Mp3 The Prodigals - Go On

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The second CD from the 4 piece Irish band based in NYC. Christened the "kings of jig punk," the Prodigals combine high energy traditional Irish music with contemporary rock sounds. 12 MP3 Songs WORLD: Celtic, ROCK: Folk Rock Details: "Go On"-The Prodigals critically acclaimed 2nd album. The Prodigals are one of the most successful bands to emerge from the East-Coast Irish scene. The band members grew up largely in Ireland; their original songs blend a funky and anarchic energy that is pure New York with a genuine passion for the traditional music of Ireland. The Prodigals have played throughout the United States, from Los Angeles and Las Vegas to Chicago, Boston and Maine, as well as abroad in Canada, Germany and Ireland, but they remain firmly rooted in Manhattan. THE WASHINGTON POST, MIKE JOYCE March 17, 2000 Imagine the Pogues falling under the rhythmic spell of the bass 'n' drum culture and you'll have some idea of how the Prodigals approach Celtic music. It's strictly from the bottom up. There's little more than a trace of fiddle here, since the core band favors the pumped up sound of Gregory Grene's accordion and a rhythm section that won't quit. "Spancil Hill," the opening track on the New York-based quartet's new album, makes comparisons with the Pogues inevitable, since this fanciful rewrite of "Ghost Riders in the Sky" gallops along at a punk-Celtic pace. But as the album unfolds, the Prodigals assert a distinct personality of their own, one that reflects a passion for combining elements of traditional Irish music with a rhythmic wallop that borrows from a variety of ancient and contemporary sources. Not that the quartet doesn't have something to say as well as play. "Comrades in the Dark" is based on a poem composed by Bobby Sands, an Irish Republican Army activist who died during a hunger strike, and both "The Immigrant" and "Green Card" evoke moments of despair and longing in unmistakably Irish fashion. In the end, though, drummer Brian Tracey and bassist Andrew Harkin make certain that rhythm rules and that the band's spirits never flag for long. ------ IN SING OUT!, ROB WEIR Winter 2000 The Prodigals are cut from the same rock-and-reel cloth as The Pogues, Black 47, and the Saw Doctors. What distinguishes them from a host of other electric Celtic bands is the extraordinary manner in which The Prodigals use percussion. Working from a full drum kit, percussionist Brian Tracey does more than

merely establish a beat; his driving pulse structures each song and he uses complex cross rhythms that bounce off Ray Kelly's guitars and Gregory Grene's accordion with such precision that they sound like a lead instrument. He does for this band much as Liam Genockey did for Steeleye Span. Time signature framing is left to bass player Andrew Harkin, though he tosses off quite a few wonderful riffs of his own. Aside from a guest turn from Marie Reilly, there's none of the expected fiddle that so defines contemporary Irish music. Lead vocals are shared by Kelly and Grene, who are the ying and yang of singers. Kelly's voice is rough and gravely, perfect for the band's more punk-influenced productions in which buzzy guitar slices through minimalist arrangements. These make a nice change of pace, but the music comes alive when Grene sings a smooth original like "Alchemy," or use his accordion to set a traditional pace from which to depart on "The Open Reel." The contrast in approach is especially stark between Kelly's cover of The Dubliners' "Weile Waile," and Grene's of Tommy Makem's "Ballybay." Both are driven by Tracey's percussion, but the first sounds whiskey-soaked and aggressive while the latter is silky and whimsical. The Prodigals seek to breathe life into Irish music by infusing it with electric energy. Ironically, though, they are at their best when they don't venture far afield.

------ DIRTY LINEN, TOM NELLIGAN

August/September, 1999 The Prodigals ride on the energy of singer/accordionist Gregory Grene's potent squeezebox and a steady, rocking rhythm section. "Spancil Hill" cleverly rewrites the cowboy classic "Ghost Riders in the Sky" as the story of an emigrant who returns to Ireland to find a much-changed country. There's a parallel perspective in "Green Card," the homesick lament of a man unable to leave New York because of his illegal status. There's a scorching arrangement of the classic ballad "Black-Eyed Gypsy," while another traditional song, "Ballybay," skips and throbs as Irish rap. Play it loud, says a note on the CD, and they're right. Good strong stuff.

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