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Cranberries talk Adele, new CD

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Last Updated: February 27, 2012 2:52pm

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Cranberries frontwoman Dolores O'Riordan says she's encouraged at the domination of British singer Adele in the last year.

"She's a voice, and she's classic," said the plain-spoken, Limerick-born O'Riordan, 40, in a Toronto hotel recently to promote the '90s-era pop-rock band's first album in 11 years, *Roses*, out Tuesday (Feb. 28)

"I like the fact that she doesn't peel them (clothes) off ... 'cause all the other broads are like, 'Here's me bum ... and whatever.' I kind of find of it aggravating 'cause I always think, 'Just 'cause we're women, why do we have to have our knockers hanging out?' Why can't we actually sing and get respected as good singers and songwriters without having our boobs and butt hanging out?"

O'Riordan, seated beside Cranberries guitarist Noel Hogan who is smiling as she speaks her mind, added it will be interesting to see how Adele's success plays out since, given she herself wrestled with The Cranberries' fame and its aftermath in the early-to-mid '90s .

"Every artist that's hugely successful, there's very often the backlash, and so I kind of wonder how it will go," said O'Riordan. "She's going to have to be a tough girl. She's going to have to be strong because she

doesn't have a band. She's on her own and she's a young girl, so just fingers crossed that she'll be tough and she'll be able to deal with everything, 'cause I just have great admiration for her."

The Cranberries themselves took a major detour in 2003 when they went on hiatus after a disappointing 2001 album, *Wake Up and Smell The Coffee*, and writer's block.

O'Riordan released two solo albums, 2007's *Are You Listening?* and 2009's *No Baggage*, but as she was preparing to go out on her own around the second CD, she instead reunited with her old bandmates for tour.

"It was nice to be back with the lads because I've done so much with them, it felt like putting on your comfortable boots," said O'Riordan, who will play with the band on May 8 at Montreal's Metropolis and May 9 at Toronto's Sound Academy.

"And I had done *Are You Listening?* with a bunch of hired musicians but it didn't feel the same."

Turns out too that Hogan had been sending O'Riordan songs since 2005 so the creative juices were definitely flowing again.

In fact, a song he sent in 2011 particularly hit a nerve with O'Riordan, and it would turn into the title track from *Roses*, which was produced by the band's longtime collaborator Stephen Street.

"I went, 'Oh, my God, I love this,'" remembered O'Riordan. "And I just got really emotional because my father had cancer for six-and-a-half years and he was dying and I knew it and I knew as well that he wouldn't make the end of the year. I knew he wouldn't see 2012. So I remember I was really emotional and very sad but it just kind of came out like -- Bang! -- and it was just all thinking about my dad ... It was beautiful and it was my way of saying goodbye, I guess."

O'Riordan's father, Terence, died at the age of 74 on Nov. 25, 2011, in Limerick, but she had a "blessing in disguise" when he passed away at home surrounded by his wife of 50 years and their seven children.

"I was actually with him when he took his final breath," she said. "I was actually holding his hand so in a way there was great closure, and I felt really enlightened that the Lord had allowed me (that). And I kind of felt in a way that (my father) did that as well because he wanted to say, 'Go ahead now little one, don't worry about me, go ahead and do your thing.'"

O'Riordan loving life in Canada

Cranberries lead singer and Irish native Dolores O'Riordan says her full-time move to Canada three years ago has worked out well.

"It's been really good, it's so tranquil and that," O'Riordan told QMI Agency while in Toronto to promote *Roses*, the first Cranberries album in 11 years due Tuesday, Feb. 28. "It's very inspiring for writing."

Previously, O' Riordan's family -- six-year-old Dakota, 11-year-old Molly and 14-year-old Taylor plus 20-year-old Don. Jr, from Canadian-born husband Don Burton's previous relationship -- divided their time between Ireland and a home outside Peterborough, Ont., the latter that they bought in 1994.

The only downside to doing what are now essentially hometown shows in Toronto is the after-party.

"There's always casualties stories about my friend in the crowd, and who had too much whatever they were drinking," O'Riordan joked. "There's always a couple of casualties the next day. 'Cause Don is so social. He has tons of friends in Toronto. So there's always like hundreds of buddies. There's always a party in my bus. I remember the last time I was doing two in a row, and I think it was Massey Hall, and I remember I was going to go on my tour bus but I could see my bus shaking from outside. The whiskey was out as there were a load of friends like people who had come from up north and what not. And they were all on the bus."

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