

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS, MAYBE

[1]

I will be kind to all relevant life-forms performing or attempting to perform Irish traditional music, regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, level of microbial infestation, or talent level.

[2]

I will resist the temptation to mock hammer dulcimer players or to pour sticky gooey liquids on their finely-tuned instruments. If I happen to find a tiny explosive charge taped to one of their hammer-heads, I will send an email alert to the authorities in a nearby state at the earliest possible opportunity.

[3]

I will fight the urge to pound my head on the table when I hear a newbie whistle tooter stumble courageously but unwisely into "The Butterfly".

[4]

I will recall that wearing a Dropkick Murphys t-shirt to the session will probably not do much to promote right musical thinking amongst the other musicians.

[5]

I will do my best to recall that since God loves bodhrán and spoon players, He would probably not want me to hide or destroy their instruments when they get up to use the rest room.

[6]

When the Session Chanteuse launches into a seventeen-verse Scots ballad - of course with the faux accent - about Bonnie somebody or other, I will offer up my suffering for the souls in Purgatory. If

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possible I will avoid the uncharitable thought that at that moment, the poor b**tards there are probably not suffering any more than I am.

[7]

I will deal stoically with the unfathomable mystery that a pretty girl can screw up a tune just as easily as an ugly guy.

[8]

I will respect the fact that some very nice people of my acquaintance consider strathspeys to be of profound musical value. I will restrain myself from referring to them as "the haggis and neeps" crowd or making slighting references to "constipated hornpipes".

[9]

I will deal stoically - again - with the fact that the banjo is considered a source of fun and derision by some. I will offer up a prayer for their unenlightened souls even as I slash the bejayzus out of their tires in the parking lot. I may hold their daughter's Barbie doll hostage until they apologize, but I will not harm it.

[10]

I will recall that there is a place in the Universe for piano accordions, although it doesn't necessarily have to be in the seat next to me, except if Kevin Killeen, Maureen Kelly, or Brian Glynn happen to be playing it.

[11]

I will not use the session as a practice area. If I'm intending to start the tune, I will learn it at home. If I'm not sure of it, I will listen to someone else play it at least once before I get involved. If I don't know it at all, I'll stay the hell out of it. If I don't like the tune, I

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will keep in mind the fact that many people consider phony vomiting sounds distasteful.

[12]

I will at all times attempt to give the impression that I'm enjoying myself, even as those hideous nine-year-old Zortnik twins are pitilessly mangling some O'Carolan trifle on their newly-purchased tin whistles. I will force myself to applaud politely at the conclusion of their crime. I will somehow rationalize this utter hypocrisy so that I can eventually look in a mirror again without feeling revulsion.

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All I can say is that I hope I'm on the right track with these resolutions. I know keeping them will not be easy but I like to think I'm tough enough to do it.

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