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THE JOHN BYRNE BAND'S DEBUT DISC, *AFTER THE WAKE*, SERVES AS A PERFECT INTRODUCTION TO A DUBLIN NATIVE'S IRRESISTIBLE CELTIC/FOLK HYBRID

"Folk music, all the way through, and at its very best . . . each song as amazing as the one before. I tell you frankly that I wept salty tears, brought on by both the subject matter of the lyrics and the intensity of the delivery." - Celtophilia.com

Hear all tracks from *After the Wake* at www.johnbyrneband.com

PHILADELPHIA -- Equal parts Celtic and folk, Dublin-born singer/songwriter/guitarist **John Byrne** is one of the few musical artists today who manage to be traditional and modern at the same time. That's clearly in evidence through ***AFTER THE WAKE***, the first-ever album credited to the **JOHN BYRNE BAND** after eight years as a co-founding member of Patrick's Head.

The **John Byrne Band** picks up where its leader had hoped Patrick's Head would go after building a large and loyal regional following from New York to Delaware and throughout the Northeast, with critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. Not bad for a gentleman who until the mid '90s, called Dublin, Ireland his home.

There's a clear reason why ***After the Wake*** comes closest to Byrne's musical vision -- it explores the best of the two genres with which Byrne is often associated.

"American folk has always been my biggest influence, probably," says Byrne, who settled in the U.S. as a teenager. "In Ireland growing up, I became a Dylan fan very young. When I came to America, I really began exploring Dylan's influences, so I became a big fan of Woody Guthrie and Ramblin' Jack Elliot. Irish music, definitely -- I dug deeper into Irish music more than I had before, after moving here. There's an Irish band, called Planxty, and they were a huge influence in the recording of the album, because they would record songs without anybody using chords -- it would all be intertwining melodies."

And since the **John Byrne Band** is "a band" after all, several other musicians - including the rhythm section of Amos Lee's band (bassist **Jaron Olevsky** and drummer **Freddie Berman**), as well as fiddle player **Sara Milonovich** (Pete Seeger), and even the album's producer, **Andrew Keenan** (guitar and banjo), loaned a hand. As proven by such standouts as "In Your Savior's Place" and "It's A Gas That Makes You Laugh Before It Kills You," the line-up instantly paid off for Byrne. But it took one special song to truly convince the band leader that the album was going to be something special.

"See You Then" was an important song," explains Byrne. "I had written a number of good songs, but when I wrote that one, I felt like I had *an album*. But I'm really in love with all of the tracks -- the process was so long that I think each one of them became my favorite for at least a couple of weeks."



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Byrne's desire to mix the traditional sounds of the U.S. and Ireland harkens back to the acoustic roots of his previous band, before it switched to the more commercially viable country pop sound that ultimately led to its breakup over disagreements on musical direction. Along the way, Patrick's Head had lots of success touring as headliners and opening for the likes of Hothouse Flowers, the Young Dubliners, Gaelic Storm and Ceili Rain.

Once Patrick's Head ended in summer of 2008, Byrne wasted little time getting on with the next musical chapter of his career. By September, he had most of the new material for ***After the Wake*** written and demoed, and he and Keenan began recording at Christmas time.

Already selling out shows in the Philadelphia area, including the prestigious World Café Live, the **John Byrne Band** (which recently welcomed in new member **Chris Buchanan** - guitar and banjo) is aiming to spread the word further, gigging steadily in support of ***After the Wake*** with marathon shows whenever possible. He's also one of the hardest working original Celtic artists around, logging 78 hours of paid gigging time in March alone!

"You can expect to see almost my head explode on stage!," says Byrne. "I like playing long shows. I think I take a lot of pride in how a show is organized, and I like to make sure it's an experience. We'll play for as long as they'll allow us to play. We'll pretty much give you everything we have. My first love is playing live. I get filled with nervous energy before each time we play live, but once I get out there, I couldn't be happier. We always try and give a really good show."

The future looks bright for the John Byrne Band, and the newly configured line-up is committed to playing as much as it can while expanding its touring base across the country.

"I just really want to push this album as far as it will go," says Byrne, "and make sure the next one is another step forward."

As heard throughout *After the Wake*, Byrne and his friends are off to a terrific start.

Track listing

1. In Your Savior's Place
2. It's a Gas That Makes Laugh Before it Kills You
3. Various Verses
4. A Song with No Words
5. See You Then
6. Boys Forget the Whale (or John Byrne's 115th Dream about Bob Dylan)
7. Old Man's Disguise
8. The Ballad of Martin Doyle
9. Already Gone
10. Midnight in Dublin

www.johnbyrneband.com

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