

~ Rock & Read ~

By Larry Kirwan of Black 47



“A rock and roll poet with a deep appreciation of his roots.”

-- Rosanne Cash

Rock & Read is designed for arts centers, small theatres, sit-down clubs, quiet pubs and house concerts. It is based on my memoir, **Green Suede Shoes**, and two novels, **Liverpool Fantasy** and the recently published **Rockin' The Bronx**; the performance combines readings from those books interspersed with relevant songs from **Black 47**'s twelve CDs.

The show deals with memories of a unique Irish boyhood in Wexford on the South East Coast of Ireland. I was raised in this historic town by a very politicized grandfather who had rubbed shoulders with many of the luminaries involved in Ireland's War of Independence. From Wexford, the story moves to Dublin, involvement in the Irish Civil Rights Movement and eventual emigration to the New York City of the mid-70's. Being involved in music, theatre and literature, I rubbed shoulders, became friends, and worked with such people as **Frank and Malachy McCourt, Joey Ramone, Pete Hamill, Joe Strummer, Philip Glass, Lester Bangs** and **Cyndi Lauper** among others, many of whom play a part in the story that unfolds onstage.

In 1989 I formed **Black 47**, often regarded as the most important Irish-American band of the last two decades. We have appeared on **Leno, Letterman and O'Brien** and been profiled by most important newspapers and magazines nationally. Our songs are used in hundreds of colleges and high school history and political science classes. **Rock & Read** deals freely, and often comically, with the successes, tragedies and turbulent nature of a life lived in this musical and political milieu.

Using an Irish storyteller's technique, combined with rock & roll chops, **Rock & Read** is a very personable, one on one, experience between performer and audience. I employ only an acoustic/electric guitar, with occasional drum machine, to highlight the character-driven songs, and use my years as a celebrity host of **SiriusXM's Celtic Crush** and my experience as a weekly columnist of the **Irish Echo** to heighten the evening.

Although the show resonates with Irish-American audiences, the story of emigration and assimilation is a universal one and appeals to both young and old, especially parents interested in introducing matters of a historical, social and political nature to their families. When the situation is right, I like to devote some time for taking questions and requests from the audience. Regardless, after the show, I always avail of the opportunity to meet and greet, answer any further questions, sign CDs and books, and generally let the audience get to know the person they have just seen onstage.

For more information visit www.black47.com or www.myspace.com/larrykirwan

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