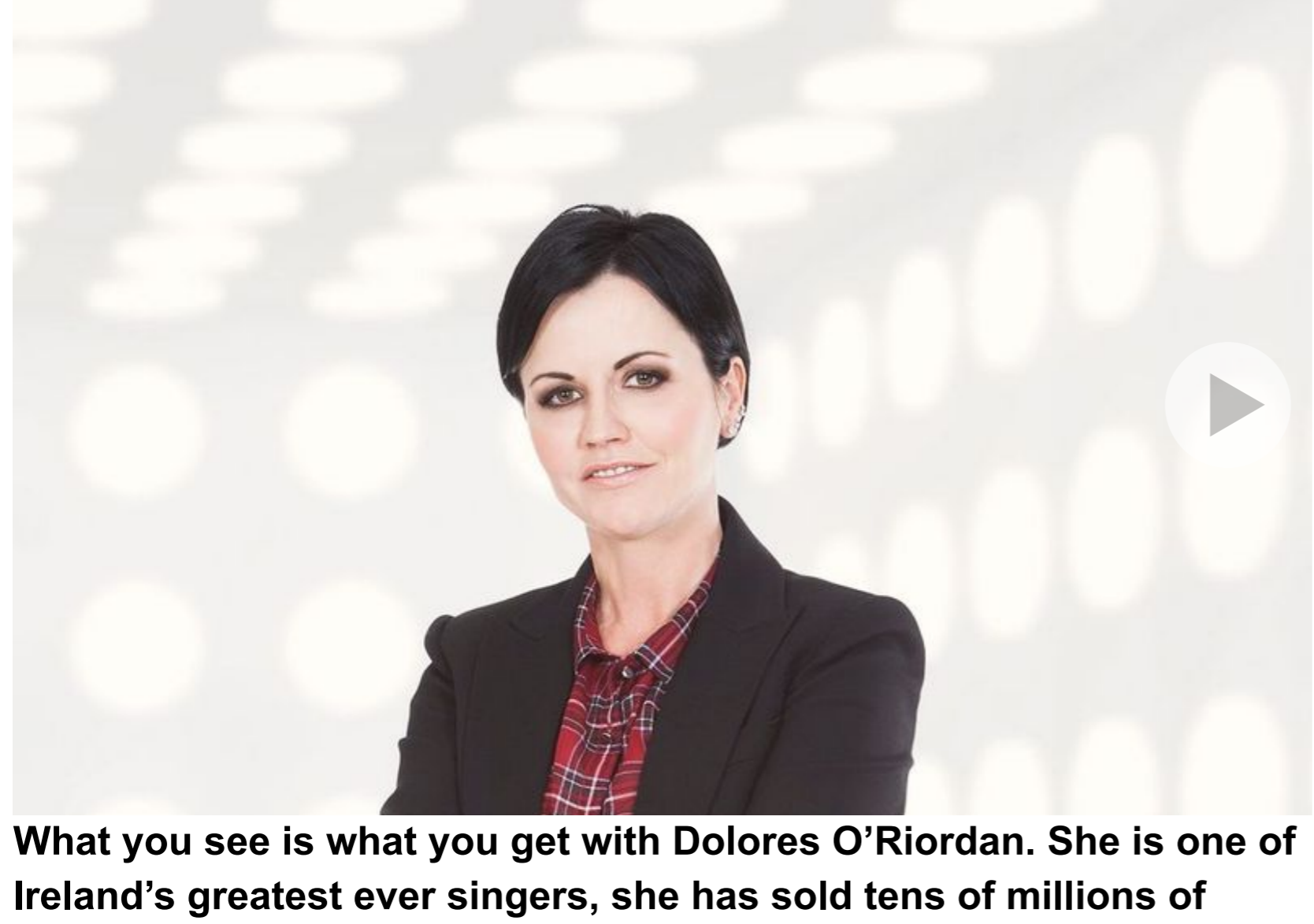


# Dolores O'Riordan: I've no regrets about The Voice, but I NEED a break

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TOP STORIES By Daragh Keany 0 Facebook Twitter Pin It Share



What you see is what you get with Dolores O'Riordan. She is one of Ireland's greatest ever singers, she has sold tens of millions of albums worldwide, she has amassed the kind of wealth (she receives just over half of all Cranberries royalties) that means she will never have to work a day in her life and she has been a complete revelation on The Voice of Ireland.

She may be 5ft 11in and is sometimes hard to understand with her unusual mishmash accent of Limerick and rural Canada (where she now lives) but she is a larger-than-life character who has been able to hold her own on the smash-hit show.

Despite having years on the other coaches and the kind of CV that makes Kian, Jamelia and Bressie look like Billie Barry kids — it is actually the Zombie singer who is the most childish of the lot. And she's proud of that fact.

*"Ah yeah I don't take myself too seriously. But neither does Kian," the 42-year-old fire cracker tells sundayworld.com. "He is just as bonkers as me and we have the craic. I don't have the same relationship with Jamelia and Bressie. They would be more stiff than us."*

"It's not a bad thing," she backtracks quickly. "It's just not my thing. They are very professional and workmanlike but I wouldn't have the craic with them that I have with Kian. He's my buddy. I think I will stay in touch with him but probably not with the other two. I actually met Kian before in 2001 when we sang for the Pope. As you do. Westlife were doing backing vocals in the Vatican. It was a time when I was lucky enough to pick and choose my gigs - where as it was during the height of Westlife's fame so the boys were knackered from all the touring."

Refreshingly, Dolores is not taking part in this year's Voice of Ireland to make a few quid or to sell a few more records. Whatever fee she is receiving from the production company for taking to the famous red chair has easily been spent on her weekly commute to and from her home in rural Ontario.

And the idea of maybe getting her songs out there to a whole new audience is completely lost on the artist, too, as she is the only one of the coaches not to perform on this year's show. In fact, she doesn't even want the contestants singing her songs.

"One of the girls at one point wanted to sing one of The Cranberries songs but it didn't work so we dropped it. I don't really care if they want to do it. But if they are doing to do it, they'll do it right," she laughs.

"And, no, I will not be performing at the final. I just don't want to. I'm not there to sing. I'm there to coach."



So what of this year's standard? "It's been really good, as you know, but it is in the control of the public and I think they have made some mistakes. Some huge voices have gone home; contestants who I thought could have won the whole thing.

*"My last girl Kellie Lewis has something special. Regardless of the results I think she can have a career in the music business. She is definitely popular with the public so we will see if that translates to a career after the show. I really hope it does."*

Just listening to Dolores detail her weekly schedule is actually quite exhausting. Since February the mother of three has commuted back and forth between Dublin and her home in Buckhorn, Canada. Even having landed in Toronto after her six-hour flight she has a three-hour drive to her home where she lives with her husband of 19 years Don Burton and their three children Taylor Baxter (17), Molly Leigh (13) and Dakota Rain (9).

"We have had the house for years and years but only last year we decided to pack up and move for real. It was a big decision but we have never been happier. I literally live in a forest a few hours north of Toronto.

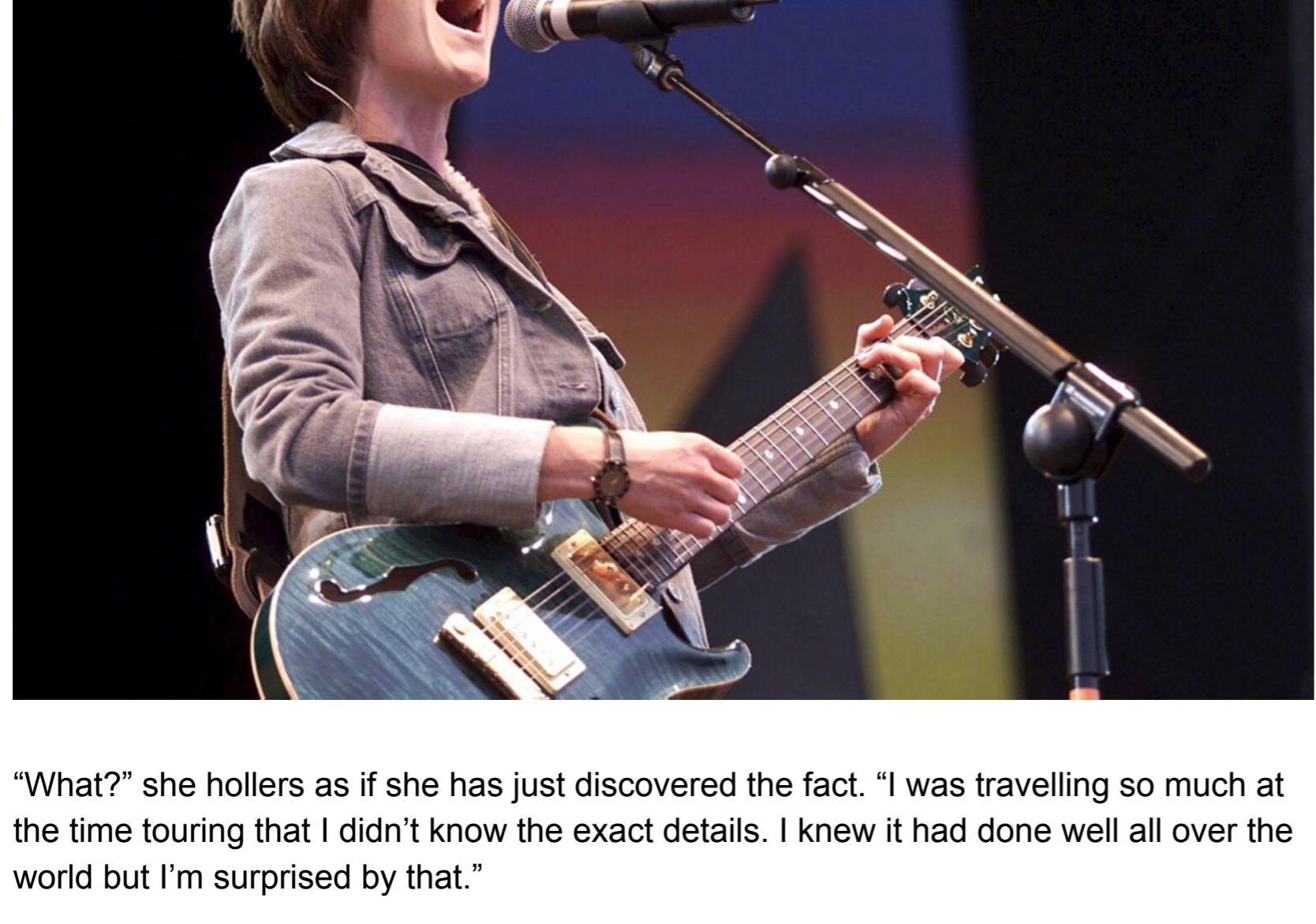
"It is only when I return to a city that I really appreciate what we have at home."

You could forgive the multi-platinum selling singer songwriter to have her entire crib adorned with photos, memorabilia and plaques, but the Linger songbird insists: "I promise you I have none of that stuff anywhere in my house.

"It is kind of cool that my kids don't think of me as a singer. There are no Cranberries albums lying around and not one photo from that time. The only thing I allow myself is my awards," she giggles. "They are on display but not in your face, either."

So how many has she got? "I dunno. A few. Some are better than others. Stop asking me about them." Okay, fine.

On researching Dolores before my interview, it didn't take long before I stumbled upon the timeless classic Zombie — a song that defined her group during their absolute heyday. But on looking up that particular song up I discovered that it was number 1 in the US, Australia, Germany, France, Denmark and Belgium but only managed number 3 in Ireland.



"What?" she hollers as if she has just discovered the fact. "I was travelling so much at the time touring that I didn't know the exact details. I knew it had done well all over the world but I'm surprised by that."

Not as surprised as I was when I realised what beat her to number 1 that month. "Ah go on, tell me," she giddily enquires. The bad news for the experienced star is that Zombie only made it to number 3 in Ireland because of Whigfield's Saturday Night and Dustin the Turkey's Spanish Lady. Boyzone's Love Me for Reason also edged ahead of the classic tune two weeks later!

"Are you serious? It just goes to show where tastes lie. That kind of pop was huge at the time. Do you remember that song Barbie Girl? [At this point Dolores starts singing it and I don't have the heart to tell her to stop.] That was huge all over Europe, especially in Scandinavia.

"Sure look — we can't have them all. I'm really proud of what we achieved at that time."

So does her stint on The Voice mean she is going to follow Jamelia and release more music and tour on the back of her exposure? "Eh...no. I just can't wait to fly home after the final and not have to worry about saying goodbye to my family within a day or two.

"We're just going to do nothing for a few weeks and I can't wait. I have absolutely no regrets about doing The Voice, but it has been exhausting. So I would like a break now."

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