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## Cranberries Bear Babies, Prepare Album for Release

By Jon Wiederhorn  
05/17/2001



When ethereal Irish alt-rockers the Cranberries were working on such chart-topping hits as "Linger" and "Zombie" at Dublin's famous Windmill Lane Recording Studios during the '90s, the grounds probably resembled a smoky bar. But as the band finished its upcoming record, *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee*, two weeks ago, it's likely the place looked more

like a daycare center.

Vocalist Dolores O'Riordan's second child, Molly Leigh, was 4 months old; guitarist Noel Hogan's wife had just given birth to the couple's second young 'un, Sophie; and bassist Mike Hogan was preparing for the arrival of his first kid. As a result, the music being generated was less akin to the death-obsessed ramblings of 1996's *To the Faithful Departed* than reflective of the sheer joy of creation.

"I'm going to be 30 this year, and I guess when you get to that next level in life, everything that once seemed so important - record sales, touring, and staying popular - doesn't matter as much anymore," O'Riordan said as the band was about to enter Townhouse Studios in London and begin mixing the record. "Suddenly your life's fuller and you learn how to grasp the moment you're in and live it and enjoy it."

O'Riordan described *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee*, scheduled for release in October, as an upbeat combination of the band's four studio releases. "There are a few fast, kind of punky songs and some slow, gentle ones," she said. "There's more maturity, more confidence, and less apprehension. I've come to the conclusion that life is for the taking and just too short to dwell on the negative."

The Cranberries recorded 18 songs at Windmill Lane, 13 of which will end up on the record. The rest, including a cover of Elvis Presley's "In the Ghetto," will be released as B-sides.

Some of the songs on the album were written last year during the band's Bury the Hatchet tour. The rest were penned throughout O'Riordan's pregnancy. Though the record doesn't concern childbirth directly, O'Riordan said becoming pregnant had a profound impact on the group's new material.

"There's a kind of sacredness around your body that affects everything you do," she explained. "You don't drink, you're not smoking, you're going to bed early, and the baby's ruling you. You think about the child all the time. And when you sing, there's a certain emotion in your voice you couldn't have if there weren't a baby inside you. The feeling that's in your heart all the time comes out spiritually in your voice and the music."

While *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee's* first single hasn't been chosen yet, O'Riordan said she hopes the first radio track will be "Analyze," which describes her newfound perspective. "It's an uptempo song about not analyzing things," she said. "When you overly analyze things, it can really paralyze your evolution. It's important to follow your heart and go with the flow."

Another track, "Time Is Ticking Out," addresses global warming and ecological awareness. "Those kinds of concerns come naturally when you become a parent," she surmised. "You see how the ozone layer is being depleted and there's lots more skin cancer, and you start to worry about what the world will be like when your kids are older. I know we need the products we manufacture, but at the same time, why can't we live without plastic and all the crap that's not biodegradable?"

But of all the songs the Cranberries recorded, O'Riordan said "Never Grow Old" is the one that most succinctly sums up the past year of her life. "It's about realizing that when your life is very good, you don't want things to change," she said. "You believe this is the perfect moment in your life and you're really very grateful. It's ironic because when the band were really big and we had massive hits, I never felt like that. I was always stressed out and insecure. I've learned that for me it's not about being a huge star. I never felt as happy as I do right now."

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