

Live



Photo by Becky Nunes

Dolores, The Cranberries.

THE CRANBERRIES

Logan Campbell Centre, March 11.

How exactly the Cranberries became famous is unfathomable, they were nobodies, then suddenly they sell out the Logan Campbell Centre and become huge in the USA. Two quite good albums and a couple of hummable singles does not make super band numero uno.

But a bleach-blonde, small, Irish woman wearing a stripy, flared jumpsuit is a good starting point. In the language of the un-PC and the in love: Dolores is a star-babe. It took all of a minute for Dolores to win over the crowd and even though nobody could understand what the hell she said between songs, everybody laughed or cheered just to please her.

She was the epitome of cool as she stood before us wiggling her bottom, as she skipped the stage in her pretend flippers and wackily did an Irish jig for us. But then she had to do something to save us from the backing band.

The backing band was made up of a moderately cute drummer and two extravagantly mediocre guitarists. The guitarists lurked on the outskirts and seemed to be: 1) doing nothing, or 2) doing something incredibly dull. They performed the music faithfully and crisply, but with an absence of character or soul. At times they verged on sounding like a competent covers band. Dolores stood alone as the Cranberries' source of brilliance and propelled them into stellar orbit tonight.

In the manner of all bands that are suddenly pitched into the spotlight, the Cranberries try to convince us that they are here to stay, though we can see their fear they will disappear. They play us a new song and instruct us that there are plenty

more where that came from, in case we dared think otherwise. It was a good song.

DARREN HAWKES

GARDENSHED, CORRUGATE, ANTON RYAN, FIGURE 60, TEENSHAG SUPERSTAR

Pod, March 4.

Certainly it was the offer of free lollipops, and T-shirt and beer give-aways that attracted me to Pod for the party celebrating the *Intravene* fanzine's midlife reaffirmation. My favourites, the lime ones, naturally got snapped up first, leaving only multiple orange Kojak props and a fistful of Export Gold tickets as consolation prizes to soothe my bitter spirit. The other 150 souls probably came to get a mainlined dose of Auckland's up and coming bands. Fair enough too, for the night offered the best line up the town's seen for awhile.

Crowd charmers and raiders of the Hammer House of Horror's make-up box, Teenshag Superstar kicked the proceedings off. Characterised by a tight rhythm section, sheets of shimmering guitar effects, and artfully led by a petulant vocalist with the unlikely moniker of Liz Taylor, TSS happily proved inner city pop incarnates. The foursome romped through their favourites — 'Anyone', 'Freak' and 'Mother' — before settling into a lurching cruise which included mourning their collective childhood memories — 'Golliwog' — and finishing with an amusing abuse of JD's nightclub, dear to the heart of anyone living west of Avondale. The masses were up a swain' and the good time mood for the evening was set.

Figure 60 followed to deliver a no-nonsense, eyes-at-the-floor mixture of joyous Grey Lynn feed-

back, ultra metal heat, a sax solo right out of left field and perhaps a tad too much practice room mess. The fans were happy though, particularly for 'Cop Show' and 'Number 39'.

Anton Ryan slotted in at number three, to act as counterpart to his louder brethren. Playing a stylistically original acoustic set of classy ditties, Ryan oozed the melodic skill and stage presence that he has finely honed in front of audiences across the Tasman. 'Live Today', with nimble fingerwork aplenty and a soaring chorus, was well received. This was followed by 'Alive Again', 'It's All Right' and the edgy 'I Can't Sleep At Night' — all driven by a powerful voice and soulful hooks. The EP promised ("soon") may well prove one to listen out for.

Back into it again with Corrugate, punching out their version of what they referred to as "metal-with-feeling", the boys, more correctly, jangled, through a loose set of winners. 'Birth', 'Purchase Payment' and 'Phosphate', amongst others, kept you humming through the break after their performance.

More T-shirt and beer give-aways, then young band Garden Shed set the place alight with a bunch of tunes worth hanging around till the wee small hours for.

Good feelings, good music, good fanzine.

CRAIG CEE

PANSY DIVISION, CHRIS KNOX, NOTHING AT ALL

Squid, March 6.

In nursery rhyme speak, the cupboards were bare at Squid for the last show of Pansy Division's lightning-quick New Zealand tour. When local punkers Nothing At All stepped up just before 11pm, the crowd had barely stretched into double figures.

Playing only through a vocal PA, the snotty trio were loud enough to shake the walls, but tonight they lacked the sense of charm and humour that makes them fun. They sped through serious versions of 'Grand Central', 'TV Generation' and 'Nothing At All', and bassist Dion ran through his collection of S Vicious Faces™, but the usual connection that sits thick between Nothing At All and their fans was absent. Blah.

Chris Knox wanders on wearing a black singlet and black footy shorts, that were a particularly black shade of black — has he gone Goth? Nope, his jandals provide the splash of colour necessary for salvation. Opening with 'Lapse', he's joined by Jon Ginoli and Patrick Hart of Pansy Division, who are clearly thrilled to be helping out on the call 'n' answer portion of the tune. Once left to go solo, Knox puts on an outrageously good performance. He's genuinely witty, and his voice is sounding strong and glorious. The new single 'One Fell Swoop' is a perfect example, and this evening Knox selects the pop songs that showcase his ear

for a melody, rather than the shrill, grating bollocks he often uses as filler. He stumbles through fresh tunes from the new album, plus hits from *Seizure* and *Polyphoto*, *Duck Shaped Pain* and *Gum*, but, with the exception of 'Woman Inside Of Me', my memory fails and I can't recall the other titles.

After a considerable delay, San Francisco's Pansy Division take their turn at the crease, as the clock races closer and closer to one. The pop and punk trio suffer through PA problems for the first two songs, before the volume is cranked up to an almost unbearable level in the still mostly empty room. Pansy Division might as well tattoo their influences on their foreheads — 'We love the Ramones and the Buzzcocks' — and anyone who tells you they're something new is talking shit. But their three-minute barrages, mostly lifted from the *Deflowered* LP, are entertaining enough, though fail to strike any real memorable blows. They're a classic case of a band whom you can take, or leave. The ridiculous noise level (the loudest ever at Squid by far), combined with the late hour, and the irritating antics of a bass player who deliberately came over like Jim Carrey crossed with the gay one from *It Ain't Half Hot Mum*, meant I chose the latter after hearing 10 songs. Ho-hum.

JOHN RUSSELL

SLAYER, BIOHAZARD

Auckland Town Hall, March 19.

BIOHAZARD

Often opening bands are missed by lax reviewers, but not tonight. Tonight is pay back time, with the first band missing the reviewer. Whilst knocking back a mineral water in the bar, in the most manly way possible, a guitar suddenly bursts into life. Scampering past the chummy security guards, I was blown away by what I took to be Headbutt playing a Biohazard cover. Then reality bit, it was in fact the mighty 'Dukes of Hazard' themselves, and I'd already missed half a song.

Rock and roll's on show, hi-ho and up to the front I go. No need for a chainsaw this evening — all that's necessary to get within twenty feet of the band is a polite "scuse me". The sound pouring from the bank of speakers is not dissimilar to an aircraft taking off. Guitarist Bob Hembel spins around and around, inspiring motion sickness, before leaping atop a speaker and doing the duck-walk whilst blasting out yet another eardrum shattering solo. Centre stage is held by Evan Seinfeld, and no motherfucker's going to take it off him. When some misguided fool biffs something on stage, Mr Seinfeld offers to have a wee bitty chin-wag with the "punk" post-gig — out the back.

Tonight's the night to fight the good fight for Biohazard, as the audience is primarily here for Slayer. The apathy surrounding them acts as a spur. Halfway through, a lengthy discussion is had with certain sections of the audience; the upshot

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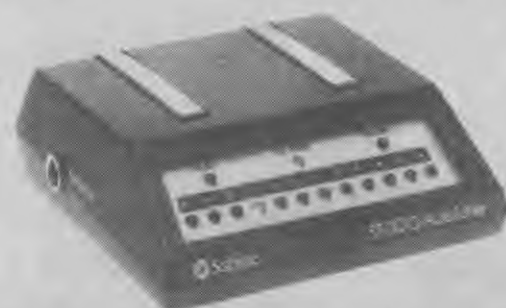
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