

Fannigan's Isle  
*Rambles of Spring*  
(Folk Era Records)  
www.folkera.com

Fannigan's Isle have been quoted saying that this album is "our tribute to Tommy Makem and the Clancy Brothers". Almost all of the 16 tracks are songs that were popularized by the Clancy's and Makem -- with the exception of the Archie Fisher penned "Witch of the Westmoreland" (a song which was largely popularized by Stan Rogers -- in fact, this song uses his arrangement).

The instrumentation by this duo is quite fine, although the vocals come across as questionable at times. All in all, it's a good album, but not to the degree of excellence reached by the Clancy's.

BY RYAN O'CONNOR

The Makem Brothers  
*Who Fears to Speak*  
Red Biddy Records  
www.redbiddy.com

The Makem Brothers are the sons of the legendary Irish folk singer Tommy Makem. This album is a collection of songs relating to the 1798 Irish uprising. Released by Red Biddy Records, this album of 12 tracks is full of classics that their father helped to immortalize with his wonderful voice and feeling of the songs (not to mention his storytelling and musicianship). Unfortunately, the Makem Brothers lack the intensity and emotional attachment to the songs that their father had, and as a result the album suffers. The boys are fine instrumentalists and do in fact possess fine harmonies -- but what's the use of a rebel song that isn't rousing in nature?

The selection of songs on this album is indeed fine, with classics such as "Roddy McCorley" and "Rising of the Moon", but the songs suffer from uninspired vocals -- and therefore the album as a whole suffers, which is a shame because it was a great idea.

BY RYAN O'CONNOR

The Popes  
*Are You Looking At Me*  
(Scarlet Records)  
www.scarletrecs.co.uk

This is the debut album from the Popes, a band best known as Shane MacGowan's back-up band since his days with the Pogues. Apparently feeling restless, the band decided to put together an album and go on tour (something MacGowan doesn't like to do anymore).

This is an excellent release, despite only having five tracks. The album starts off with a very energetic "Are You Looking At Me", followed by "Hillbilly", another upbeat tune with a Cajun feel. "Sleepless Nights" is a major contrast to the other tracks, as it goes about with a much slower pace.

The only track on this album that I didn't like was "The Popes Instrumental", in which the band played a straightforward (and almost boring) piece. The album is rounded out with another version of the title track.

BY RYAN O'CONNOR

The Young  
Dubliners  
*Alive, Alive 'O*  
(Cargo Music)

I'm happy to say that after hearing this album, I no longer despise the Young Dubs. In all seriousness, after hearing their previous studio release, *Rocky Road to Dublin*, I thought the band was a bad joke -- living off of the name of the Dubliners (a famous Irish folk group).

This is a live release (as the title implies), with an added studio track at the end for good measure. An interesting fact is that out of the eight tracks on the album, six of them have never been recorded by the band on either of their previous releases.

The music is lively and rocking, especially on tracks such as "Fisherman's Blues" and "Change the World". If you haven't heard the Dubs before, their music is rock that adds the occasional touch of a Celtic flair -- such as a fiddle instrumental.

So, if you're looking to get introduced to the Young Dubs, buy this album and forget about their previous studio material.

BY RYAN O'CONNOR

## For a few laughs...

An article stated that the typical symptoms of stress are eating too much, smoking too much, impulse shopping and driving too fast. Are they kidding? That is my idea of a perfect day.

Skinny people piss me off! Especially when they say things like "you know sometimes I just forget to eat." Now I've forgotten my address, my mother's maiden name, and my keys but I've never forgotten to eat. You have to be a special kind of stupid to forget to eat.

A friend of mine confused her valium with her birth control pills. She has 14 kids, but she doesn't give a shit.

**They keep telling us to get in touch with our Lodies. Mine isn't all that communicative, but I heard it the other day after I said "Body, how would you like to go to the six o'clock class in vigorous toning?" Clearas a Bell my LoJy said, "Listen Bitch...do it and die."**

The trouble with some women is that they get all excited about nothing (and then they marry him).

*I know what Victoria's secret is. The secret is that nobody older than 30 can fit into their stuff.*

If men can run the world, why can't they stop wearing neckties? How intelligent is it to start the day by tying a noose around your neck?