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HOT PRESS

GREEN WITH ANGER

**Lord Mayor John
Gormley Unchained**

The North

**LIFE DURING
PEACETIME**

**NO SURRENDER IN
CROSSMAGLEN**

**ROUGH JUSTICE
The Beating
goes on**

One From The Heart

The Dolores O'Riordan Interview
by Cathy Dillon

American Music Club • Lyle Lovett

• Grant Lee Buffalo • Jimeoin



fruit of the heart



"Dolores knows things she doesn't know," said John Waters on a recent *Late Late Show*.

He wasn't suggesting that the Limerick singer had reached some kind of Socratic state of wisdom where the more she knew the more she realised the limits of her knowledge. He was rather pointing out that there is a history reflected in her voice of which she is not necessarily conscious. Just as, as human beings we have a collective unconscious, we also carry the emotional history of our race, a history which is reflected in everything from our art, music and literature to our accents, manners and physical posture.

Nothing your average Jungian psychologist would argue with there, but Waters, who was on the *Late Late Show* to publicise his forthcoming book on U2, maintains that we are, as a country, denying the reality of our past. It has of late, he argues, been left to a large extent up to popular artists to attempt to deal with it, politicians being too busy embracing the notion of Ireland as a new, progressive European democracy and none too keen, for pretty obvious reasons, to rake over the past.

He maintains that while it is indeed a good thing that U2 became the most popular rock band in the world and that our soccer team did well in the World Cup, our over-reaction to their successes – the sense of stunned delight that we could actually achieve anything at all – is the hallmark of an immature and deeply damaged national psyche.

As Waters see it, Bono's now-notorious tearing up of the tricolour in public was an understandable reaction to his frustration at this country's apparent inability to grow up. It is people like U2 and Sinéad O'Connor – whose new album, *Universal Mother*, contains a track about the famine – who are attempting to make us look at the trauma of our past.

Most of the studio audience expressed amazement that anyone could possibly imagine things might be less than tickety boo in this country's march towards a glorious Eurofuture. The impression was given that this was a rum idea indeed with several people accusing Waters of being a "natural melancholic" whose point of view was tainted by his own childhood baggage. One woman did muster the courage to agree that this country is "in massive denial" about its past.

In the midst of this, the Cranberries came on and did their new single 'Zombie', a heavy-duty grunge workout, which Dolores introduced as "a plea for peace in our country."

"With their guns and their tanks and their tanks and their bombs," Dolores sang, her voice, somewhere between a snarl and a yodel, sending shivers up even the most resistant spines. "It's the same old theme since 1916..."

"I had never heard of the guy," says Dolores the next day. "But I thought he had a lot to say for himself. I don't think the public really wanted to hear it though. He had some good points but it was probably a bit deep for television."

Dolores and her fellow Cranberries are in July's to do promotion for their new album *No Need To Argue* which hit the shops this week and she and I share a pot of tea at one end of a long table in one of the hotel's plush conference rooms.

She was, she admits, pretty nervous about appearing on the show. "It was funny, because Don, my husband, couldn't understand it. He's Canadian so to him it was just another TV show. I said I supposed it was because since I was two or three or something it was the show, the thing that people always watched."

No doubt there are, as we speak, people writing theses about the significance of the *Late Late* in Irish life, but Dolores was hep to the pitfalls of appearing on it.

"I think there are people who want you to go on and be the rebel and want you to say the wrong thing and try to provoke you but I just went on with a casual attitude, y'know – it's a show and I'll chat but I wasn't into causing a rumpus."

Nor, today, will she be drawn on the subject of her voice, despite

the fact that Waters is not the first to comment on its evocative quality. Jah Wobble, with whom Dolores had a recent collaboration, observed that her voice had "a rare, ancient, almost shamanistic element."

"I'm not conscious of that at all," she says hurriedly, when I bring it up.

Then: "It's people who are really into the music who hear it, but it's not something you really want to talk about because it sounds kind of weird. You can talk about it to your friends, but not in public." She eyes me warily.

There is no doubt that Dolores is suspicious of the press and with some justification. She still feels resentful about the failure of journalists here to pick up on the Cranberries before they became mega in the US and feels there is still a lot of prejudice against bands who aren't from Dublin.

"Well, that was a long time ago and things have changed a lot for me since then, but I still want people to know that there is a lot more to Ireland than just Dublin. It's not that there aren't some great people in Dublin, there are, but there are a lot of stupid, pretentious people in the scene too. Y'know (*adopts South Dublin drawl*) 'we're this band and we're in the capital and we go to this pub' or whatever. I prefer just going to ordinary pubs where there are real people and nobody gives a shit."

Things have indeed changed a lot for Dolores. 1993 was an extraordinary year, a year in which, after almost four years of being ground in the music industry mill, the band conquered America within a matter of six months.

They returned to this country at the end of the year to find that Cranberry fever had crossed back across the Atlantic. Their January gig at Dublin's Tivoli theatre was a particularly sweet revenge, though it took until early summer for their debut album *Everybody Else Is Doing It So Why Can't We?* to go to number one in the UK.

1994 has proved pretty eventful too. At the end of '93 Dolores ended a long-term relationship and began going out with Canadian tour manager Don Burton whom she had met while the Cranberries were touring America with Duran Duran. Then, at the beginning of this year, she sustained a serious leg injury while on a skiing holiday in France. She still has a steel pin in her leg, which causes her to wince in pain from time to time.

The injury put her out of action for a considerable portion of the beginning of the year, just as the Cranberries were supposed to begin recording the new album.

"It could have been pressurising if I had let it be," she says of her inability to fulfil her commitments. "But you just have to get over the whole thing of 'oh, I'm in a band and people are waiting' – let them bloody wait, y'know? Put yourself first and get your priorities right." Getting her priorities right involved taking time off and going on a "premature honeymoon" with Don in Jamaica where she relearned how to walk on the beach.

"It was good, 'cos you know you can't really learn how to walk again on the street because there are too many people pushing and shoving and walking around the house isn't really any good."

She returned to London to put down the vocals on the album.

"It was a bit frustrating for Stephen (Street, the producer of both albums and frequent Morrissey collaborator) because I couldn't stand for long periods and I can't really sing properly sitting down, but in the end we got this album done in the same length of time as the first one – six weeks."

Then, in July, Dolores, sporting a new peroxide hairstyle, married Don Burton in Holy Cross Abbey in Tipperary. Her outfit, a cream lace number, designed by hip New York designer Cynthia Rowley, caused a flurry in the tabloid press, inspiring comments along the lines of "she got married in her knickers."

The "controversy" which she has described as "pathetic" and "typical of a Catholic country" obviously hit Dolores hard. Mention of the



Since DOLORES O'RIORDAN appeared on the cover of HOT PRESS at the beginning of the year, her life has changed dramatically on both a personal and professional level. Not only has she starred in the Wedding Of The Year, but she's also sustained a serious leg injury, appeared on the *Late Late Show*, and become a dab hand at dealing with media begrudgery. In between all this, THE CRANBERRIES found time to record a new album, *No Need To Argue*. Interview: CATHY DILLON. Pix: CATHAL DAWSON.

incident brings forth a knee-jerk torrent of anger at journalists who are "about forty and are fat and insecure and have problems with themselves and are jealous of me."

"It was really pathetic to me," she goes on, "because every time you'd read an article that said 'oh, she's vulgar and she's this and she's that' you'd go 'this has to have been written by a woman and she's has to be either old or fat or ugly or in some way insecure, so much so that she has to bitch about my wedding clothes'. 'Cos I would never, ever, complain about anything another woman does. If she's happy then leave her. I don't understand that mentality, that whole bitchy thing."

You sense that she means it and that the rant is simply a reaction to a real sense of hurt. But surely she knew it was bound to happen. It was, after all the silly season and she is a rock star.

"I didn't really think there would be that many press there," she insists. "I had an idea there would be a couple but then the Abbey and the priests were saying that they were getting an awful lot of calls – from every newspaper in Ireland basically – and we thought 'Shit, we'd better get some security'. But all you really want is to be an ordinary girl on your wedding day."

How did her parents react? "They were OK about it because, well, I moved out of home when I was eighteen and it's turned out alright and I think sometimes your parents realise that you can actually make decisions about your life and they can turn out to be good decisions."

"But my dad was funny because he's a real countryman. And I put on the outfit and said 'Look Dad' and he said 'Yes, that's lovely but where's the dress?'. I said 'Dad, I'm not wearing a dress. I don't want to be boring and predictable. I want to wear something different'. But I mean if you go around thinking about the pea-brained Irish mentality and worrying about what people will think... I mean who gives a damn?"

She is obviously still angry too about a piece that appeared in a recent *Q* magazine in which the band's former publicist – by his own admission fired when he failed to deliver the goods and get the band exposure – was quoted as saying that since they had become famous, Dolores had changed.

"How could he possibly know?" says Dolores. "I haven't spoken to him for three years. It's just that now that we've become big, bigger than he could have imagined and he's trying to sell stuff about us. It just goes to show how disloyal some people are and what lengths they will go to to get themselves a bit of attention. It's sad really."

The second album from any successful band is traditionally considered 'difficult'. When your debut has sold 4m worldwide it could be described as 'well nigh impossible'.

No Need To Argue however seems set to consolidate the Cranberries' success. Dolores describes it as being about "the changes I've been through." It is not an upbeat album – several songs clearly refer to the break-up of her last relationship and there are songs dealing with child abduction as well as the aforementioned 'Zombie', about violence in the North.

It's clear that the events of the past couple of years – wonderful though they may have been – have taken an emotional toll. 'Ode To My Family' is a paean to the simple old days and the warmth and security of family life.

"It's just about missing the old days when nobody judged you and you were a nobody," says Dolores.

She has of course experienced ye olde Irish begrudgery, though she seems to have become inured to most of it.

"It's just sometimes when you're out having a pint and someone passes by and says 'my friend hates you' and you're like 'ah, can you tell me that when I'm sober please?' Sometimes it's a bit of a pain in the ass. At the same time, the whole 'I love you' thing – it's like 'ah STOPPIT!'. The only person I believe when they tell me that is my husband."

Overall though, she is confident about her ability to handle fatal fame.

"I think there are no major dangers unless you let it happen. It's all in my control because my mind is in my control. I'm not going to say anything unless I want to. I could turn around and start saying horrible things and being a rebel and protesting and suddenly everyone hates you and you make your life a mess like a lot of people have done. But I don't choose to do that. I leave that for other people. I'm just an ordinary girl making a living like everyone else. I never wanted to be famous. I just wanted to be a singer and a songwriter."

As with everything else in life, however, women in the public eye are subjected to more push and pull than men. Dolores got a taste of this when she was recently asked to do a fashion shoot for an ultra-hip New York magazine.

I ask her if she considers herself a feminist and she immediately swings into sarcastic mode. "Yeah, I'm a real feminist, I hate men – that's why I got married."

I'm trying to figure out how she has come to confuse feminism with hating men when she explains. The photoshoot was supposed to focus on feminism and Dolores was presumably picked as representing young, independent-minded, talented women.

When she turned up for the photo session the stylist informed her that the first picture would feature her bursting out of a cardboard box wearing nothing but a pair of high heels. In the second, she would again be naked but this time with her Docs tied around her neck.

This, apparently, is what passes for a feminist statement in New York's hipper circles these days.

"I said immediately that there was no way I was going to do it. And I said 'You think that's a feminist statement? To me that's just being a dumb woman!'" says Dolores.

"I don't need to use my body, why should women use their bodies to get attention? I don't need to strip off to get exposure. If I ever take my clothes off for a photograph it'll be when I decide – maybe if I'm pregnant or something, maybe I'll take a picture of my belly. There's nothing wrong with nude photography – it can be really beautiful – but that's just such a cliché."

All of which sound sense brings us to Madonna. It has been said that La Ciccone is a Cranberries fan. What does Dolores make of the Material Girl?

"I've never met her but we know someone who is close to her and she says Madonna is a really nice person. But y'know she is so famous and I mean I go out and people sometimes call me a bitch when I'm out drinking, and I mean I haven't taken my clothes off, I haven't done anything really vulgar, but Madonna has done some pretty heavy stuff. And if I can go out for a jar and get called names and you can end up in bits – crying because you've had a few drinks and someone calls you names and you take it really badly – if that can happen to me, imagine what it must be like for Madonna."

"She mustn't be able to walk a hundred yards without people shouting things at her. So it probably does end up making you pretty angry. And you know Madonna is really famous and she knows how to make money but I don't think money necessarily makes you happy."

Dolores' songs seem to reflect a genuine interest in spiritual matters. Was it this aspect of her poetry that drew her to Yeats, who inspired a track on the new album?

"I don't claim to be spiritual," she says. "I see too many people in bands who claim to be spiritual and maybe it's just because they are into aromatherapy or whatever. Spiritual awareness is something most Irish people have because of the Catholic religion – you think a little bit more. Like, kids in the States are very materially spoilt but they have nothing else. You're aware that maybe there is another world. Your parents may tell you it's God and Jesus and the Devil. Any maybe it is or maybe it's not, maybe it's some other side. I do believe that there is another side, a spiritual world where the human soul goes after death but it's not something I harp on about."

"I just always loved Yeats, him as a human. He was so passionate and just wrote what he felt. I always found it difficult in school because I loved Yeats' poetry but I wasn't into analysing it. I just had my own understanding of it, me as a poet myself – a young girl who writes. I write my own lyrics and as far as I'm concerned I'm writing my own poems and verse and it might not be over-intellectual and it mightn't be fifty pages and have big words and y'know, clauses and all that stuff in it but I'm just writing what I feel and as far as I'm concerned Yeats just wrote what he felt."

"But then you sit down at your exam and it's like 'where does he use similes in this poem' and 'where is he being ironic'. I'm sure when Yeats wrote his poetry he didn't want kids to look for the irony in it, I'm sure he wanted young people to sit down and go 'wow that's cool, I really understand that.'"

Her studious determination to hang onto her own thoughts and ideas and dreams and her equally stubborn anti-intellectualism got Dolores O'Riordan through childhood and schooling in rural Ireland. Ironically it is this same refusal to bow to the authoritarianism of hipness in her new world that has earned her both plaudits and scorn. The Cranberries' lack of studied coolness and a sense of irony is what endears them to those who are jaded by post-modern cynicism.

Because Dolores is the singer and chief songwriter, there have, needless to say, been rumours that she is being put under pressure to go solo.

"Well the band actually got me into a room last week and put a gun to my head, a knife to my throat and a rope around my neck and said 'Dolores you're to go solo!'" she says in a voice laden once more with sarcasm. "So I said, 'OK lads'." She pauses. "And that's what I think of that question."

She has in the past expressed a desire to have kids. In fact in the last interview with HOT PRESS she said she has been putting it off since she was eighteen.

"Actually I already have a child," she exclaims, smiling. "There's your headline: SHOCK HORROR DOLORES O'RIORDAN HAS A SON! Actually, I have a stepson – he's three. He's my husband's son and he's really great. Because I love kids and I would like to have them some day, but having the contact with him kind of keeps my longing satisfied for the moment which is good."

"I'm only twenty-three and the first record has done this much and if this one goes well then maybe in a couple of years I'll be able to take a year off, 'cos you really need to take a good bit of time off."

She also says that despite being married she would like to be financially independent enough to look after her kids.

"I know that my husband would be great – it's not that – it's just that I think if you are a strong woman you sort of want to stay independent. But if things continue to go well that shouldn't be a problem, in ten years I may be able to give up working."

"But for now I just want to what I'm doing and stay sane and enjoy it." ■

ALBUMS

THE BEAST INSIDE



R.E.M. looking rather puzzled by that opening paragraph

REM: "Monster" (Warners)

WELL, IT'S about time this crowd came up with a second album. I suppose the fact that they've finally decided to write a bunch of original songs accounts for the delay.

No, do not adjust your horizontal hold; your correspondent hasn't entirely lost his grip on reality. The band to which I refer are The Hindu Love Gods, a vintage souped-up model which REM dragged out of the garage a few years back in the company of Warren Zevon, for a run through a brash and invigorating set of R&B standards and the odd inspirational contemporary cover, like Prince's 'Raspberry Beret'.

Monster is more certainly a beast of a different colour, but in sonic terms at least, it harks back to the spirit, if not the letter, of the Hindu Love Gods, as REM once more crank up their amps to 11 to create a mandolin-free zone that nevertheless still manages to accommodate some entirely unexpected pleasures.

The opening three tracks, 'What's The Frequency Kenneth?', 'Crush With Eyeliner' and 'King Of Comedy', leave you in no doubt that this is a monster of the Jurassic variety, all wild and snarling, spitting raw guitar chords and with feedback dripping off its claws. Which is not to say that this is brutally hardcore; REM's facility for barbed hooks and melodies that snare, is still around to sweeten the pill and lighten the load.

The broodingly tense 'I Don't Sleep, I Dream' finds Stipe evoking Morrison. That's Jim, not Van, which means the mood is primal not spiritual, as the REM mainman teases out a lyric that posits sex as a metaphor for a meeting of minds or, perhaps, the other way round. 'I'll settle for a cup of coffee but you know what I really need,' he half-sings through eyes that can only be heavy-lidded.

I think we do, Michael, and I also think the reviewer who described the next song, 'Star 69', as a topical piece about nuisance calls, may have missed the blatant innuendo. The soundtrack drives it home, for this is a textbook REM rave-up, a cascade of guitars and a waterfall of words building up to the kind of giddy sensory experience that begs to be described as orgasmic.

Balladic but still red-blooded, 'Strange Currencies' is the one that will have them swaying and striking matches when REM come to Slane, but after an extraordinary interlude to which we'll later return, Godzilla lopes out of the garage again on 'I Took Your Name' with Stipe sounding a ringer for Iggy Pop and the band serving up their own pleasing interpretation of raw power.

Elsewhere, *Monster* is sometimes in danger of toppling under the weight of its heaviness, as in 'Let Me In', a Peter Buck showcase that offers more in the way of bluster than substance, and 'Circus Envy', which wouldn't have sounded out of place on an early Blue Oyster Cult album, were the song possessed of the saving grace of irony. (And with Stipe, who can really tell?)

Happily, *Monster* recovers to end on an impressive note. On first hearing, 'You' may sound lugubrious, but repeated playing reveals something of the strange, jagged beauty of Tom Verlaine's post-Television work. All of this would be enough to make *Monster* recommended if not essential listening; what actually pushes it towards a five-star rating is the presence of two outstanding songs at the top of side two.

'Bang And Blue', has charms to soothe the savage beast in its sultry, mid-paced swing and a radical change for the chorus that produces one of the album's most memorable refrains, but it's 'Tongue' which will throw you right off your feet as it casually cuffed by old Mr Rex himself.

The irony is that this is easily *Monster's* most unrepresentative song, a gorgeous concoction of Hammond organ, piano and Stipe falsetto that effortlessly evokes Stax, Al Green and the sensation of cool, crystal water on a parched tongue.

Monster may be largely an album of heart, lungs and groin, not to mention fang, tooth and claw, but with 'Tongue', REM reveal their soul to crown a generally impressive return with one of the year's most outstanding listening experiences.

• Liam Mackey

MASSIVE ATTACK: "Protection" (Circa)

IT WAS one of those daft pub conversations that sticks in your mind. There we all were, about as sober as Boris Yeltsin on a Shannon stop-over, when he who-shall-remain-nameless dropped the frankly girly bombshell that given the choice between listening to *Pet Sounds* and engaging in pom-pom practice with the Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders, he'd rather go ra-ra-ra with Brian Wilson any day of the week.

I've been passionate about a good few records in my time - Ziggy Stardust, Give 'Em Enough Rope and Screamedelica are just two that hold a special place in my affections - but I've always regarded them as an accessory to life rather than a substitute for food, warmth and, lest we forget the teachings of Sam Snort, laurie.

That is, until I discovered *Protection*. Our torrid affair is only three days old but if the ecstasy we've shared these past 72 hours is an indicator, myself and Massive Attack's second album are destined to spend the rest of our days living together in perfect harmony, melody and heavy dubwise bass thud.

Forget the bollocks about Blur being the authentic sound of young Britain - *Parklife* may boast some cracking tunes but it's still white-boy pop for a predominantly white-boy audience. Bristol's Wild Bunch collective don't suffer from any such colourblindness, blurring - no pun intended - the established borders between 'white' and 'black' music to the point where they simply cease being relevant.

The exquisitely understated title-track is a prime example - Tracey Thorn wrapping her almost indecently seductive tones round a gently pulsating soul-techno backdrop that's as far removed from Everything But The Girl as Wigan Athletic are from the Premiership. Thorn, who's ostensibly been signed as an on-loan replacement for Shara Nelson, also supplies the 'X' factor on 'Better Things', a song that owes more than a stylistic nod and a wink to Robbie Robertson's 'Somewhere Down The Crazy River'.

Tricky - note, this man is no longer a Kid - may have debunked to pursue his own solo endeavours but not before contributing the mantra-like 'Karmacoma' and jazzy spilled-up 'Euro Child'. No negative Snoop Doggy Dogg vibes here, Massive know life's crap but they'd rather flush away the shit than wallow in it.

Just when you think it can't get any better, along comes 'Sly' - aural stimulation of the most sensuous kind which finds the newest Attacker, Nicolette, set adrift on a sea of sampled strings. 'Eartha Kitt on a particularly skaggy 'E', suggests my soon-to-become redundant girlfriend and, yeah, she's got a point.

For reasons of thoroughness, I ought to mention Horace Andy's sprightly skank through 'Light My Fire' and the heavy-breathing 'Heat Riser' but there's only so much salivating one can do before the hyperbolic juices dry up.

Suffice to say, *Protection* is sex in a jewel-case and I want to have its babies.

• Stuart Clark

DINOSAUR JR: "Without A Sound" (Blanco Y Negro)

THE OPENING track on this album, 'Feel The Pain' has me totally hooked. Maybe it's because the first time I saw it was with its so-ridiculous-it's-a-work-of-art video.

OK, maybe I'm twisted but I just love that video. I mean, two fellas playing a round of golf through New York, bashing business execs over the head as they go; it's great. And maybe it wouldn't matter what video this song has. I mean, I'd love it just as much if they showed the live, un-edited coverage of a snail playing patience. Who knows? Who cares?

'Feel The Pain' is a classic Dinosaur Jr. track. It lopes along on a nice little pop melody, then - as if it's arse has gone on fire - explodes into frenzied riffermania before, it would seem, realising that it was the acid and not its arse which had gone on fire, dutifully falls back into that beautiful

lope. Oh, it's a classic. I swear, it would be worth buying the album just for this one track.

J. Mascis has an image of being the ultimate, lazy slacker; somebody who finds it hard to make the effort to wipe his arse after a shite. But either he is one of those unique accidental geniuses, or else he cares. Because this album cares. It is rock 'n' roll right down to its smelly socks, sweaty t-shirt and hang-dog jeans. You couldn't be casual to most of these tracks because they are simply so inherently joyous and brimming with guitar-driven energy and - yes - genuine sincerity and love - that they grab you, twist you and roll you all about. Fuck's sake, this is what it's all about.

LET 'EM ROLL

THE CRITICS DEBATE AND DECIDE

12 A CERTIFIABLE CLASSIC • 11 INTOXICATING • 10 EXCITING • 9 VERY GOOD • 8 GOOD • 7 GETTING THERE • 6 SOLID • 5 NOT THE WORST • 4 WATERY • 3 STODGY • 2 A DUD • 1 A COMPLETE DUD

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Yes, there is a growing-older maturity and depth about this stuff, a genuine delving and searching for and into love and relationships. It is sometimes marshalled by a veneer of cool and distance, but ultimately the honesty comes true. Like on 'I Don't Think So': 'I'd like to think she cried for me/But I don't know... Could it be she cried for me?/I don't think so'.

There's a certain level on my volume dial that for the neighbours' sake, I shouldn't go beyond. And generally, I'm a courteous person, but sometimes, sometimes the music simply demands to be turned on up. Without A Sound most definitely contains such music. Will I love it next week as much as I do now? Who cares!

• Gerry McGovern

A GOOD ARGUMENT



The Cranberries: argue experienced?

THE CRANBERRIES: "No Need To Argue" (Island)

THE DOC'S are shinier. The haircuts are a tad trendier. The Cranberries have been there, done that and now they're going to do it all again. The conundrum of how to follow up an album that's sold 3 million is of Confucian proportions. And Confucius says: 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it'.

Seeing your face plastered across feature pages and hearing your larynx stretched thinly over all manner of dodgy airwaves is apparently not all it's cracked up to be. If the songs on *No Need To Argue* are to be believed, (though I'm prepared to give it a shot - if anyone cares), The Cranberries have been sauce (har, har!) for every turkey and media man on both sides of the Atlantic for the past 12 months and what their second visit to the studio says, above all else, is that they've had their spell in the fish bowl.

Dolores is coming out, guns blazing, teeth grinding and heart virtually bursting at the seams with enough melodrama to fire at least half a dozen sessions on Anthony Clare's couch.

O'Riordan knows trauma when she sees it. 'Disappointment', 'Ridiculous Thoughts', 'I Can't Be With You' say it all about the tone and texture of *No Need To Argue*. When *Everyone Else (was) Doing It*... The Cranberries were too, 'cept, 'doing it' then meant (mainly) juggling with matters of the heart first time round, almost always a joyous discovery.

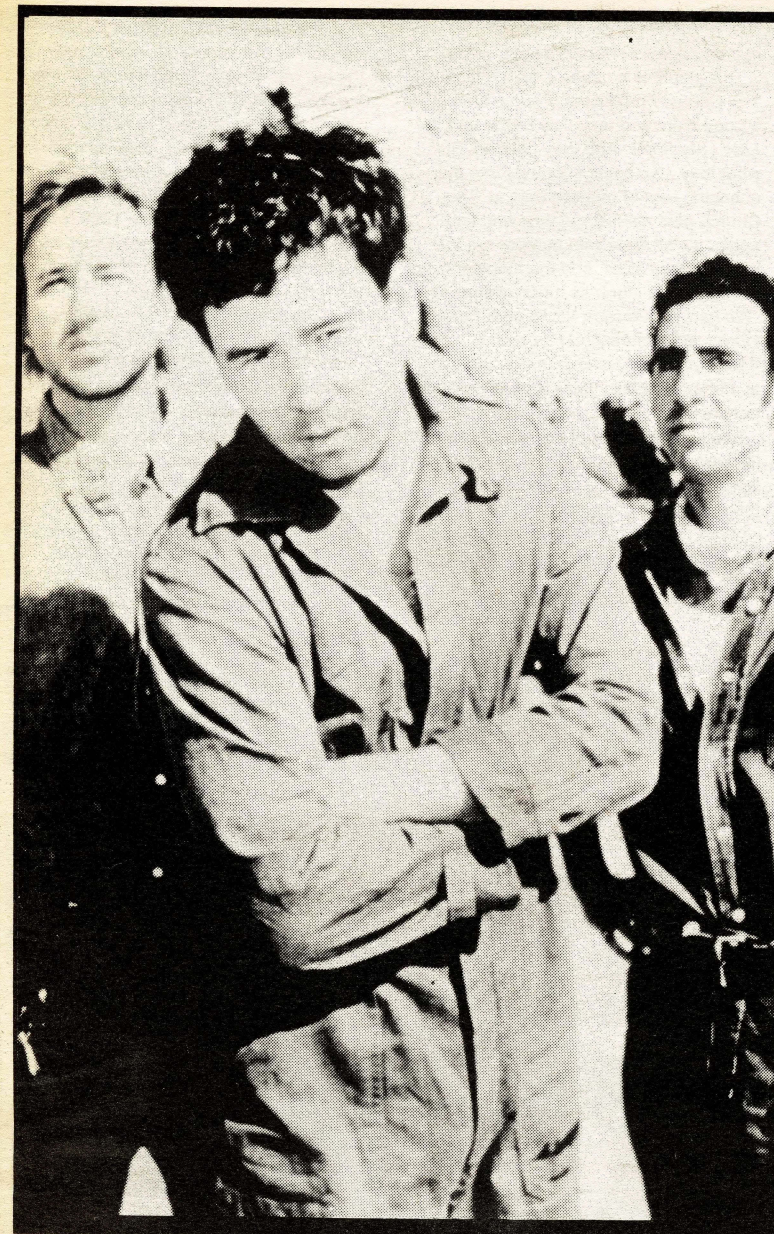
Success has many tentacles though and The 'Berries haven't been too enamoured with a few of its strands. *No Need To Argue* sets its own musical identity firmly alongside its older sibling; O'Riordan's whoops and hollers still brittle, still stick thin, though seeming to edge an octave higher than they did before. Noel Hogan's trademark electric and acoustic guitars ply the same trade though this time daring to linger longer past Dolores' vocals. Fact is, it's Feargal Lawlor's percussion that's strayed furthest from the flock, lending a more subtle scuffed than before, particularly on 'Dreaming My Dreams' and 'Daffodil Lament'.

According to O'Riordan, she's been through the mill both professionally and personally over the last two years, but the changes that've been wrought are largely inside her own head. The voice is pained and fragile, but no more than it was before. She's matured for sure: 'Ode To My Family' has a Keats-like sobriety; 'Twenty One' marks out her territory in the Big People's world; 'No Need To Argue' proclaims with religious conviction of her intentions not to dwell over past debacles in the fields of love and war.

Hacks across the water may latch on to the Gregorian chant feel of 'Twenty One' to fill rain forests full of theories on her Catholic upbringing and her early choir singing. The Sinead O'Connor comparisons could be bolstered by their joint fascination with WB Yents, (Helen of Troy may well be a worthy icon for both of them) and - well, Ph.D.'s could be written on the haircuts alone. But when the screaming and shouting's all over, *No Need To Argue* will sit quite comfortably alongside its predecessor in the family album, the likenesses clear to the eye, the differences less so.

Confucius was right. And The Cranberries know it.

• Siobhán Long



Grant Lee Buffalo: the moon also rises.

MOONSTRUCK

GRANT LEE BUFFALO: "Mighty Joe Moon" (Slash/London)

ON FUZZY Mr Grant Lee Philips showed himself to have an ear for heart-breaking melodies and an eye for the kind of image that has a resonance which haunts the spirit long after it has registered on your musical sensibility. *Mighty Joe Moon* builds on that staggering first record's achievement and then takes those heartfelt themes of dislocation and reconstruction and seems to personalise them more.

The sleeve, tells us a lot about what's going on here. Its references are many and varied but with images of humans wearing animals heads and a broken-down sitting room full of obscure musical instruments, some of the more obvious watering holes of inspiration are The Band and Captain Beefheart. Furthermore, on the front sleeve, the striking image of the inner workings of what looks like an archaic amplifier, an old-fashioned reel to reel amid a conglomeration of numerous other anachronistic electrical gadgets, behind which lurks the painted name of Grant Lee Buffalo, acts as a metaphor for the kind of archaeological excavations of America's troubled psyche - which let's face it is everybody else's troubled conscience too! - and modernism's pale faith in reason which Grant Lee Buffalo have decided to explore.

With thirteen songs clocking in at a grand total of just under fifty minutes, the impression might be one of a paring down of instrumentation but although the sound is never cluttered and grandiose there has been a kaleidoscopic expansion of orchestration with banjos, dobros, mandolins, tabuks, tablas, maracas, marimbas, cellos, and even acquired hunks of metal added to the conventional rock structure of guitar, bass and drums. At all times, though, each instrument is utilised with the finest economy, sometimes making the briefest of appearances in a seemingly haphazard way. On other occasions, as the banjo on 'The Last Days Of Tecumseh', one instrument leads the line in an understated and low-key manner.

It's nigh impossible to single out individual tracks but perhaps one of the more immediately outstanding tunes is 'Mockingbirds', about devastatingly-difficult-to-shake-off crises of self-confidence. 'Demon Called Deception' describes the personification and distancing of inane conceit, while 'Lone Star Song' is a crucifying fable of all things white religious and fanatical down in Texas.

One of the things that singles out Grant Lee Buffalo from the pack is their ability to whisper and sing quietly when sledgehammer noise might be the easier option. It's a sign of greatness and unparalleled self-belief. There are many examples of such profoundly gentle restraint on *Mighty Joe Moon*, including the pioneering title track itself, but it's most brilliantly exemplified on the sombre 'Happiness' where Grant Lee Philips ghostly intones 'Never mind me cause I've been dead/Out of my body/I've been out of my head/never mind the songs I hum/If you don't want to sing along/Did I say it?'

The truth of the matter is, however, that the songs of Grant Lee Philips are burning themselves indelibly into rock history. And whether one person or a million appreciate that fact doesn't really make any difference. By any standards this is poetry. Deep, dark and mightily soulful. It will last long after you and I are gone and will resurface in different times and unknown places but why miss out now on one of America's finest bands ever?

The funny thing is Grant Lee Buffalo will get even better. *Mighty Joe Moon* is as undeniable as life itself.

• Patrick Brennan

GIL SCOTT-HERON: "Spirits" (TVT/Mother Records)

GIL SCOTT-HERON'S big problem could well be that he's *too much* the genuine article. He was a rapper back when what he did was called "spoken word music". He was a protest singer when it was still possible to listen to such singers without feeling immediate affection for the forces of oppression. And, he was a raiser of black consciousness with his eyes on the prize of something more than a newer and snappier t-shirt slogan.

Twenty years ago, Scott-Heron released an album called *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* on which he summarised, with uncanny perceptiveness, the main barriers that would be erected in the path of the black struggle for equality during coming decades. 'Message To The Messengers', the outstanding track on *Spirits*, harkens back to that classic statement in both style and content. Here though, he is primarily addressing what he calls "the 9 millimetre brothers", the musical spokesmen for the current generation who have too often fallen into the very traps that he was signposting back in the early '70s. It's a simple but brilliant piece of work, the bloodied but unbowed voice of an authentic elder counselling the younger broods.

Over a hypnotic, stone-killer groove, Scott-Heron urges them to "keep the nerve, keep the nerve," but chastises them for their gullibility and how easily they've been dazzled by the glamour of drugs and guns. He warns against the appeal of "lies in a truthful disguise," and calls for more respect, for community, for history and, most of all, for women: "Things don't go both ways/You can't just talk respect on every other song or every other day/What I'm speaking on here is the raps about the woman folk/On one song she's your African Queen/On the next she's a joke/You ain't saying no words that I ain't already heard but that ain't no compliment/It only insults 8 people out of 10 and questions your intelligence."

Elsewhere, unfortunately, *Spirits* is an uneven though often intriguing album, holed beneath the hull by some very ponderous 'concept' segments and an ill-conceived attempt to marry a Scott-Heron rap with a John Coltrane instrumental. For 'Message To The Messengers' alone, however, it's an important proclamation and proof positive that there truly ain't nothing like the real thing.

• Liam Fay

THRUM: "Rifferama" (Fire Records)

THRUM ARE a four-piece based in Glasgow, Scotland and fronted by female vocalist and guitarist Monica Queen who co-writes everything with guitarist John Smilie. They also happen to be one of Grant Lee Buffalo's favourite bands of the moment.

What's really great about Thrum, though, is that they have managed to steer clear of the po-faced inverted snobbery of what used to be known as "The Sound of Young Scotland" whilst also avoiding the pitfalls of pandering to English critics' whimsy. The reward for such single-mindedness is an album of scintillating and thoroughly enjoyable rock music. Okay, so the presence of Neil Young past, present and future is quite apparent. But, hey, that's not such a bad influence now is it?

The disc opens up with the title track 'Rifferama', a psychedelic guitar blitz that owes as much to Punk and Grunge as it does to underground late 'Sixties melodic distortion. Queen sets the pace for the other ten tracks by slipping and sliding all over the place as she manically intones themes of search, denial and condemnation through a kaleidoscopic personalised colour code. As with the rest of the album, the guitar playing is quirky and innovative, and cleverly wild.

'You Wish' is the hearth of Rifferama. It's very much a ballad where the guitar takes a reverent back seat, apart from the odd well-chosen and sympathetic solo. The other slow number 'Almost Done' very firmly points out the country influence on Thrum but on 'You Wish' Queen's vocals are laced with lazy jazzy tones which soar epically according to the dictates of piercing lyrics like "I wish I had a stronger heart/Then maybe we could finally part." It's genuinely heart-rending stuff, which, naturally, we masochists of desolation cry out for more of.

There's often a lot of nonsense in the music press about the Next Big Thing or Last Year's Model but you can rest assured that Thrum have what it takes to shake the complacency out of such faddishness and, while they're at it, maybe even put some heart and

soul back into country rock music. *Rifferama* is an orgy of driving beat-guitar music to die into and get lost in. Let it lick you all over.

• Patrick Brennan

TERRY HALL: "Home" (Anxious)

TERRY HALL has put together quite a band for this, his first solo LP. In fact, the line-up looks like a "Who's Who?" from the 1980s. The former Specials' frontman is ably helped on *Home* by The Smiths' fifth member Craig Gannon, ex-Bunburyman Les Pattinson and World Party's Chris Sharrock. Ian Brodie from Lightning Seeds produces, and plays guitar on a couple of tracks, while Nick Heyward and Andy Partridge assist with the songwriting.

Home is a far cry from the classic Specials' sound of 'Ghost Town'. The opening 'Forever J' is a slice of melodic, mellow pop, where the mysterious J is described as "a bee with honeyed thighs". 'I Drew A Lemon' has Terry sounding like John Lennon, full of clever lyrics about the banalities of life after a break-up: "A couple of cops drop by/Cos Mr Singh complained the level of my Hi-Fi's dri-

ving him to drink, I think/I'll turn it down 'til you turn up again".

Terry's voice has never sounded better than on the ballad 'Moon On Your Dress', or the quietly captivating 'No No No' where he sings the cryptic "Oh no, here comes that violin again" before each chorus. 'What's Wrong With Me', co-written with Nick Heyward, is a clever self-parody containing the immortal lines, "And you can do anything that you want to me/Cut off my legs and call me shorty". All this, and the cover doesn't even have a parental warning sticker.

The Cure-like 'Grief Disguised As Joy' is a bit pretentious, with its lyrics about weaving mortal coils and "some distant beach like paradise". I think Terry's been watching too many Aussie soaps! 'First Attack Of Love' is the only filler here, and serves to remind me why I'm glad the '80s are over. The album finishes with 'I Don't Get You', a gentle, endearing ballad about the effects of loneliness.

Home is a very likable album. It's a fine collection of songs that, while not the most innovative, are well-crafted and appealing. The only thing I dislike about Terry Hall is that he gives special thanks to the red ink-deils, Giggs and Cantona, in the credits.

• John Walsh



Pierce's voice is full of that Manhattan Turner Mystery.

PIERCE TURNER: "Manana In Manhattan... Live" (Virtual Recordings)

ANY SONGWRITER who can convincingly work several references to Lou Reed's decadent 'Walk On The Wild Side' and the chorus of the Irish Catholic anthem 'Faith Of Our Fathers' into the same song ('You Can Never Know') must be, if not actually a God, a prophet.

Pierce Turner is a modern Irish prophet appropriately unacknowledged in his homeland. If he ever re-introduce capital punishment to Ireland it should be applied to those record companies who have criminally failed to alert the Irish public to his extraordinary talent.

Recorded at a live gig in one magical night in New York last May, with no subsequent overdubs, *Manana In Manhattan* must go into the annals as one of the most intoxicating and uplifting live albums of all time, ever. Listen to Turner's wordless vocals and Wyn Hogan's violin on 'All Messed Up' and you'll see that you probably won't hear much of this gem on daytime Irish radio because it might frighten the brainless dodos who apparently comprise their 'listeners'. Bastards.

And you should keep the tissues, and your anger, to hand for the sheer architectural wonder of 'Moonbeam Josephine', the aching 'Don't Want Her To Feel That Way' and the plaintive 'Zero Here'. 'Musha God Help Her' is an unrivalled encapsulation of the gossip-ridden, back-biting, hypocritical Catholic Ireland we all know and love (and leave) and on which Turner's ace band for once get to slip the leash of his usually tight-as-this arrangements. One also might suspect they had a jolly good romp on the jaunty instrumental 'Carolan's Receipt'.

His feisty refurbishment adds new dimensions to Ewan McColl's classic 'Dirty Old Town' and successfully rescues it from the ballad-mongers and wedding vocalists who rarely show any awareness of the subtlety of the lyric. The rattling version of 'Wicklow Hills', one of his own songs which Christy Moore introduced to willing Irish ears, even includes a snatch of Gregorian chant as Turner's soulful vocals take the song to new heights.

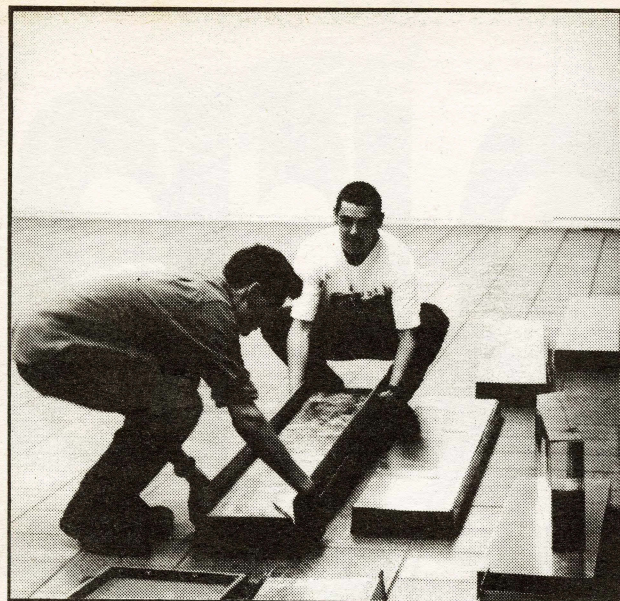
Turner confounds the received wisdom that modern technology and a sense of spirituality are mutually exclusive. How? Simply by boldly putting the technology at the service of the songs rather than vice versa. Ironically, despite his New York base, you find more echoes of the Irish psyche in one Turner song than in a month of *Late Late Show* discussions.

His lyrics are often saturated by the real pre-occupations of, and with, an Ireland that rarely makes it onto the concert stage or into the mainstream media except when it is condescendingly portrayed as a relic of a quaint but distant past.

The use of both strings and synths throughout the album uncannily evokes the right mood for each song with Turner's often panic-stricken voice constantly ducking and diving as acrobatically as a PR man's tongue.

Let the kids do without food for one week and stock up on some real nourishment for a change. Is Pierce Turner Ireland's greatest living poet or what?

• Jackie Hayden



Colin Finley and Theo Sims holding their own installation

party-goers, and the promoters promise an atmosphere that will be second to none.

It is this constant appetite for development that should see Belfast remaining, as it always has been, ahead of the field.

THE BANDS OF HOOLEY JOY

IF THERE'S one man, who over the years has come to epitomise the spirit of Belfast rock'n'roll, through good times and bad, then it has to be Terri Hooley. He's been in the midst of it all since Belfast's first band explosion in the '60s, right up to the present, when he's busier than ever, with a revitalised Good Vibes label, new record shop, TV series and about a million other schemes and scams to keep on "doing what I do best - enjoying myself."

It's been a long time since Terri's finest hour - releasing the 'Tones 'Teenage Kicks' upon an unsuspecting but eternally grateful world - meantime he's gone bankrupt, seen his label turn into a kind of vanity publishing outlet and watched many great Northern bands cruelly ignored as the A&R hordes descended on Dublin in their desperate feeding frenzy, hoping for the next U2.

But things have started to turn around - both for Terri and the North in general. 1990 saw the first Belfast Rocks Again Festival. Three days of the best Northern Ireland had to offer - launching Therapy? and the Divine Comedy onto careers that have re-established the

North as a credible base for R'n'R success.

The concept was such a winner that successive events grew to become the sprawling unmanageable monster that was Belfast Rocks III. Terri expresses dissatisfaction at the lack of focus of the last festival. "It was a bit out of control. We had to use split venues which created problems. The bands were great, but you couldn't get to see them all."

The next festival, planned for early 1995, will, he promises, be on a more intimate scale, perhaps even surfacing in a completely new format - but that's all under wraps for the moment.

Still, Terri's got enough to be going on with - a "best of" compilation featuring the cream Belfast punk on his Good Vibrations label - "Yeah, it was strange listening to all those old songs again, we put out some damn good records"; a TV series - *Rock 'n' the North* tracing the history of the North's music scene from the R'n'B clubs of the '60s to Therapy? in the '90s - "I have a lot of respect for Therapy? - They've done a great job of promoting their home town."; a forthcoming album *24 Inch World* from the Junkmasters on Good Vibes - "I discovered them by accident. The label was more or less dead, then I stumbled on them playing in a bar and they just blew me away... I'm not gonna release anything by anyone anymore if it doesn't have that effect on me. I'm not doing it for anything but the love of it"; There are also plans to release an album of his poetry on Warners in the USA. "They gave me all this money to make an album, and they keep phoning up asking 'Where's the album, Terri?' So far it's still all in my head - but I don't suppose that's what they give you the money for - it's great though!" - and then there's his new shop The Vintage Record Store dedicated to that disappearing treasure - the vinyl LP.

"It's our protest against the monopoly capitalist record companies who think they can rip people off for more money with CDs," he says. "Record companies around the world are dumping their back catalogues, so we're buying it up cheap and selling it cheap - 'Cos WE LOVE VINYL! I set the shop up with money I borrowed from friends and I've managed to pay them all back. We've had people coming over from London finding albums they'd been looking for for 20 years and paying about £1.50!"

That Terri still retains the thrill and excitement of a teenager/madman for pop music when he's way past being old enough to know better is testament to the fact that he is one of the few people left who still believe in the thrill for the sake of it and bugger the business side. He's turned down more lucrative jobs abroad than you dare to think about and has chosen to remain in Belfast as "the people are brilliant - the salt of the earth, and the quality of life is still better here. Everyone I know in London or wherever all want to come home - and this is before any ceasefire had been announced."

As for the future (whether the ceasefire continues or not) Terri would love to see musical activity returning to the levels of the '60s when there were 80 clubs in and around Belfast and bands could play three gigs a weekend no problem. "People want entertainment, bands have got to learn that, that's why dance is so big - it entertains. My band The Rocking Humdingers entertain, and we don't care what people think - if they think we're fools it doesn't matter, we're not gonna leave



Karen Vaughan of Catalyst Arts - the mother of innovation

them without making them laugh - at us or with us, it doesn't matter..."

ROCKIN' THE NORTH

IT GETS to the point when you've heard so much trash on the radio from London, Dublin, New York, wherever, the next big bloody thing and you think - I'm not excited anymore, listening to this is a chore, I don't like music anymore, I'm gonna go and listen to Radio 4, and then you step outside your own backdoor and this little band of oiks from Ennisbloodykillen get up on stage and tear yer little rib cage, throw it about a bit, give it a kiss, give it a kick and then stuff it back in yer chest where it belongs, twice the heart it was before, all in the name of rock'n'roll and sheer bloody entertainment and they're called the Skinflints and if you ignore them 'cos they don't have any money and they're from the arse-end of nowhere and you can't be bothered shaking yourself out of your cosy wee expectations and cynicism to see them then you don't deserve the thrill or the joy of punk rock, pop songs, or whatever the bloody hell it's called. (Is that enough "bloody"?)

This ain't no idle hype - most music is shit, I can't listen to it anymore, too many careers, too many plans - The Skinflints are a perfect noise - they may not be for long, they may not out-last their first single, it is, after all, only 'Ten Seconds Of Joy', but they are, for

now, the best band in the world.

And another thing - living in Belfast or Derry or Enniskillen - which for the purpose of the music business is nowhere-on-the-outskirts-of-somewhere-else-no-one's-heard-of - bands don't make music for their friendly neighbourhood A&R man, don't adjust their sound to glide into the slip stream of fashion - they make it for themselves, the sheer bloody (OK - it wasn't quite enough!) pleasure of the sounds in their head. And that's why the North is brimming with more and better bands than ever before.

All this is not to say that the little attention we're receiving here now isn't very welcome, but just to note that it's been demanded and earned through the absolute class of the bands that have made the transference to the "real world" of record companies and shiny CDs.

Johnny Hero, who has presented the only radio show in the North (on Downtown Radio) to really support, provoke and nurture the local scene, for almost five years now, has seen an enormous change in the attitudes and quality of northern bands.

"Five years ago it was a big step for a band to go and make a demo - now people have the self-confidence and self-esteem to say we don't need to prostitute ourselves around the English labels, looking for crumbs off the table, we can make and release our own records on our own labels and have total control. If someone picks up on it later, then fine but we're not gonna worry ourselves about it."

"The next step we need to make, is to get a pressing plant based in Belfast. With that in place bands will be able to get more organised. Instead of having to wait for things being turned around in England, which can take forever - they can get a small scale release back in a week and have it in the shops. There's nothing worse than sitting around waiting for something to kill your momentum. Hopefully, if this ceasefire becomes a real peace, then we can use all the money that'll be pouring in from the US and Europe to build a base from which we can become self-sufficient."

Stephen Anderson of dance music specialists **Underground Records** has recognised this potential and is in the process of setting up a subsidiary label - **Savage Snow** - picking up on exciting young bands for one-off 7" releases.

"We are the only real record label in Northern Ireland. Our intention is to release well-recorded, well-packaged and internationally distributed records, with nationwide press and radio promotion. We're not restricting ourselves solely to Belfast bands, but I would dearly love to release a series of top quality singles by local bands. We're listening to demos all the time, but I'd like to hear a lot more. The dance side of Underground is very successful, with records charting right across Europe, and I feel sure we can achieve the same level of success with Savage Snow."

If you've got a demo that might interest Stephen, send it to him at 64 Donegal Street, Belfast.

MEANWHILE . . .

There are just *too many* bands deserving of coverage to possibly fit them all in here, but hey! I'll give it a go!!!

Watercross, a kind of They Might Be Giants/A House, quirky sorta



Artificial Joy: a sincerely happy-ing band

ouffit, but with songwriting gifts that far exceed their surface appeal - **Ash** and the **Catchers** you know, teen-pop genius in excelsis; **Monkhouse**, who sold out their debut 7" and were picked up by Damaged Goods to release a fabulous punk rock album *Cokay Pig* October 24; **The Golden Mile** debut 7" *Apples And Oranges* coming any day now - spunky! - **The Holsteins** - £300 to record an album of the finest pop music this side of the Appalachians (and on funky coloured vinyl too!) - **Emily Ryder**, whose debut album *cucumberpidvounduplove* is like one of those compilation tapes yer best mate makes you - every song you've never heard but wanted to; **LMS, Backwater, Toenail, Bedhangers, Sunday Club, Cuckoo** . . . I'm out of breath now!

These are all bands with attitude, though rarely the one you'd suspect. Add to this the plethora of fanzines springing up like daisies in the lawn (full marks to Jonathan from **Weedbus** for his long-standing effort and ebullience on behalf of local bands) and the enthusiasm, energy and general in-yer-face spunkiness of the scene is infectious.

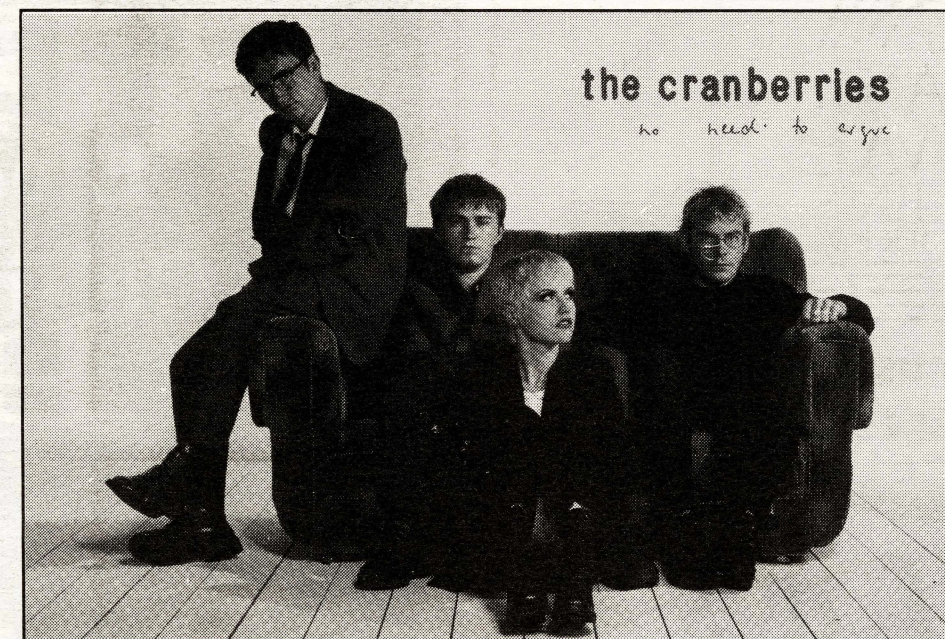
So, there you have it - embrace us or ignore us - we'll still be making the finest music up North whatever the world decides.

COMMUNITY ARTS FORUM

OVER THE last four or five years, there has been a massive ground swell of activity in the arts in Northern Ireland. Theatre groups, galleries, arts centres, community projects, rehearsal rooms and training facilities have been springing up in the unlikelyst of places. Of these, a substantial proportion have been initiated, and run, by the people who most wanted them - and fought to have them realised. Now a new umbrella organisation - the Community Arts Forum - has been set up with the intention of providing a support structure for these groups. There are around 40 affiliated groups in and around Belfast and membership is slowly spreading across the province. The activities involved cover all bases from theatre to photography to circus skills and dance.

CAF recently opened an office in Belfast's Academy Street, and are currently employing 3 or 4 part-time workers. As Belfast-based

"everybody else" has the first album?



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The Big Electric Ceili Band

The Best Kept Secret

"THE HOLLY AND IVY JONES" E.P OUT NEXT MONTH