

THE CRANBERRIES - LONDON PALLADIUM, LONDON, UK (20TH MAY 2017)

DANNEE PEPPI • MAY 24, 2017 • GIGS

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Dolores O'Riordan, lead singer for *The Cranberries*, is the unassuming director of the stage. Flanked by her exuberant nine musicians and with a fully packed venue screaming before her, she smiles joyfully at the crowd, like she's greeting good old friends. With that, the first words of 'Analyse' dance across the London Palladium, beckoning her audience: 'Close your eyes, close your eyes...'

The Cranberries are pros at selling out venues across the country. But you don't need to know this in order to grasp the energy of the evening here in London. The stalls are up and dancing from beginning to end, shoulders are rocking through the aisles, and whether Dolores invites the crowd to sing along or not, lyrics are shouted back anyway and without restraint. The crowd blooms with movement, drawn awake by the dawning spring of her voice.

And at the forefront of it all is the wonderful Dolores, calm and stately, who exhibits a lovely charm as she introduces each member of the string quartet to the crowd, asking them in turn 'What's your name?'. She doesn't indulge the crowd with too much chatting; with their extensive back catalogue to cover in 90 minutes, there's no time for that. Guitarists and violins and drummers are her rising dawn chorus, and through the ensemble she lites and wanders, back and forth, along the promenade of the stage. She's never quite predictable; now and then, she'll dance along almost shyly in front of the microphone, or conduct a refrain in the song with a tilt of her arm. In the occasional instrumental moments, she sits down on the back of the stage, and listens and ponders to the progression of the song, a peaceful nymph in the waterfalls and meadows of drum kicks, bass notes and bows. In her imagination, she might be a piper journeying through a landscape of her band's extensive musical creation, rather than headlining in front of a buoyant forcefield of over 2000 people.

The Cranberries know that their winners are in their old favourites, and the first five songs are a magical trance of nostalgia. 'Please feel free to sing aloud, I think you know this one', she says humbly before launching into 'Linger'. No introduction is necessary for classics like 'Ode to my Family', 'Just My Imagination' and, of course, 'Zombie'. With Noel Hogan and other band mates leading in deep vigour, the energy of 'I Can't Be With You', 'Salvation' and other rock favourites sweeps across the hall as she stands small yet mighty in the whirlwind of sound. One thing is for certain - *The Cranberries* is a band you have to see live. Each soft acoustic is a lulling lullaby, every rock song is whipped into a tireless impulse, fully exhibiting the band's prowess of the dynamic and the tender.

The encore is sustained, sweet and rewarding. Together, the band delve into their promised acoustic pieces with a focus on their newer songs, and the cadence of 'Why', 'somewhere in between here and heaven', is one sublime example of their recent work. Sadly, the night is just not long enough to touch upon the breadth of their discography. The show slowly draws to a close with 'You and Me', where more than a tear or two are spotted in the enthralled crowd. But not before their parting finale, and it can only be one song. 'Dreams!' shouts Dolores; the band launches straight in and the aisles surge with dancing. The melody, we soon find, never really ends; the fans make sure of that long after the show draws to its conclusion, singing and amplifying the refrain of their final song down the streets of Soho. *The Cranberries* haven't aged, only ripened; the music is as sweet as ever, their influence still unyielding and permeating.

the cranberries

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- Third of May / Odaigahara - Edit 4:02
Fleet Foxes
- We Got The Power (feat. Jehn... 2:19
Gorillaz, Jehny Beth
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- BOOM! : JACKOBINS 'NIGHTFIRE'**
MAY 22, 2017
- BOOM! : MT WOLF 'HEAVENBOUND'**
MAY 20, 2017
- BOOM! : ZIPPER CLUB 'BREATH'**
MAY 19, 2017

