



*"A triumph to Celtic fusion...delivered with passion, confidence and pure genius."* Urban Kelt

*"Taking whistle music to a different dimension."* BBC Radio Lancashire

*"An incredible musical mélange."* Folkwords

Formed in spring 2010 and based in Hampshire UK, Monkey's Fist is a four-piece instrumental Celtic fusion band playing a unique brand of intricate, catchy and soulful music with its roots in a variety of traditions.

Their debut ten-track album 'The Boardroom' is a whistle-led mixture of Irish flavours, jazz inflections, funk mixed with bluegrass, Latin warmth and gypsy passion.

The band's line up is as follows:

Whistles: Sam Piper  
Guitar: Jody Smith  
Bass: Chaz Collett  
Percussion: Simon Ford

All ten album tracks are available to listen in full via the band's website <http://www.monkeysfist.co.uk>, along with images, further information and social media links.

A monkey's fist is a weighted knot, commonly used from the 17th Century to pass a lifeline at sea. It also sometimes doubled as an improvised weapon – intricate and punchy!

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# Reviews

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## ***'The Boardroom' from Monkey's Fist – an incredible musical mélange***

### ***Tim Carroll - Folkwords***

Monkey's Fist is apparently a 'Celtic fusion band'. Be that as it may, the unbridled innovation and eclecticism that flows through their music is strong enough to eschew pointless or restrictive definition. Their album 'The Boardroom' stands on its own without needing a crutch of classification. It's a whistle-led mixture of Irish flavours, jazz inflections, funk mixed with bluegrass, Latin warmth and gypsy passion. Were that not sufficient to defy categorisation, the synthesis is free from musical restrictions that excites as much as it confounds. Just when you think you have this one lined up, the band takes another swift turn or indulges in a totally unexpected direction-change.

Monkey's Fist are Sam Piper (whistles) Jody Smith (guitar) Chaz Collett (bass) and Simon Ford (percussion). And that instrument line-up contributes to the confusion. How does such a simple mix produce such wicked twists and turns lifting a simple combination into something fascinating? The answer lies in the symbiosis between the musicians. Throughout 'The Boardroom' Monkey's Fist are as tight as the proverbial knot from whence they take their name - looks simple, difficult to learn, and once achieved, a thing of wonder to the uninitiated. That about sums up this quartet - a twisted collection of close-fitting genres that make it hard to identify where one ends and another begins.

Monkey's Fist may well be 'Celtic fusion', they also perfectly illustrate the phrase: 'something different'. In fact, their tunes are 'aural illustrations', each creating their own image - from the funk-ed-up fervour of 'Phunky Monkey' through the loquacious expression of 'Arfer Chewn' and the sublimely tranquil 'End of Days' to the uninhibited delight expressed by 'Mina's Wedding'.

Playing the whistle in a chromatic style drives much of their direction – interestingly the term originates from 'chroma' the Greek for colour. Perhaps 'Celtic-coloured genre-fusion' could work, then again, that's just one more definition that excludes multiple influences and expressions. Forget it! Just go with Monkey's Fist and let this colour for your ears wash over you.

## ***A triumph to Celtic fusion...delivered with passion, confidence and pure genius.***

### ***Urban Kelt***

Here at Urbankelt we love a bit of fusion so was eager to hear what Monkey's Fist had to offer.

The instrumental Celtic fusion foursome hail from Hampshire and got in contact; kindly sending us their material to hear. With no knowledge of what to expect and only being told it was 'Celtic....kind of..', You will quickly understand why, and it was immediate from its opening that this was going to be an infectious and glorious musical adventure with a worldly influence, experience and expression that is heard in its Celtic, jazz, gypsy fusion. Like an unexplored part of a map, it leads you to a melting pot, a musical explosion and an uncharted and hard to pin down genre!

You will find you have no other choice but to be engaged by the impact of a soundtrack that appears to have no musical restrictions! Whilst one track might throw you from one incredibly detailed and dense cloud of colour, another takes you to a stripped back ambient and melancholy feeling of heaviness – but don't feel too safe as the next can throw you back into chaos again. Incorporating a mishmash of other genres to create a brand new sound, they exude the confidence of having taken an experimental sideways glance at traditional music...something which escapes your notice as you listen as it sounds so right! To provide an interesting counterbalance, the whistle owns and leads the whole album which not surprisingly helps the Celtic sound dominate. Jazz, Latin and Gypsy add warmth and depth to the magical collection.

The first track Phunkey Monkey is a perfect leading melody that introduces you to what to expect, or -I correct myself- introduces you to the unexpected! The album is funky and sophisticated if that's even possible? The general air of funk that emanates from the grooves rides naturally underneath the tunes being played outstandingly by Sam Piper, a man whose name will undoubtedly be a household one in the near future. Track 5 Bee Keeper got us to our feet in the office, bouncing around just as the track seems to do with its rollercoaster melody...

But that's enough info from us – if you're intrigued, you should be. We part ways here... Go buy the album and experience the whole thing without influences from us. You will soon get the picture.

The band includes Sam Piper on whistle, Jody Smith on guitar, Chaz Collate on Bass and Simon Ford on percussion. "And the rest?" I hear you say. Yes, it's hard to believe just four people can create such an explosion of sound.

Which genre on our album collection shelf would we put them? We have no idea... but why not put up a new one just for them as they rightly deserve it!

This album is a triumph to Celtic Fusion and unique is the incredible talent delivered with passion, confidence and pure genius that leads you to feel it's hard to believe they haven't been on the scene for years! Watch this space...