



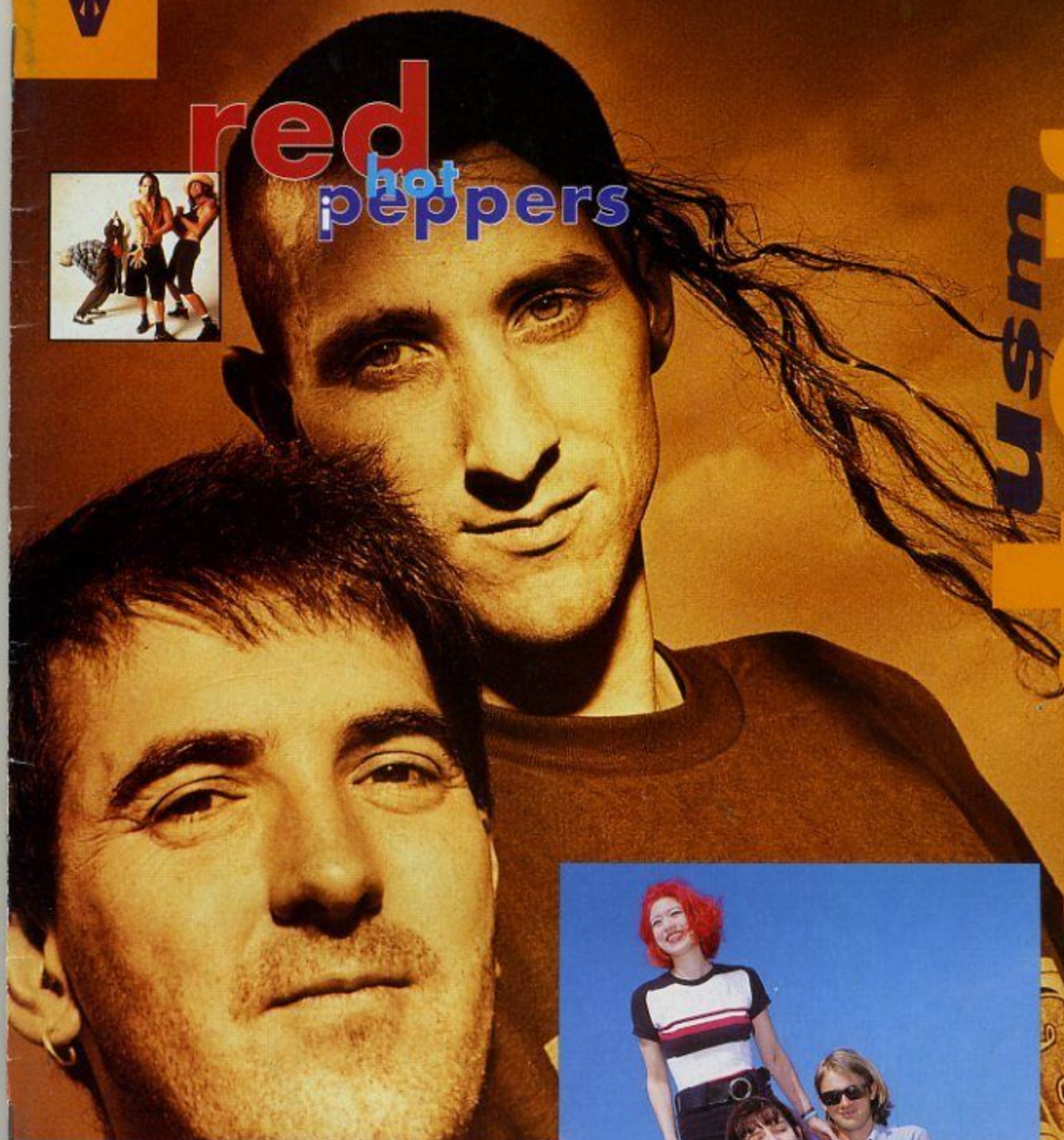
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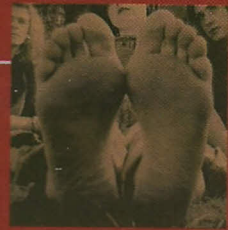


photo • matt anker

Finding The Cranberries a never ending sauce of inspiration, Michael Bonner returns to tempt Dolores with endless offers of earthly pleasures. Instead, he finds himself very generously helping the rest of the band to take advantage of their rider.

they think the four tracks on their single are equally representative of their material. This is, of course, perfectly true. The opener, the cuddly *Uncertain*, is balanced by the delicate, sea-shore lapping of *Nothing Left At All*, while *Pathetic Senses* is as close to a rock stomper as they'll probably get and *Them* is their elegant and veiled set piece. Personally, I prefer the likes of *Nothing Left At All* and *Them* because they're so much more unique, so

It's been two months to the day since I last shoved a tape recorder down the throats of everyone's favourite Celtic charmers, the Cranberries. Back then, we were out on the first floor patio at the University of London Union. Now we're sitting in the calm, air conditioned comfort of the Columbia Hotel, Lancaster Gate, blessed with an excellent view of Hyde Park and a well stocked bar which reception opens up especially for us. My, don't things change quickly? The last time we met, the Cranberries were on the verge of signing to Island. Now they have, and the result is a record called *Uncertain*, which is truly wondrous; suffused, as it is, by a wild, evocative beauty which makes me think of Mazzy Star's *Black Flower* and the Cocteau Twins' *Cico Bluff* spun together into one exquisite silk.

Anyway, the Cranberries tell me that they think the four tracks on their single are equally representative of their material. This is, of course, perfectly true. The opener, the cuddly *Uncertain*, is balanced by the delicate, sea-shore lapping of *Nothing Left At All*, while *Pathetic Senses* is as close to a rock stomper as they'll probably get and *Them* is their elegant and veiled set piece. Personally, I prefer the likes of *Nothing Left At All* and *Them* because they're so much more unique, so

much more tantalizing and I like to think that they, more than the rest of their set, embody the essence of what makes the Cranberries special.

"I like the moody ones, too," admits Dolores. "I think my strength as a writer lies in those songs. You spend a lot more time working on something that's very emotional like *Them* and so it's really satisfying when you can here it played back."

Two months have been awfully kind to the Cranberries, bearing in mind their sudden and fortuitous rise to somewhere close to Heaven. By the time you read this, I'm sure that at least one weekly will have put them on the front cover, while everyone concerned believes that *Uncertain* is going to do Great and Glorious Things. Nonplused, though, the Cranberries remain unaffected by all this palaver.

"Everything's still the same," says Dolores casually. "We're still living as we were. We haven't been changed by anything and I don't think we will. Personally, I'd never even heard of a record deal until a year ago, so it doesn't really mean that much to me apart from being a nice thing to happen to us as a band."

The Cranberries' sense of down-to-earth is nigh on supernatural. They refuse point blank to be drawn into the whole rock 'n' roll shebang and, when I postulate that it's possible Dolores might find herself in line for the throne of Indie Goddess, she just smiles.

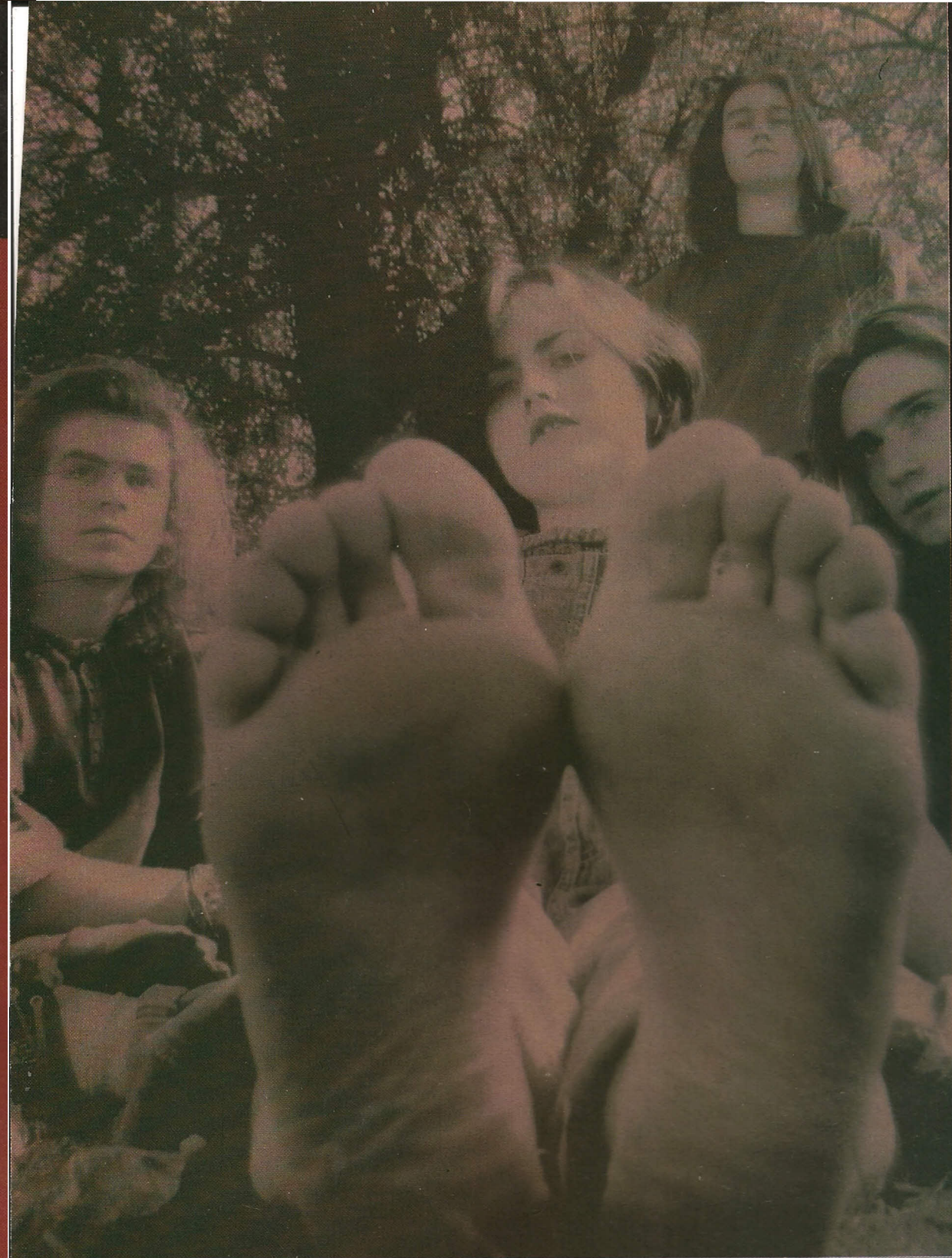
"I just want to have a nice house and loads of babies," she shrugs.

But wouldn't you like to be famous? Wouldn't you like all the trappings that go with it? The money, the women, the hard drugs?

"It just goes to your head," says someone.

"I'd like enough to live on" admits Dolores. "It's just that the main goal isn't material richness, it's richness in your mind. We want to be happy with what we're doing, first and foremost."

For sure, but wouldn't it be nice to be immensely stupid and irresponsible with a huge pile of cash, just for a short time?



I put the bag of coke and the keys to the Toyota MR-2 back in my pocket and console myself with another family-sized bottle of Corona.

"No!" they all agree in unison.

Oh well, I put the bag of coke and the keys to the Toyota MR-2 back in my pocket and console myself with another family-sized bottle of *Corona*.

So, where do the Cranberries stand in the scheme of things? Curiously, my friends, curiously indeed. You see, they have, if you like, an indie sensibility which has been nurtured from playing with Moose and the House Of Love, but their style and ability to create extraordinarily atmospheric and accomplished pieces of music will doubtlessly see them embraced by more commercially orientated - maybe even AOR - radio stations. This poses no problem at all - in fact, it's exactly the sort of thing one should encourage. The Cranberries themselves see it all as part of destiny - theirs, everyone else's,

the Universe's - which almost tempts me into some rambling debate about the concepts of free will, destiny, Implicate Order theories and Anthony Burgess but, luckily, time forbids such luxuries and the Cranberries escape unscathed.

Later in the evening, after a few more gins, *Guinnesses*, *Kronenbergs*, vodkas, and some other stuff I don't really that well, the Cranberries play to a crowd which looks like a Who's Who of the British music industry. In some ways, it's absolutely astounding that these four people from Limerick can conjure up such spectacular acclaim in so short a time. At the end of the day, though, this isn't some short-lived hype - this is pure and from the heart and these qualities will ensure the Cranberries' future.