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## ENTERTAINMENT FEATURES

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### The Cranberries: Learning from the past

By Han Wei Chou | Posted: 30 March 2012 1452 hrs

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SINGAPORE: It just wasn't fun any more.

Sure, there were other factors, like the fact that some of the band members had become parents, but that was the biggest reason iconic Irish rock band The Cranberries decided to go on hiatus in 2003.

"The fun had gone out of it. We just kind of weren't really feeling it was working for us any more," said the band's guitarist Noel Hogan in a recent phone interview.

"We weren't arguing with each other, because I don't think anybody cared enough to even bother arguing."

"We have done it for 13, 14 years at that point. We were just kind of dishing out stuff. That's why we decided to take some time away from it and see what happens."

Fast forward to 2012, and the band, which consists of Hogan, his brother Mike, the band's bassist, along with drummer Fergal Lawler and lead vocalist Dolores O'Riordan, is back - older, wiser and with a new album "Roses" to boot.

Hogan described "Roses" as having the same feel and sound as The Cranberries' first two albums, albeit with a few new elements thrown in - very much like the band itself after their reunion in late 2009.

"We had all played with other people during the years apart, it was great, but it was never that kind of connection that I think the four of us have always had," said Hogan, adding that the band had always known they would get back together - they just didn't know it would be such a long time before they did.

Hogan explained that they have the same kind of chemistry they had before, but have learned from their mistakes and embraced a different way of life.

#### Change

The Cranberries, who are currently on tour in support of "Roses" and will be performing at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on April 2, now take extra care to balance work and family.

"What we try and do now is we try to do four or five weeks [of touring], then go home for two or three weeks.

"You could literally stay out [on tour] for a whole year. That was what we used to do," said Hogan.

"Other people think it costs more to go home and come back out again, with your crew, your gear on standby."

"But the way we look at it, if we kept going, you might get a year out of the thing, and then you are done, and you are finished because we are going to get sick of it again."

"We learned from that mistake so we just want to keep a tight control [over the touring schedule]."

Hogan also revealed that the band was no longer simply "going through the motion" and rushing to churn out generic music, like they had been doing just before they went on hiatus.

Instead, the band now takes their time crafting their songs and would only release an album when it's ready, as they had done during their early days, when they released their first albums.

"When I listen back to particularly the last two albums before we took the break, the things on there, I kind of go 'God, what was I thinking!'" said Hogan with a laugh.

"We're not going to do that again. If that (writing songs for a new album) takes a few years, so be it."

"If you rush into this just to get a song out, you have to live with it for the rest of your life."

#### Balancing new and old

While their next album may be some ways off, The Cranberries' Singapore concert is just around the corner, and Hogan believes their fans will definitely leave the concert satisfied - the band will be playing a slew of their hits in addition to their new material from "Roses".

"We are going to play a bunch of new songs from the album and the kind of hits that everybody knows.

"We are still going to do the hits because if I go see a band, and they just play all the [songs from the] new album, and nothing else, you kind of go 'Oh God' [as] you are kind of waiting for the hits all night," said Hogan with a chuckle.

"I hate it when that happens!"

-CNA/ha



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The Cranberries (from left): Dolores O'Riordan, Noel Hogan, Fergal Lawler and Mike Hogan.

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