

THE BOSTON  
GLOBE

# C

# ALENDAR

OCTOBER 27, 1994  
VOLUME 21  
NUMBER 1

8

Boo!

Halloween events  
near and far

19

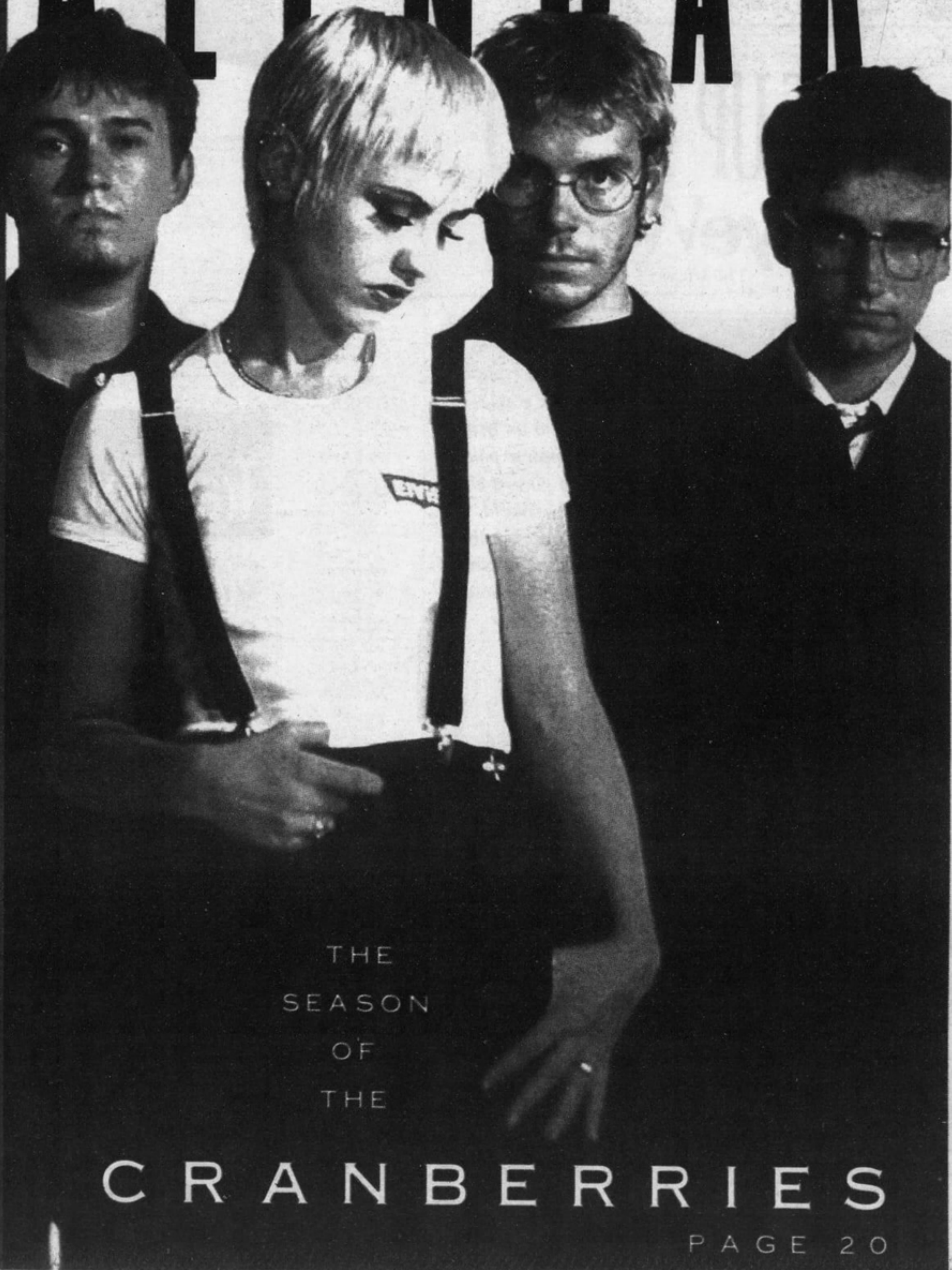
Irish jam

London scene  
players in concert

25

Morse Code

Comedy returns  
to Square



THE  
SEASON  
OF  
THE

# CRANBERRIES

PAGE 20

# C | R | A | N | B | E | R | R | I | E | S

I R E L A N D ' S   A C C I D E N T A L   R O C K   S T A R S

by  
Steve  
Morse

Hailing from the small town of Limerick, the Cranberries are Ireland's latest rock sensation. They're living at a fast-lane speed, but rest assured they didn't plan it. They started four years ago as teen-age hobbyists, with no hint that their debut album would ever sell 3 million copies.

Entitled "Everybody Else is Doing It, So Why Can't We?", that album is the top-selling debut in Irish history, even besting country-men U2's first album. It's just been followed by a second disc, "No Need to Argue," which sets the stage for a tour stopping at the Orpheum Nov. 7.

"When you come from a town like Limerick, you think, 'Well, I could start a band, but nothing is going to come of it.' So all this has been a bit of an accident, really," Cranberries guitarist Noel Hogan said last week from Paris. "When we started, I was working in a hotel. I had gone through many,

many jobs - and I took up music as just something to do."

The other Cranberries were likewise preparing for non-rock careers. Singer Dolores O'Riordan was in school and working week-ends in a clothing shop. Hogan's bass-playing brother, Mike, was an apprentice plumber. Drummer

Fergal Lawlor was training to be a machinist.

"It was weird," said Noel, now 22. "We used to just meet three times a week. We'd rehearse and that would be it. We did a few local gigs and we were quite content with that. We just thought, 'Grand, this is fine.' Then we made a demo [tape]. We did it for ourselves, just to have it. But everyone we played it to said, 'You should send it out.'"

"We knew nothing about what you do to get a record contract. And we weren't out looking for one. But we got some addresses and just sent the [tapes] off. Then we got all these letters back. People started flying us to London and coming over to see us. We were shocked. We were all trying to get days off from work. It was really strange."

The Cranberries captivated record labels with an ethereal, pop-textured sound based around the bewitching, ornamental voice of O'Riordan. She is 22 now, but was just 18 when she walked into her first rehearsal. Talk about beginner's luck. The first song she wrote with the band was "Linger," which became a worldwide hit with its romantic word play: "You know I'm such a fool for you - you have me wrapped around your finger; do you have to let it linger?"

"I didn't know anything about Dolores until a guy that we knew - his girlfriend's sister was in Dolores' class - told us about her," said Hogan. "She was from more out of town than we were - about 12 miles outside [Limerick]. I suppose it would be considered the country.

where she's from. We had a lot of

instrumental-type stuff at the time and Dolores was looking for a band," said Hogan, who had been playing guitar for less than a year. "We were really bad. We were writing our own stuff, because we didn't know anything else. Dolores said she had been writing for years at home, but never met the right people. So she came and sang some stuff that she had. It was obvious she had an amazing voice. We put some things on tape for her and she came back a few days later and the first song we did was 'Linger.' At the time our equipment was so bad that you couldn't really hear the words."

Although one might detect seeming traces of Irish singers Enya and Sinéad O'Connor in O'Riordan's voice, she was not a big fan of either, Hogan said. "Dolores was never really into any kind of pop music. When she was younger, she didn't bother with it. She used to sing in the choir... and that was about it."

"She's never bought a CD in her life," Hogan added with a chuckle. "I think she likes orchestra-type stuff, such as the soundtrack from 'The Mission.' That type of stuff. She's always talking about how she went to a monastery in Ireland, and how these monks did chants there at a particular time every day. She said that was amazing. She kind of prefers things like that to stuff in record shops. But she does like Metallica."

If there's one nagging regret to the Cranberries, it's that their first album was poorly received in Ireland. They didn't become stars at home until they had captured America, where the first album sold 2 of its 3 million copies.

"We had to go to the other side of the world and make it there first," Hogan said. "It wasn't until they re-released the record that it went to No. 1 in Ireland."

Hogan said the band was hurt by the backbiting of some Irish journalists. "When we got some success, they immediately slagged us. I'm not saying everyone's like that. It's just certain journalists. And we know who they are." He adds a story that U2's Bono told about the difference between Dublin and Los Angeles. "He said in LA there was a guy cleaning the streets, and when the guy looked up to the top of the hill, he said, 'Someday, that's going to be me living up there.' But when a guy in Dublin cleans the streets and looks up to the top of the hill, he says, 'Some day I'm going to get that

bastard.' That kind of sums it up, really."

The Cranberries have likewise encountered some backlash on their new album, "No Need to Argue." It's a slower, deeper, more atmospheric work than their first album, but some critics have pegged it as indulgent.

"In my opinion, it's a good album. I'm not ashamed of it," said Hogan. "We could have played it really safe and tried to do what we did on the first album all over again, but we didn't... We were like 17 and 18 years old when we wrote the songs on the first album. I'm 22 now. We've been through so much in the last few years. We've just toured and toured and toured. Hopefully, that has made us better... We knew this time that we wanted to experiment around with things. We wanted to try out different sounds."

There's also some deeper political commentary, notably on the new single "Zombie." It's one of the few hard-edged songs on the record and is a chilling condemnation of violence toward children. O'Riordan wrote the lyrics.

"She writes about things that are going on in her life," said Hogan. "With 'Zombie,' it was about the Warrenton bombings in England, where some kids got killed. She saw it on the news. Two children were killed, I believe. What the song is about is how violence affects children more than anyone else. They're the ones who suffer."

"The song wasn't having a go at any one particular crowd of people. It was having a go at anyone who's involved in violence of any kind."

Typically, O'Riordan writes the lyrics for the band, while she and Hogan collaborate on the music. But they still try to keep the same spontaneous feel of their early days. "I learned just by messing around," said Hogan. "I went to a guy for some lessons for a few weeks. Just basic stuff. But I never really know what I'm playing. I just play it. If it sounds good, I leave it at that."

Steve Morse is a member of the Globe's staff.

## OUTTAKES

UPCOMING SHOW:  
Nov. 7 at Orpheum Theatre.

BAND MEMBERS: Dolores O'Riordan, Noel Hogan, Mike Hogan, Fergal Lawlor.

ADVICE FROM U2 SINGER BONO: 'We met him last Christmas in Dublin at an awards show,' said Noel Hogan. 'He told us to take care of ourselves and watch out and don't let people take us for a ride. He was really nice.'

ON MEETING SINEAD O'CONNOR: 'She was in another studio where we were doing the new album. She kind of said hi, just passing in the hall and stuff. There wasn't any kind of bitchiness or anything. She just said, 'Hi, how's it going?' That was about it. When you don't know people well, it's kind of weird.'

NO BIG STAGE SET: 'We have a PA and a few lights, but there won't be any big explosions or anything like that happening. We're into having the songs out there more than stunning everyone with tons of staging.'

ON PLAYING WOODSTOCK '94: 'It was a bit of an honor, I suppose. We were probably the youngest band there. It was great to see it as well. A lot of people have asked us do we think it was like the first Woodstock. But we don't know a lot about that. We weren't even here yet.'

IN PHOTO FROM LEFT: FERGAL LAWLOR, DOLORES O'RIORDAN, MIKE HOGAN AND NOEL HOGAN

