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Album offers taste of Boston, taste of Ireland

By Lauren Gniazdowski/Correspondent

Thursday, April 05, 2007 - Updated: 01:10 PM EDT

For Paddy Saul, a Brighton-based musician, the most important thing about songwriting is that the song he is working on has to turn him on.

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"There has to be that moment when I'm sitting at home in the house and I'm playing and I am like, 'You know what, there's something here.' You don't always get that," he said. "I need to be turned on by a song before it even leaves my front living room."

This week, Paddy Saul released his debut album, "One Town Tasted" (Nine Mile Records), and will hold a CD release party at the Paradise Lounge on Saturday, April 7.

"It's called 'One Town Tasted' because basically it does map Boston," Saul said. "These songs are all written in Boston. There's

no fiction in there. They're stories that have happened to me or someone close to me."

The album may reflect his time living here, but growing up in Ireland was also an influence. "I think when you listen to this record you can tell 'this guy is not American-born'... You know it's from the other side of the pond," he said.

Saul came to the Boston area with a friend in June 1995 to spend the summer working. He finished school and had no other immediate plans. He packed light and left his guitar behind.

What was meant to be a three-month stay was extended. Saul decided to stay another month. Then he said he would stay until Christmas. "That was 12 years ago," he said.

The beginning of his time in Boston was a welcome break from playing music. In Ireland, he transitioned between two cover bands. A third band had the potential to be something original, but did not work out. By the time he came here, he said he was tired of trying.

After two years, Saul planned to return to his home in Drumconrath, County Meath, Ireland.

"Towards the end of those two years, I began to hang around places like the Lizard Lounge, Tír na nóg and the Druid. I started to see that there's a great scene here," he said. "So when I went home, I was hungry to bring that guitar back."

"I was a closet songwriter for a while," he said. The songs he wrote here were more personal and a far cry from the covers he used to perform. "I never expected to start writing songs like I did," he said.

Saul began to perform his music around town. "I started doing a lot of open-mikes, slowly picking away at it," he said. He gradually began to play more gigs, opened for well-known acts such as Josh Ritter and Mark Geary, and collected a number of musicians to form a steady band.

He currently works as a mechanical engineer to support his art. His ultimate goal would be to pursue music full time and live without having to work another job.

Overall, Saul said the support has been amazing. He has a tight-knit family who stands behind him. His two brothers and three sisters, most of whom will be traveling from Ireland and one sister from Singapore, are coming to the CD release party.

Locally, Saul has a strong contingency between Brighton, Cambridge and Somerville. He said there is a big Irish community in Brighton and they really believe in the music. "They're very supportive and rally up the troops for gigs," he said.

Gene DeSimone knows Saul as a good friend and as a performer. He said Saul is a dependable, honest and a modest guy.

"As a performer, he really catches you off guard and he really blows you away," DeSimone



Paddy Saul
(courtesy)

said. "That's what hooks you."

DeSimone said he also helps promote Saul in a way any friend would. He sends out mass e-mails to spread the word about gigs and events. DeSimone has recently set up a text blast on his cellular phone as another means of sending out messages.

"It's easy to sell someone that you believe in," he said.

Erin Doyle, a friend of Saul's, fan of his music and occasional roadie, sees him as a person who is focused and very mellow. Doyle said she has seen his confidence build around his music since they met.

"How many people have something they wish they could do," she said. "He actually does it."

In the coming months, Saul will tour Ireland and has plans to tour New England as well.

"I've been wanting to do this for so long," he said.

Want to know more about Paddy Saul, his album "One Town Tasted," or his CD release party? Visit www.paddysaul.com.

Come to the album release party

When: Saturday, April 7, doors open at 9 p.m.

Where: The Paradise Lounge, 969 Commonwealth Ave.

Opening Act: The Johnny Come Latelies

Tickets: www.thedise.com

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