'n the Box* reminds me of '70s TV theme tunes with its collage of classical, big band and soul. This might seem a lot of styles on a single album, let alone a single track: you should know that the guest musicians on *Mischief* include most of an orchestra, a jazz band and a rock combo.

All of this leaves little room for Irish music, but the boys (and Niamh, a fine feisty fiddler) still squeeze in plenty of reels and jigs. *The Narrowback*, *The Trip to Cullenstown* and various Beoga compositions strike just the right balance between tradness and madness, that space of genius occupied by Reeltime, North Cregg, Nomos, Davy Spillane, Gordon Duncan and others. The title track is on solid Irish ground, as are *Ryan's Air* and *Another Journey*. But Beoga are quick to find fresh pastures: *Dippers Dilemma* is not the only tune here to blend a bit of Balkan with the Irish, and *The Slip-On Gang* lurches from Quebecois to Oompah to Cuba on its merry way. They could as well have called this CD *More Lovely Madness*: glorious, multi-hued mayhem mixed with genius, available from www.beogamusic.com and, if you're lucky, at a venue near you.

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February 2007

Hot Press Mischief - NINE POINT FIVE/TEN

A lovely madness, the 2004 debut from County Antrim's Beoga, is still one of my favourite trad recordings of all time. With top class musicianship, great taste in material and a wonderful ebullience that comes through loud and clear even within the confines of a studio, the band really only lacked one thing, and that was a singer. Well, now they've got one. Hailing from County Limerick, Niamh Dunne has a beautifully warm, smoky voice that wraps itself snugly around everything from the upbeat 1920's ditty 'Please don't talk about me when I'm gone', to a spine-tingling cover of Steely Dan's 'Dirty Work', with lovely harmonies from Liam Bradley and Eamon Murray. She's also a classically trained violinist whose smooth fiddling is the perfect addition to the existing four-piece lineup of accordion, percussion, keyboards and assorted strings. Instrumental numbers include bouncy original tunes from most of the members, in glorious arrangements featuring guest appearances on several tracks from the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, no less.

Copyright © 2007 Sarah McQuaid, Hot Press

February 2007

The Irish Times

BEOGA Mischief ****

Beoga follow up their blistering 2004 debut, *A Lovely Madness*, with an even more high-spirited collection. Duelling accordions still define the band's identity, but they're augmented by newcomer Niamh Dunne's fiddle and vocals, and by the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, no less. A swathe of their own tunes pepper the set list, and Cú Chullain's *Despair* captures the effervescence of the band in full, unadulterated swing. The orchestral touches lend more novelty than creative impetus to the band's sound, though. Beoga's bold forays into Americana (*Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone*) and 1970s jazz/rock (*Steely Dan's Dirty Work*) whisper at a quintet who relish wide vistas. Less flamboyance in the arrangements might serve them well in the long run, but such kite-flying celebration is a rare thing of beauty.

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Beoga's Musical 'Mischief'

Singer Niamh Dunne Extends Band's Appeal

CEOL By Earle Hitchner [Published on June 20, 2007, in the IRISH ECHO newspaper, New York City. Copyright (c) Earle Hitchner. All rights reserved.]

The spirit of Limerick-born Mick Moloney's "McNally's Row of Flats" album last year may have seeped into the singing of another Limerick native, Niamh Dunne, in her rendition of "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone" on the new CD "Mischief" by Beoga. Although the track description places the song in the 1920s and credits its composition to Sidney Clare and Sam H. Stept, it was actually composed in 1930 by Clare, Stept, and Bee Palmer. Dubbed the Shimmy Queen for the risqué way she moved on stage, former Ziegfeld Girl Beatrice "Bee" Palmer was the first to perform the song. Steeped in vaudeville, late flapper fun, and the "red hot jazz" of the time, the song has since been covered by Gene Austin, Ethel Waters, Eubie Blake, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Billie Holiday, Kate Smith, Johnnie Ray, Sammy Davis Jr., and Willie Nelson, among others.

Backed with speakeasy charm by her four Beoga bandmates, along with clarinet and muted trumpet from guests David Howell and Linley Hamilton, Dunne brings a saucy, soubrette style to such lines as "Please don't talk about me when I'm gone / Though our friendship ceases from now on / And if you can't say anything that's nice / It's better not to talk at all is my advice." The track is an absolute hoot. The boldness of Beoga's repertoire and approach on "Mischief" can be gauged from its rendition of that 1930 song and its rendition of a song written and recorded 42 years later, "Dirty Work," by Walter Becker and Donald Fagen, founders of Steely Dan, a band known for its appealing confection of pop and jazz overlaid by wry, sly lyrics.

An Irish traditional group tackling an American pop song harks back to the days of De Dannan's relatively successful covers of the Beatles' "Hey Jude" and "Let It Be." But De Dannan itself faltered embarrassingly with its 2000 album, "Welcome to the Hotel Connemara," consisting mainly of dimwitted renditions of such pop-rock songs as Procol Harum's "A Whiter Shade of Pale" and Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody." Even I preferred the silly sing-along version of the latter in the 1992 film "Wayne's World" to De Dannan's insipid treatment. This points up an ongoing challenge and often treacherous undertaking for Irish traditional musicians: how to deliver a freshly styled, coherent, compelling interpretation of modern pop or rock music in a different genre without distorting or fracturing it. Failure is all too common. Beoga, however, succeeds largely because of Dunne's unforced, modulated lead vocal, Liam Bradley's tasty Hammond organ and Mudd Wallace's electric guitar playing, and Lisa Murray's touches on whistle. To the implied question "Why?" Beoga emphatically answers "Why not?" Most importantly, it works.

The difference between Beoga's "Mischief" and "A Lovely Madness," the band's intrepid debut album in 2004, is greater seasoning and control of its more ambitious flights of fancy, as well as the addition of singer, fiddler, and composer Niamh Dunne in 2005.

The interlocked button accordion playing of McKee and Portglenone's Sean Og Graham, nimble keyboard playing of Tobermore's Liam Bradley, imaginative percussion of Randalstown's Eamon Murray, and Dunne's adept fiddling represent a powerful instrumental engine for Beoga. Add all that to guest contributions from the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra on four tracks, banjoist Brona Graham on two tracks, harper Claire Creelman on two tracks, and bassist Odhran Devlin on one track, and you get a heady, virtually head-spinning sonic blend stamping Beoga as perhaps the most audacious Irish band rooted in trad today.

At the same time, the five members of Beoga understand and respect Irish traditional music and play it very well. It's evident in Dunne's hard-core fiddling of "Mickey the Pipes," a tune she wrote for her father, and in the boxed, out-of-the-box jigs "Ryan's Air/Beoga on Ice," penned by Sean Og Graham.

Purists may cry foul at Beoga's seemingly blithe integration of diverse outside influences into an Irish trad band sound. But the quintet avoids the usual pitfalls of polymorphic music through well-thought-out, well-executed performances with a little, well, "mischief" tossed in for good measure. Beoga is what Reeltime and Kila wanted to be but never were: edgy without novelty.

For finesse, fire, and flirtatious fun, this album is an overflowing treat, and among Irish bands launched in this new millennium, Beoga joins Grada as two of the most promising to watch.

Beoga's "Mischief" (cat. no. 4457) is available from Compass Records, 916 19th Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37212, 615-320-7672, www.compassrecords.com. Also visit the band's website at www.beogamusic.com.