

ENTERTAINMENT MUSIC

# The Cranberries farewell album: One more time with Dolores

By Bernard Zuel  
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When Dolores O'Riordan died in January last year, it looked like it was the end of The Cranberries.

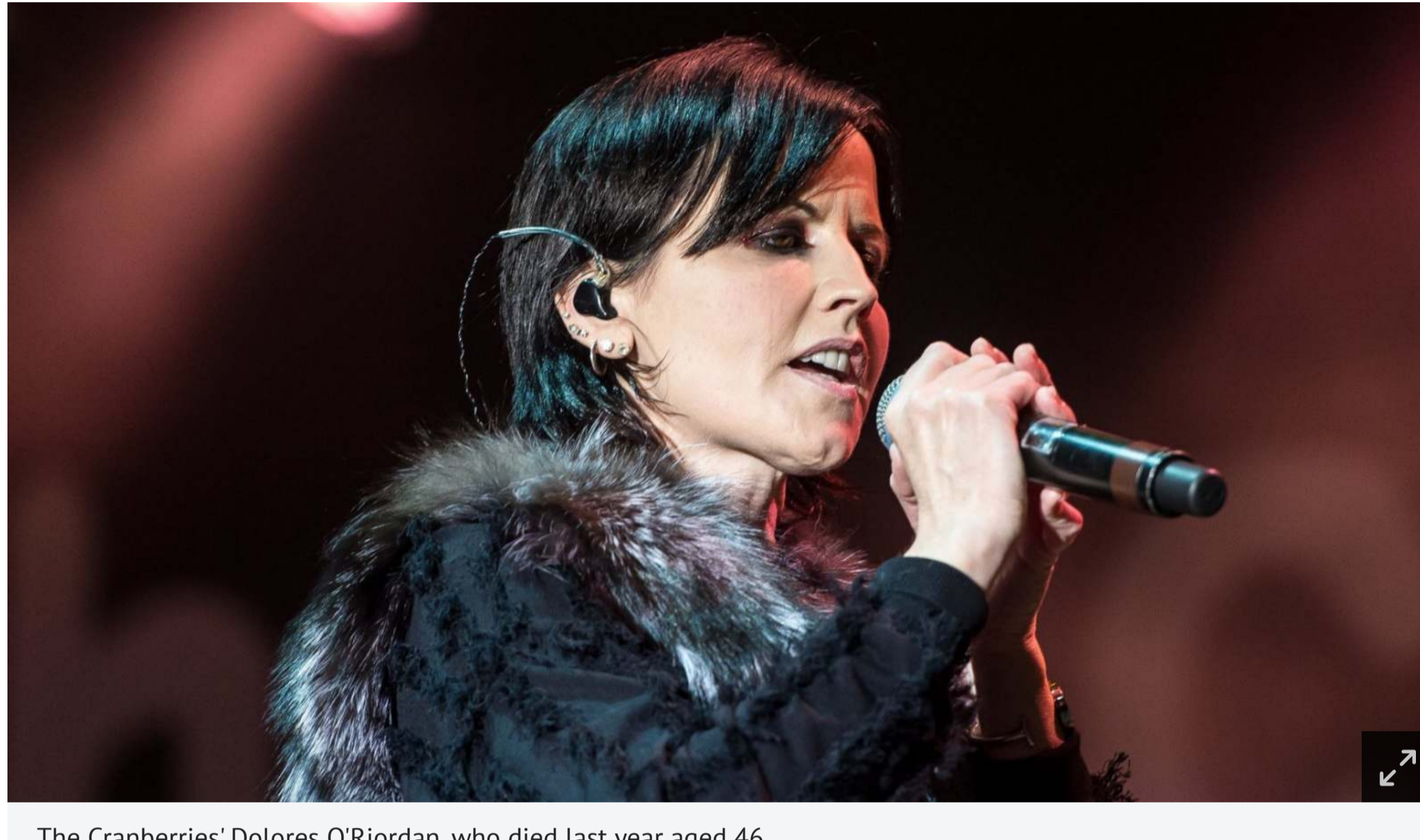
The band went on to produce sales of more than 40 million and hits in perpetuity such as *Zombie*, *Linger*, and *Dreams* after she joined them nearly 30 years earlier in Limerick, Ireland.



The Cranberries in 1996. MARK SELIGER

As much as the songwriting was shared with guitarist Noel Hogan, and the band had held firm through those years of massive sales, periods of relative quiet, and her solo career, O'Riordan was the voice, face and spiritual pulse of the group for everyone else.

But she'd left a swag of songs written with Hogan, many of which had her full vocals on demo tapes, ahead of the band's planned return to the studio.



The Cranberries' Dolores O'Riordan, who died last year aged 46.

And as Hogan listened back to them a month later he could hear something there that felt right, "like a gift that Dolores had left behind", he says now.

Could they? Should they? When the estates and record companies of Michael Jackson and Prince, Elvis Presley and Jeff Buckley had trawled through the bottom drawers and shelves for anything to sell, there had been a smell of exploitation hanging over it all.

The Cranberries were better than that, surely, and anyway, these were not offcuts and discards; these were whole songs itching to go.

Hogan went to her family for approval.

"No, no, we couldn't have done it with that cloud hanging over us of not having their approval and feeling like we had stolen something from them," he says, explaining the family had always been close to the band and O'Riordan's brother Peter had been co-managing them since 2012.

"I spoke to him first and Peter got the [sound] files I didn't have from New York and he said 'I know she was so excited about doing this so it would be crazy not to finish it'.

"Then we spoke to the rest of the family, particularly her mum who she was very, very close with, and her mother was so delighted to hear it because she was worried we wouldn't finish it. They said go ahead and do what you need to do and whatever else you need, we are here to do that."

So Hogan, his bassist brother Mike, and drummer Fergal Lawler went into the studio in April with their long-time producer Stephen Street to finish a job. And to finish the band.

"We knew we were done after this. We'll leave The Cranberries behind us now," Hogan says. "We never, ever discussed replacing Dolores, or having someone else there. It's only really in the last month, since we started doing this kind of [promotional] stuff that it's come up. It was always the four of us and without one of us there, you wouldn't consider it."

Whatever you may think of the proprieties of a posthumous album – and this one begins with a song called *All Over Now*, and ends with one called *In The End* – there is nothing about this record that suggests patchwork or a hastily cobbled-together cash-in.

It sounds if anything like early Cranberries. The symbiosis of a band is there. As is the needs of three forty-something men dealing with loss.

"We had to do it for Dolores's memory, for the band, for the legacy of the band, so to come in at the end with some kind of subpar album was not something we could do," says Hogan. "It was almost like therapy at the time, but looking back on it now I can't imagine how I could have coped last year if we hadn't done this album."

**The Cranberries' *In The End* is out April 26.**

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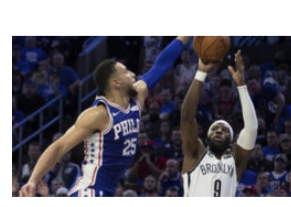
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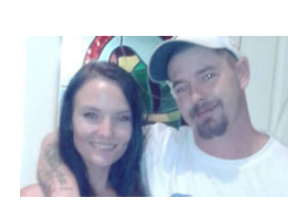
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