

# Home fans give Cranberries a rapturous reception

THE sensational Limerick rock band, Cranberries, whose record-breaking debut album "Everybody Else is Doing It So Why Can't We" is believed to have already grossed an estimated \$15 million in sales in the US, last night played to 1,000 home fans at a sell-out concert in the Theatre Royal.

It was a memorable occasion for the talented band members, lead vocalist, Dolores O'Riordan (22), brothers Noel (21) and Mike Hogan (20) guitarists, and drummer Fergal Lawler, as they took the stage to a raptur-

ous reception following their successful four-month tour of the US where their debut album created Irish musical history by selling 1.1 million copies and reached 18 in the US charts. Last week the album sold 80,000 copies.

Earlier in the day Cranberries were accorded a warm reception at City Hall by the Mayor of Limerick, Sen Jan O'Sullivan, to mark the band's outstanding achievement.

"I welcome you home as superstars and congratulate you on your phenomenal success.

"We are hugely proud of you - I know you started from a modest beginning and you have gone from strength to strength on the quality of your own songs and music and Dolores's distinctive voice," declared the Mayor.

Sen O'Sullivan pointed out that bands

By TONY PURCELL

came and went but "we are convinced that you have the kind of product that is going to stay and I cannot see any reason why you cannot remain at the top and reach even greater heights on the international stage."

Dolores, who accepted a special plaque presented on behalf of the city, thanked the Mayor for what she described as the "brilliant reception" for the band in their home city.

She expressed her full confidence that many more young Irish bands and artistes could make it to the top on the international stage.

"There's a lot of talent in Ireland and we have proved it can be done on a global level," she said.

One of the main reasons for the band's phenomenal success,

she believed, was because the songs she wrote have a universal theme "about my own life and experiences as a human being, how human beings treat each other, which appeals to young people."

Surrounded by auto-graph hunters, Dolores, from the village of Ballybricken, eight miles from Limerick, said that she was not frightened by the prospect of mega stardom. The band's success had not really struck them.

"Since I was five years' old, I had a subconscious feeling that one day I would make my career in singing and writing.

We are delighted with our success, and the Irish people are very supportive of the band. It is lovely to come home and be so well received. It is really brilliant," said a de-

lighted Dolores.

An indication of their meteoric rise to international stardom over the past year could be gauged from the fact that only two years ago Cranberries were one of three bands that played before only 35 fans at the Theatre Royal, and last Christmas they played to some 600 people at the same venue.

But, last night, Seamus Flynn, owner of the Theatre Royal declared: "We could have run for a week - the demand was huge and tickets were sold out three week ago. We could have sold ten thousand tickets."

Mr Flynn, who witnessed the rise of Cranberries from the very beginning, described their success as "absolutely phenomenal" and said that the band members were "great ambassadors for Limerick and

Ireland."

"They are extremely positive young people and are very well organised," he added.

The Cranberries plan to spend Christmas at home and will appear in London's Astoria theatre on January 15.

"We are planning a second album fairly soon," said Dolores, "one of the mistakes that bands sometimes make is to leave too much of a gap between albums."

Dressed in a black leather jacket and trousers, Dolores also revealed that Cranberries plan to shoot a new video to promote the release of their second single "Dreams" in the US to follow the success of their first single "Linger," which is currently 15 in the US charts.



■ SUPERSTAR Dolores O'Riordan, lead singer with Cranberries, at Limerick City Hall yesterday for a mayoral reception. (Camera: Kieran Clancy)