



Ed Sheeran by Dara Munnis

19

ED SHEERAN

Whelan's, Dublin | Jan '15

A magical night watching Damien Rice in 2002 inspired Ed Sheeran's career in music, so it was coming full circle when the flame-haired chart-topper – arriving with VH1 *Storytellers* cameras in tow – supplied perhaps the most incredible night in the venue's decorated history. Heading to the show with HP snapper Kathrin Baumbach, rabid fans were ready to rip us limb from limb for one of the precious wristbands, as an estimated 70,000 applications had been received for a mere 400 golden tickets. By the time cameras rolled at midnight, excitement was at fever pitch; by the time the greatest one-man-band in pop finished 90 minutes later, we were utterly floored. Watching it back, it looks fantastic on telly – but trust me, it was something else entirely to be there.

• Colm O'Regan

18

THE CRANBERRIES

Theatre Royal, Limerick | Dec '93

It was either the second or third year we'd done a Christmas gig at the Theatre Royal. The previous ones had been a bit quieter though, put it that way!

We'd been away for nearly a year, starting with a few weeks around Europe supporting Hot House Flowers in February. Our album had come out, but done nothing – charted in the late hundreds – and we thought we were going to get dropped. Then, we got a call saying 'Linger' had taken off on US college radio, and off we went to the States; it was nine months later when we got home.

We had no idea what was coming. Shannon was stuffed with photographers and press. I'd heard from my parents that they'd read things were going well, but we didn't know that it had been picked up back here to that extent. My dad was waiting at the airport, and he was as surprised as we were! I'll always remember how rammed the Royal was that night. At the back door, there were old schoolmates you hadn't seen in years banging on the door looking to get in; all of a sudden, you had a lot more cousins than ever!

To play a home gig is always a buzz, but to have everyone know every song, and to get the reaction we did made it totally special. You felt like you'd arrived; if it ended the following day, we'd done what most bands hope to do.

• Noel Hogan

17

LEONARD COHEN

Lissadell House, Sligo | July '10

While there are those who will steadfastly maintain that the Kilmainham 'comeback' shows were the most notable of Laughing Lennie's visits to our shores, the memory of hearing Cohen pay tribute to WB Yeats in the heart of Sligo is that little bit special. Reciting lines from the stage, we could all see he was visibly moved – no more, it might be added, than I was, seeing Cohen's genius up close once again. 75 years young he may have been, but in a glorious setting, the titfired troubadour was simply incredible. It was a magical evening with a musical master.

• Colm O'Regan



The Beasties backstage by Cathal Dawson

16

BEASTIE BOYS

Tivoli Theatre, Dublin | June '94

Myself and Hot Press snapper Cathal Dawson met the Beasties in the 900-capacity venue at three o'clock after they'd completed their very loud soundcheck. They were going through a cricket phase at the time, and when they clocked I was English decided to do the interview in "tally-ho, old boy!" accents.

Being a camera buff, Mike D was able to tell Cathal exactly what lens and shutter speed were required to get good photos of them in the dimly-lit dressing-room.

The gig itself was smoking, with the trio seamlessly switching between funky call-and-response hip hop, speed-freak punk and their brazen 'up yours!' frat boy rock, which had so enraged the UK red tops a few years earlier.

• Stuart Clark



Thom Yorke by Cathal Dawson

15

RADIOHEAD

Rock Garden, Dublin | May '93

A subterranean flea-pit with the stickiest floor ever, The Rock Garden was for four or five years the venue where most emerging acts made their Dublin bow. Radiohead were among the initiates. Estimates vary enormously, but I reckon there were around 100 people there to see a bleach blond Thom Yorke and the chaps plug their debut *Pablo Honey* album, which was doing far brisker business at the time in the States than on this side of the Atlantic. With their prog rock leanings yet to surface, it was a loud, punky performance, with Yorke subjecting his mic to Iggy Pop levels of abuse and Ed O'Brien throwing serious guitar shapes. Afterwards we all headed to Fatima Mansions' almost equally legendary late night gig in The Tivoli, where there wasn't room to swing even a vertically-challenged cat.

• Stuart Clark