

FREE NINE-TRACK CASSETTE WITH THIS ISSUE!

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

**'MONSTER' MAGNATE!:
REM'S PETER BUCK
AND LP REVIEW**



Crazy sauce

- ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT
- JESUS AND MARY CHAIN
- MASSIVE ATTACK
- THE WONDER STUFF
- THE CULT ★ KYLIE
- ECHOBELLY
- RAY DAVIES
- SPEARHEAD
- JAM & SPOON
- SVEN VATH

GOING FOR GOLD! THE CRANBERRIES' blonde belief

We regret that for copyright reasons this free tape is not available outside the UK



Available **FREE** only with this issue

HOT CHILI PEPPERS, GREEN DAY, THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN, SHANE MacGOWAN, BIOHAZARD, DINOSAUR JR, ELECTRAFIXION, CANDLEBOX, BABYLON ZOO

Germany Dm 5.30 Spain Paa 300

Dolores O'Riordan photographed by Steve Double

W M H

the cranberries.

LomRie

NEW SINGLE AVAILABLE ON
SEVEN INCH • CASSETTE • TWO CD BOX SET



single
of the
week

LIVE IN OCTOBER

- 3 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
- 4 WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC HALL
- 6 NEWPORT CENTRE
- 7 PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL
- 9 LEEDS TOWN & COUNTRY CLUB
- 10 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
- 12 NEWCASTLE MAYFAIR
- 13 GLASGOW BARROWLANDS
- 14 LIVERPOOL ROYAL COURT
- 16 LONDON SHEPHERDS BUSH
EMPIRE - **SOLD OUT**
- 17 LONDON SHEPHERDS BUSH
EMPIRE

KNOW HMV • KNOW MUSIC

MAY THE SAUCE BE WITH YOU

● **THE CRANBERRIES** are no indie fops, but neither are they major label lackeys. And after much bedridden soul-searching, singer Dolores has decided that she *isn't* going to go mental. **SIMON WILLIAMS** goes straight to the sauce to find out exactly *what* everyone else was doing.

Turkey shoot: STEVE DOUBLE

Once upon a time there was a girl. A shy girl – cripplingly so, some reckoned – but fiercely individual with it. A girl with an offbeat, hermetically-sealed life that was comfortable but frustrating. She knew she loved children, she knew she had a talent, but she didn't have a clue what was going to happen to her as a woman.

Then something happened to change her life so dramatically that within five fierce, frantic years she would look like a totally different person. Within that time she would be worshipped, abused and adored once again. She would be whisked from obscurity off around the globe. She would go ski-ing, unwittingly become a significant representative for her home country in America and come to abhor the snooping, swooping press. It seemed as though she would suffer a nervous breakdown one day and wear designer clothes the next. Her picture would be flashed around the world, not least her 'sensational' wedding shots. She would be the centre of attention and it would crack her up. She would hang around with Duran Duran. At times she didn't know what was reality and what was a particularly fantastical fantasy.

Now and again she would stop and look at herself, her husband and her surroundings. She would see all the hangers-on, the fervent strangers, the friends she left behind. And she would say, "Why the f— am I doing this?" So that's the story of Princess Diana sorted, then.

And, funnily enough, that is the fairytale – nay, hairy tale – of one Dolores O'Riordan.

TO PUT it politely, the music business, much like life with the Windsors, is not noted for Happy Endings. For every success story there are a million losers milling around the bottom of the pile. For each gloriously fulfilled dream there are dozens of Bum Gravys scratching away at the arse end of the rainbow.

And even The Big Breakthrough hardly guarantees a lifetime of languid delights. If you manage to get through the layers of management, PRs, record company execs and bodyguards, just ask Michael Jackson and George Michael about success. Because when the world knows your name, part of your globally-renowned spirit sinks and says, 'Oh shit'.

More than any other year, 1994 has proved what a potential minefield the whole mindless marathon really is. From Kurt's grisly suicide to the ghastly Reading antics of the Love/Dando/Barlow unholy alliance; from the rambling Roses' continued exile to The Stiffies' demise; from what Bernard Butler saw to Richey Manic's lyric sheets. At one point this summer it felt as though the whole horrible, punk-inspired 'success sucks!' ethic was going to send half of our so-called heroes toppling like drunken, drugged-up dominoes.

Remember that Brett Anderson is now claiming to be a housewife who, presumably, has never had a domestic cleaning experience. Remember that three years ago the record company told Blur that their career was over. Remember the pressures, the level of expectation shoved upon shoulders barely capable of carrying an entire album's worth of decent material.

Dolores does. That's why, in retrospect, the alpine incident which left her knee in a Gazza-style state of disrepair earlier this year is seen as a blessing in disguise. Because it meant that The Cranberries' singer *had* to stay in bed for a month. And put everything into perspective.

"I don't think I would be as happy now as I am with the band if that hadn't happened," she says, "You can be doing things and not thinking. So I had a chance to have a good think about everything that had happened to us, and I decided that I wasn't going to go mental."

This is no display of fanciful dramatics, either. Dolores speaks matter of factly and follows it up with a contradict-me-if-you-dare glare. Because The Cranberries have had their delicate, introverted fingers burnt by the industry before.

And now, quite frankly, they couldn't give a shit. Sitting in the bar of Dublin's Gresham Hotel, Dolores O'Riordan is (alarmingly) fresh from a four-hour photo session. While 'The Lads' (drummer Fergal Lawler, guitarist Noel Hogan and bassist brother Mike) are holed up in a rehearsal room across town, the singer comforts a Bailey's on the rocks, armed with a peroxide blonde crop, false eyelashes and a flesh-defying array of ear studs.

The Cranberries have undoubtedly made people sit up in their Leatherworld sofas and think. About three million album sales worldwide. About 'Linger' lingering around the Top 20 for what felt like several decades. About a shelfload of awards donated by MTV and a humbled Irish music mafia. About the infamous American tour when The Cranberries stole Suede's thunder and then decided to take their lightning as well, just for good measure. About – and here's the crux – one of the craziest (see insane, erratic, seemingly over at one point) careers in the history of pop.

CRUCIAL FACT: The Cranberries are about as 'indie' as Mike Oldfield's arse. Blonde crops or not, their relationship with hipper-than-bastard-thou coolness lasted about five minutes a bloody long time ago. And while 'The Lads' may have developed sufficient fondness for the likes of The Smiths to start a band in the first place, when Dolores ran away from her strict Catholic upbringing in the Irish village of Ballybricken, the 18-year-old knew bugger all about the Creation label sound or the hazy noodlings of shoegazing, let alone the delightful forthcoming releases on

"If these adults have a problem with these other adults then go and fight them. Have a bit of balls about it. Don't stick a bomb somewhere you'll hurt kids." – Dolores

Damaged Goods.

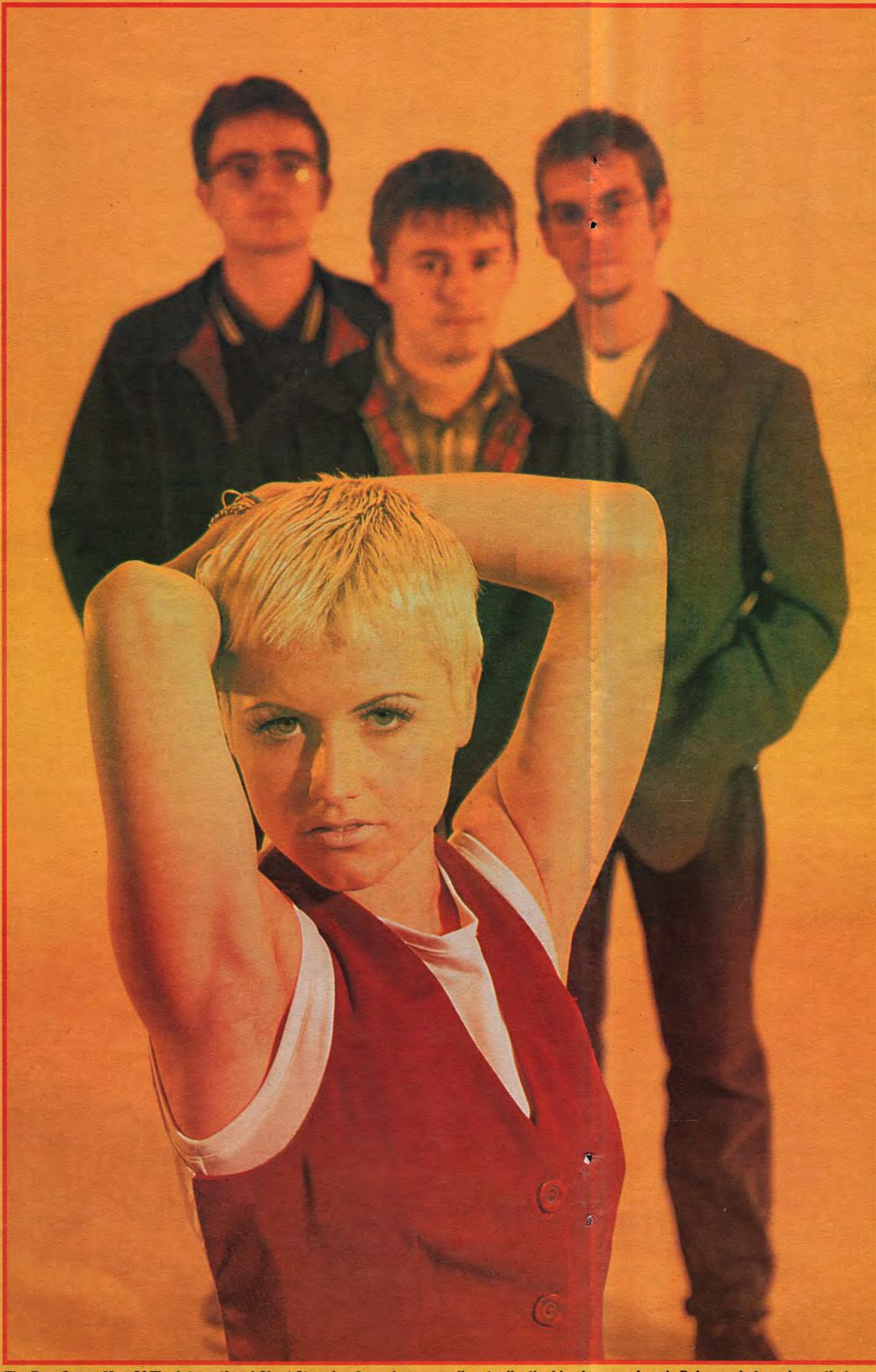
Four years on, little has changed. True, she has some *vague* idea observing, at one point, "There are so many women in bands over in England trying to sing, but all they do is go 'EEEEEEEE!'," the eeeeeek! being delivered with a resonance that resembles Björk having a brain haemorrhage.

Yet for the most part, like someone who's just had a damn good Frenchie with the Blarney Stone, she's content to babble on about hanging out with some of the most seriously ridiculed people in the known universe...

"Duran Duran? Oh yeah, I know them well," she beams. "They're f—ing sound, if you excuse my vulgarity. Simon (*Le Bon*) is the nicest man, and he's mad about his kids. And Yasmin's a sound woman and a great mother, a really cool woman."

See, to The Cranberries there is bally all difference between touring with Suede or the Durannies. This isn't being post-ironic. It's not being ironic at all. And that is the key to their success. During their initial rush of attention, Other People took The Cranberries (described as 'leprechauns' at the time) under their supposedly knowledgeable wings and strived to transform the intrinsically naive into the naturally Pop Kid-friendly. So the band toured with Scouse stompers Top. And then with morose sorts Moose. And they brought out a single, 'Uncertain', and then... everyone lost interest. *Everyone*.

Having signed spectacularly to Island, The Cranberries saw labelmates PJ Harvey and Stereo MC's storm ahead in the release schedule stakes. They had management problems. They had tried to discover a Brave New World, only to find that Dublin was dead to them and London so incestuous that, in spiritual terms at least, both cities were just as closed-in, as claustrophobic as



The Four Sauce Men Of The International Chart-Storming Apocalypse... well, actually, the blond, cropped one's Dolores – but you knew that...

Limerick. Oh, and Dolores' personal life was falling apart. In short, everything went wrong. "I was going to leave the band at that point," shudders the singer. "I couldn't take it anymore – I couldn't even get out of bed. I discovered that life's not a sweet trip at all. It seemed to me to be the biggest farce. All I ever wanted to do was write songs and be a singer without being hurt by the industry. I just freaked."

Later, the terrifyingly affable Fergal and Noel (the former resembling a sexy pseudo-Adam Clayton, the latter a Fred Perry-tastic cousin of Graham Blur) relate a story which sums up just how little The Cranberries knew about anything back then.

Apparently, the first time they ever stayed in a London hotel, they discovered the dangerous thrills of the mini-bar in their rooms. Believing its contents to be free, they emptied all the mini-bars they could find and got cheerfully smashed. Incredibly, the following day all the mini-bars were refilled! So, scarcely believing their luck, not to mention the generosity of the capital's hoteliers, the band invited all their mates round and drank everything all over again. Cool.

When they checked out, The Cranberries were confronted with bills of £460. Each. Not so cool.

Now, of course, they can laugh about it. Because one day way back when (time is irrelevant – this is supposed to be a fairytale, right?), Rough Trade supremo Geoff Travis became involved in their career. And, at last, The Cranberries clasped the guiding hand of someone who realised that these four half-shy, half-bewildered band members had more to them than the crippling 'New Sundays' tag they had been ascribed. They toured the UK with Belly. They rambled around Europe with Hothouse Flowers. And then America called.

Finally, the oft-delayed debut album 'Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?' stumbled from the drawing board and into the shops. When The Cranberries started touring the States with The The it was selling 40,000 copies a week. Then it was up to 50,000 a week. Then 70,000.

Dolores, thrown into the hectic whirl of gigs, tour buses, hotels and more gigs, claims, "It wasn't freaky at all, I wasn't even thinking about it". But then again... "After ten weeks of it you do start thinking, 'Oh, we must be near selling a million by now!'"

More importantly, The Cranberries had crept into a marketplace that cared diddly squat for hipdom or the Cocteau Twins. An element of their newfound audience embraced the band's Celtic spirituality, hankering after their own spurious Reagan-style Irish roots. Conversely, a fair chunk of their fanbase thought that Limerick was somewhere in England. And none of this mattered because this new land was huge, innocent to the band and, unlike the suffocating confines of Dublin or London, absolutely gagging for a spot of gently-fondled flopprock that involved a (cough) cutesie pie Irish lilt instead of a sweating lump of grunge kid plummeting onto your head. Unsurprisingly, (and hold on to your passports Messrs Hunt, Anderson and Albarn), Dolores is rather smitten with America.

"I LOVE IT over there!" she gushes. "It's got so much going for it that Europe hasn't, and sometimes it can be annoying but most of the time it's great. The narrow-mindedness of where I come from and what I've seen annoys me so much that I love the open-mindedness of the Americans. The women will never judge other women. They will never look at someone else and say, 'Look at her, she's a slut!' In the States, women come over to you and say, 'You're beautiful!', and that's lovely. There's no bitchiness."

"Men seem to be a little more open with their emotions, too. Guys cry all the time over there, because they weren't told as kids 'Don't cry! Boys don't do that!' They're told to express themselves."

This, one presumes, is not the American norm. Walking through Manhattan, you are unlikely to bump into gangs of youths marauding the streets, sobbing into their bandanas over the dead squirrel they've just buried in Central Park. Hazarding a guess, Dolores has been fortunate enough to meet American women who want to be her friend for life (or at least until her records stop sprinting out of the stores), and the blokes are sensitive types who reckon that 'Linger' is written solely about them, which obviously gives them a divine right to dribble over the singer until some friendly bouncer comes along and helps them ever-so-gently out of the building.

But then that's Dolores O'Riordan in a nutshell – one part stompy Tank Girl, one part caring, sharing Earth Mother. And it's a bizarre, contradictory beast whose very naivety leaves her screamingly wide open to cynicism, if not outright exploitation.

So one minute she will frown at her drink, lips curled down, and, with a petulant reference to The Cranberries' early days, snap: "It seemed as though we were being ridiculed by some very small-minded Englishmen. I was reading some STUPID CRAP about me!" Then she'll switch back into Earth Mother mode and, with the sort of enthusiasm normally reserved for Jesus Army conscripts, claim that, "Everyone is cool, everybody has got something to offer!"

Similarly, there's one moment when she recalls going back to Limerick, post-platinum sales frenzy, and being confronted by "big men" shouting "There's that bitch! There's that rock star!" at her as she walked down the street, which she now dismisses with a curt shrug and an unnervingly calm: "You always meet the odd asshole wherever you go." Then there are other rare moments when she slips into crushing cliché-speak and talks about "The gift" that is her musical talent (cue "Being given a voice and the ability to write songs is something I love so much...").

For the most part, however, over the space of an hour Earth Mother and Tank Girl somehow come together as a rather neat, caring, considerate whole with a fanatically philosophical undercurrent. Which is rather fortunate, because The Cranberries – unwittingly or not – are about to drive straight into the eye of the Irish political hurricane.

JUST AS 'Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?' was a perfect title for the timid demanding some attention, so The Cranberries' forthcoming second album – neatly poised to join the pre-Christmas rush – is called 'No Need To Argue'.

Sticking with what has turned out to be a staggeringly successful formula, the likes of 'I Can't Be With You' and 'Dreaming My Dreams' are wistful, gentle wanderings, the proverbial koalas in the rock zoo, dealing with enough aspects of love, loneliness and loss to make Kleenex sales rocket with American males.

But before that comes a single, 'Zombie', which shows that Dolores has swiftly moved on from learning how to play guitar (she only started last year) and is now getting to grips with effects pedals. So the fuzziest-up underbelly of 'Zombie' goes "GRRRRR!" (in a restrained, tasteful Cranberries kind of way), and up above Dolores sings about bombs and guns and how all this fighting in Northern Ireland is pretty bloody stupid.

Appropriate enough, you might think, bearing in mind the recent media overkill on the '25 Years Of Trouble' since British troops made themselves at home. And downright spooky when you consider

"I'm always conscious that when I'm sitting there I don't want my knickers to be showing off. What's that got to do with your head and your music?" – Dolores

that, a week after our conversation, the IRA announce the ceasefire.

The original idea was to hook up with the band at the video shoot for 'Zombie', which was supposed to take place in Belfast. True enough, over the next couple of days a film crew will be in Northern Ireland shooting footage. But The Cranberries will be staying, umm, in Dublin. "A street is a street," explains Dolores, defiantly, "and your mentality says that what goes on in the street has got nothing to do with people in a band standing there looking glamorous. It looks too mental."

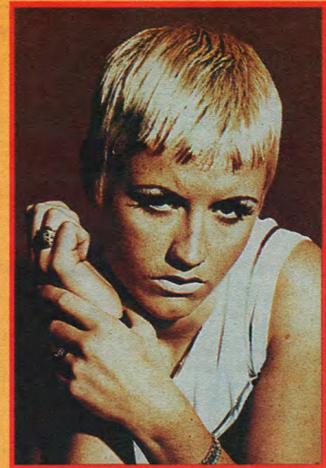
So where are the band recording their parts for the video?

"LA."

Right! Admittedly, The Cranberries will be filmed within the confines of a studio, but it proves just how wary people have to be when it comes to dealing with 'The Troubles', so crassly has pop culture crash-landed into Belfast before. Remember 'Invisible Sun' by The Police? Or 'Belfast Child' by Simple Minds? The relationship between pop and politics may have had some kind of spiritual second honeymoon over the past couple of years, but rarely have the likes of Senser or Rage Against The Machine looked as desperately stupid as Jim Kerr unleashing his Celtic conscience on a disbelieving public.

And so to 'Zombie', a song written by Dolores in the wake of the Warrington bombings last year. Fittingly, it's here that the singer's usual fizzy, freeform chat is usurped by hesitant contemplation.

"There was a funeral, a little child's funeral, and I was sickened," she begins, brow furrowed.



Dolores: "I couldn't take it anymore"

"Because no matter what you ever achieve in life I don't see how *any* human being can get satisfaction from destroying a little child and seeing his mother, who carried it for nine months and pushed it out from between her legs and all the pain and suffering she went through, seeing her lose him. Why? Because she just happened to be walking down the street."

"To me, the whole thing is very confused. A lot of people need to grow up. If these adults have a problem with these other adults well then, go and fight them. Have a bit of balls about it at least, you know? Don't stick a bomb somewhere where you'll hurt kids and ordinary women who never did anything to you. Some people might think they're getting their point across, but to me... it's pathetic, really."

Dolores talks about her love of Irish history, how maybe once upon a time there was a reason for the killings, but that time has long since passed. She says that the song is as applicable to Rwanda or Bosnia as it is to Northern Ireland ("It doesn't name terrorist groups or organisations. It doesn't take sides – it's a very human song."), and that when James Bulger was killed in Liverpool she could feel a new sense of evil in mankind.

When faced with the idea of wannabe Irish media types across America, desperate to 'live' The Troubles, sinking their teeth into 'Zombie' and refusing to let go, she shrugs and insists that "I'm an artist and I'm entitled to say 'I am not going to talk about that.'"

Ultimately, she says, no matter the implications or repercussions inherent in writing such a song, and no matter the ever-present dangers of being that open, that honest, Dolores simply wants to make people think.

"I think I'm in a position where if you feel really

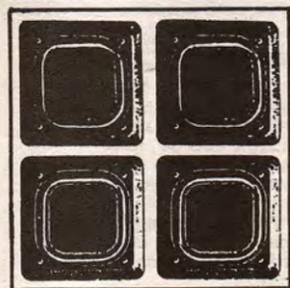
strongly about something and it really annoys you, then other young people will think the same as you and something can be done about it. But first you have to be aware before you do anything about it."

SUCCESS HASN'T made fools or freaks of The Cranberries just yet. Nope, Dolores isn't going to become the next Sinead O'Connor, honest virtues or not, she knows where to draw a veil between the public gaze and her private life. Yes, Madonna is a big Cranberries fan.

Yes, Dolores wears rather designer clothes for free. Yes, Duran Duran rather like them. Yes, The Cranberries are level-headed types with occasional flaky rock'n'roll outbursts. And yes, when 'No Need To Argue' flutters into the top end of the chart, 'Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?' will still be lurking around, ticking on towards that next platinum disc.

Success? Pah!
"In the States last week I had to do this interview and this magazine wanted to do a thing on women for their 25th anniversary. So I went down there and their man was like, what you have to do now is take your clothes off for a few shots. And it was like no, I'm not doing that, no way! I'll only take off my clothes for my husband, DARLING!"

"I hate all that crap, it's so cliché. I'm always conscious that when I'm sitting there I don't want my knickers to be showing off. To me it's like, why? What's that got to do with your head and your music? And the guys aren't into that – they never wanted me to go, 'Pout, baby, pout'. See, we're not a band who does what we're told to do. We do what we want to do. That's the difference."



LIVE

**PANTERA
NEWPORT CENTRE**

JESUS CHRIST, it's a bloody abattoir in here. There's a penned-in herd of human cattle at the front, the same generic metalscum crowd you would see in Doncaster, Dortmund or Des Moines. That's how massive the multi-platinum thrash-monster called Pantera has become while we weren't paying attention, and now these Texan road warriors are impossible to ignore. Tonight, they rip Newport's head off and dance around its spury-necked corpse.

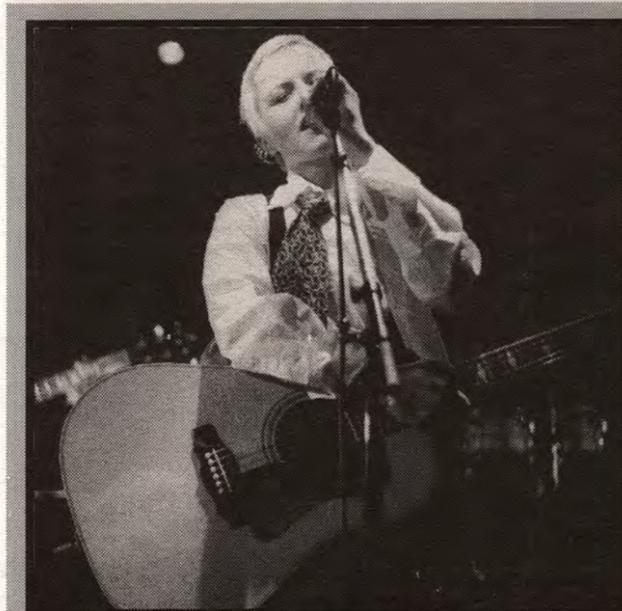
It's only during the second song – or maybe the third – that your brain recovers from the full-on sensory assault long enough to realise that Pantera are the BEST METAL BAND IN THE WORLD EVER. They've got all the things that make metal brilliant – awesome firepower, a World War Three lightshow and an all-out Kill Everyone attitude – with none of the shitty bits. Better still, they deliver their payload with such brutal conviction and skull-crushing volume that any pisstake critique – even NME's all-purpose Mask Of Irony – is instantly crushed to steaming offal beneath their thundering hooves. Pantera, on every level, rock.

Human stealth bomber Philip Anselmo is a balls-out brilliant frontman, out-Rollinsing Henry as he prowls the vast mountain range of Marshall amps which make up Pantera's none-more-black stage rig. Scoring hash off the crowd mid-set is a neat move, but recommending unsafe sex is pushing the steroid-pumped redneck pose too far – joke or no joke.

Still, nobody comes to see Pantera for PC politeness. They come to get their heads blown off by thrash hurricanes like the astonishing 'F—ing Hostile' – a grisly prison riot of a tune which detonates ferocious flailing of limbs for miles around – and the neck-snapping riff meltdown 'Five Minutes Alone' which – no kidding – rocks like a three-legged pig on crack. Pantera are the only metal act around trying to match hardcore rap's amoral adrenalin rush head on without – and here's the crux – stealing from it. This is why they rule, dude.

So watch your backs, Metallica, because Pantera are THE BEST METAL BAND IN THE WORLD EVER. And they know where you live.

Stephen Dalton



Dolores, girl with a heart bigger than her guitar

PICTURE: JOHN CHEVES

**THE CRANBERRIES
LONDON RONNIE SCOTT'S**

HEY INDIE saps! If you wanna progress in the real world, then follow The Cranberries' example and realise one of the major pop dictats: artless is more. You can be the coolest and the smartest item ever, but if you can't give the soul-staggers to the populace or frazzle their senses, you're nobody. The Cranberries do all that stuff without hardly thinking about it.

Coming on for three million record sales and you still feel that Dolores and her mates are fluking it, brilliantly. No English band would even dream of writing a song like 'Ode To My Family' without dousing the whole show with irony, weird juxtapositions, all that scene. But Dolores just bleats on about what a silly, star-crazed girl she's been and how it's upset her mam and dad. You couldn't contrive the eye-moistening glory of it all, as the singer tails off with these cutesy 'doot-doot' intonations and gauchely tweaks a couple of guitar strings.

The sentimentality she shovels into those tunes is terrifyingly potent, hardly rock and roll at all. It's the raw material of pub ballads and pitiful folk laments, and then you realise that this was her formative music way back in Limerick. Dolores never had to fret over the relative merits of Swervedriver and

Catherine Wheel, but she can exocet your feelings with astonishing ease.

All of the tunes off the new LP cover a now-distant writing period when The Cranberries were at their lowest; forfeiting lovers, clashing with rotten business folk, losing confidence. Yet there's no cynicism here, just expressions of hurt, bewilderment, a desire to fix things up. On 'Empty', Dolores pulls the title word around, stretches the syllables, up-ends it, tries to find meaning in the spaces but finally draws back, exhausted. On 'No Need To Argue', she sets out the predicament between herself and her partner, begging for reason, frantically willing away all the interfering static and dumb circumstances. By the end, she's literally in tears.

It's to the other members' credit that they don't try to busy the music up, to jam their own egos in there. There's no need; even in this acoustic 'showcase' setting, Dolores can give 'Zombie' (a sloppy, liberal cop-out on paper, a flamingly great and topical plea for peace live) the kind of raging dynamics it deserves.

You wouldn't want every band to be like this, but The Cranberries prove you can still play it straight and then triumph as mind-benders. Thanksgiving's come early this year.

Stuart Bailie

**GORKY'S
ZYGOTIC MYNCI
CONGREGATION**

LONDON CAMDEN
LAUREL TREE

WHAT FRESH madness is this? There is a band on stage by the baffling name of Gorky's Zygotic Myncl. They are clearly Fall acolytes and they are using trombones, Palitoy keyboards and skew-whiff guitars to kick up the unrullest of rackets. And yet they still take a mere 17 seconds to convince you (and the Laurel Tree's biggest crowd EVER) that superweird can be superace. Cheers.

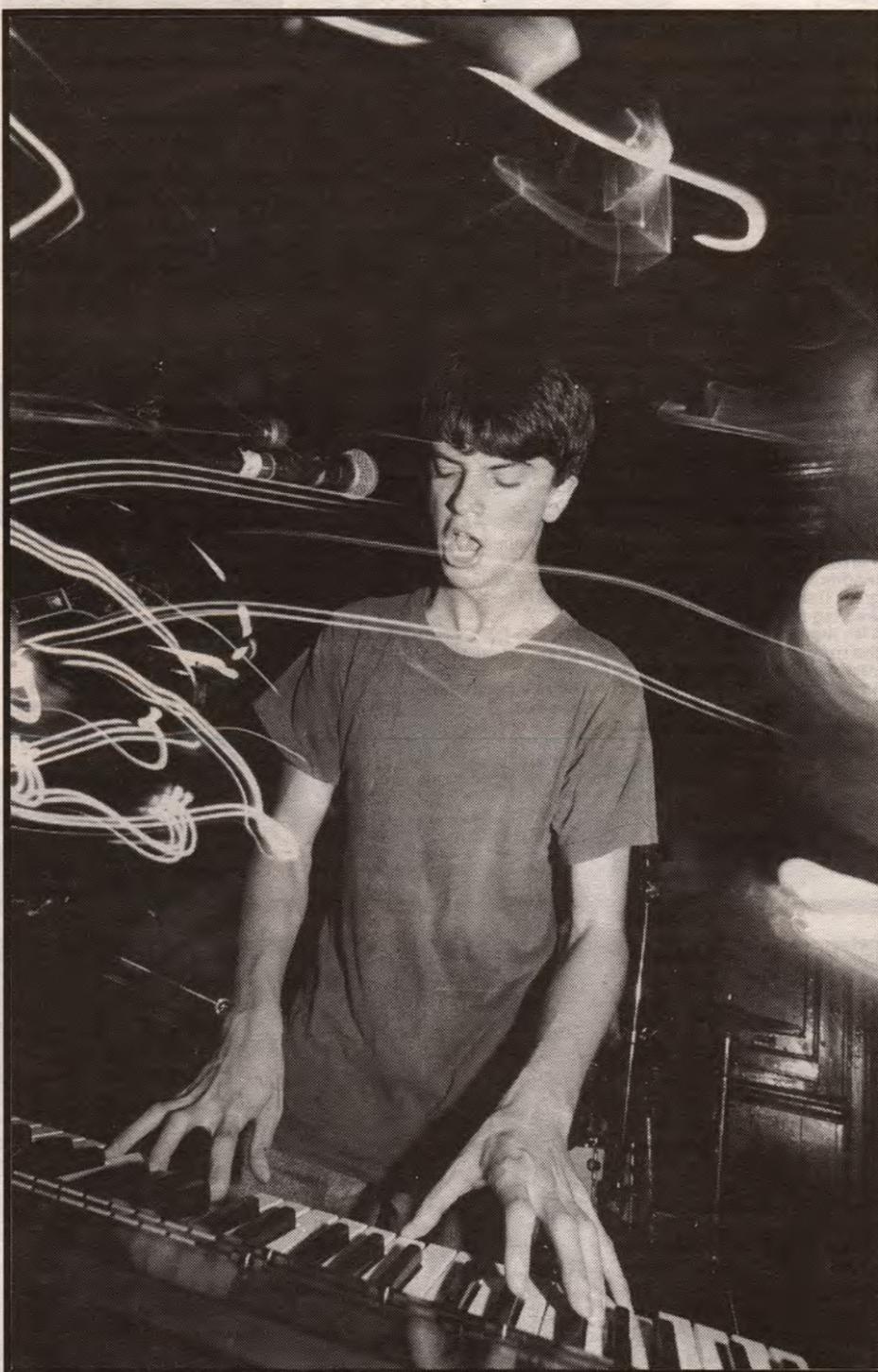
But first, the considerably less off-kilter Congregation. Singer Billy tries his best, bless him – posturing vainly between songs and removing his shirt to expose a liquorice-stick physique – and they have at least one rather lovely, Family Cat-esque number in their splndly set. But ultimately they're all sweat and no glow.

By the time the Gorky's finally cease faffing about and commence their set of brightly packaged oddities, there's so little oxygen in here you can't strike a match. Fortunately, most people are holding their breath anyway, as the last night of summer expires in delightfully unhinged fashion.

Because the Gorks are at once the strangest and the most fantastic thing in too long a while. Live, they're more accessible than on their occasionally impenetrable recordings, but still combine furrowed brows and broad grins by cramming 18 different songs into one.

They do make one concession to popularity: almost half tonight's set is sung in English although, in truth, their Welsh lyrics are no harder to sing along with than, say, the Manics' English ones. But it's heart-warming proof that, after a period of Welsh language isolation, this generation of Welsh combos (see also 60Ft Dolls, Catatonia, Helen Love) are not about to make ignoring them easy.

Not that you could ignore a band who are busy unleashing a 'Monster Mash' for '90s indie-literate, complete with what sounds like a sample of a



PICTURE: ROGER SARGENT

Simian guys have all the pluck: Gorky's reorganise rock

bleating sheep. And that's what Gorkys do on the fundamentally bizarre 'Game Of Eyes'. They also, during the course of the evening, sound like Spacemen 3 playing Blur's 'To The End' ('Bunch'), the Inspiral Carpets on bigger, badder drugs ('Eira') and the

soundtrack to David Lynch's maddest movie yet ('WAW'S'). Yet the chief miracle here is that, throughout such shenanigans, the ghost of wackiness never once has the nerve to inquire about visiting hours, while the whole sanity-deprived shebang remains

curiously danceable. Oh, and they write pop songs that'd make people like Congregation weep.

Putting the disco into discordant, Gorky's Zygotic Myncl are truly, madly, deeply wonderful.

Mark Sutherland

**CHUCK
LONDON CAMDEN
DUBLIN CASTLE CLUB
SPANGLE!**

LOOK, IT'S not our fault, right? Admittedly, the New Wave Of New Wave may just have been invented in some shady, half-pissed corner of NME Towers, but now the crazy coloured tiles of Carnaby Street are quaking with anticipation of... THE NEW MOD! Seriously! All over a square, ooh, 100 yards of North London Town, The Kids are getting scootered up and rediscovering a new Parka-life. Allegedly.

Call them Weller wannabes, or Blur's babies if you want to be really cruel, but all around the world the likes of Mantaray, Therman, Alvin Purple, The Weekenders and Create! are windmilling and scissor kicking their way through toilet gigs bulging with 'La la las' as if grunge never happened. And drinking cups of tea. Enter Reading's Chuck, a finely-tuned powertrio with the kind of tonsil-straining harmonies that would scare a rocker at 200 paces.

Fresh from opening up their hometown festival – guitarist Paul still models his luminous wristband – they're in boisterous frame of mind, flaunting a dynamic debut single in 'Jump' (funded by singer Mark's dad's redundancy money) and basically going for the full steam ahead anti-slacker angle with a weird mixture of cheeky imp grins and socially aware stomps. In fact, it's sometimes hard to equate their puppydog exterior with such politico-punchy lyrics – particularly when Chuck lapse into banal platitudes (see 'Stand up and be counted!') and the set drags on roughly three songs too long.

'Racey' is one word that springs not unreasonably to mind most of the time, however. 'Irrepressible' is another. And 'fruity' is yet another, as Mark punches his bass, launches himself skyward with legs akimbo and flogs yet another wretchedly catchy chorus like a man who has this loud'n'lairy Beatpop thing totally sussed. Woof.

Next week: The New Wave Of New Romantics hits the Bull & Gate. Probably.

Simon Williams

**THRUM
LONDON THE
MARQUEE**

OUTSIDE, HUNDREDS of people are pressing to glimpse Naomi Campbell at her West End book launch. The rumour machine across the road, says she'll be in the Marquee later to check out Thrum. But Campbell and her entourage don't show – and it's their loss.

Inside the Marquee, there's an equally compelling woman holding court in the diminutive form of Monica Queen. She's blessed with a voice to kill for, although it harks from the sun-drenched states of America rather than the rain-sodden streets of her native Glasgow.

Thrum are part-garage, part-country and part full-on rock; somewhere between Lone Justice and The Rockingbirds with a king-sized heart and balls bigger than Buster Gonad's. Tonight they're spewing out bite-size nuggets of love, hate and joy with brash guitars and melodies that shimmy and shine.

They're ploughing the Americana-obsessed vein that dominates Scottish music. But there's not the puffy gloss of Texas, the impish retro-fixation of Whiteout or the insidious poses of Del Amitri. They're dirty, passionate and believable – and naturally, they're very drunk.

Guitarist John Smillie goes epileptic during the metal-esque assault of 'Rifferama'. 'Nowhere To Run' is a sonic rocker and when it ends two encores later Monica is wailing through a dizzying version of – you guessed it – Neil Young's 'Like A Hurricane'.

Outside, the hapless suits are still milling about waiting for Naomi to surface. Poor bastards, they were queueing for the wrong event.

Andy Richardson