

Limerick group which the public either love or hate

By MARY HEENAN

LOVE them or hate them, there seems to be no happy medium but judging from their thousands of fans the length and breadth of the country, the O'Malleys are becoming a force to be reckoned with on the music scene in Ireland.

The six member band who all hail from Limerick city have been entertaining audiences with their versatile and original repertoire for the past eighteen months.

Founding members of the O'Malleys, Brian Mulcahy and Peter Donnelly played together for many years before teaming up with the band's four new members, Eddie Clancy, Joe Maguire, Ger Costelloe and Tom Cronin.

Playing all original material, with the occasional obscure version of recorded songs, the O'Malleys attribute much of their success to their constant rapport with the audience.

Alternative

"People either love us or hate us but we certainly offer an alternative to the approach taken by a lot of bands to-day who are so worried about their image that they forget that there is an

audience out there who want to listen and be entertained," said Ger Costelloe, musician and singer with the group.

"We like to keep in touch with our audience. We are not too worried how we approach a gig. We just get up and get on with it."

Ger, who originally played with The Outfit claimed that many bands create this barrier between themselves and their audiences.

"They don't intentionally do this but there are so few bands who are willing to get down with their audiences.

"People pay money to come in and be entertained. If bands take their music that seriously then they would be better off staying at home and playing in their bedrooms."

Boundary

Ger said that there was no boundary to what the O'Malleys do on stage.

"If we feel like doing a song we have never done before then we go ahead and sing it and if audiences feel like joining us on stage, if that is the mood on the night then its o.k. with us."

With their first E.P. 'The Puc,' recently reached and climbing up the charts, the O'Malleys are already making plans for the release of their first single early in the New year.

Band manager, Declan O'Brien, who admits to falling for

the band the first time he heard them said that he wasn't too happy with the airplays the recent release received.

"Of course we were happy to get into the charts," said Declan, who predicts a great future for the band.

"They are unique in their style of entertainment. And there is a market out there for this entertainment," the manager claimed.

Ensured

A recent Late Late Show appearance plus a spot on Night Hawks has now ensured a hectic schedule for the coming months for the band who admit to being influenced by the blues and country music.

When asked if their music was unique, Ger pointed out that there has been no original music since the fifties.

"Its the way we present our gig that is unique," said Ger who attributes Peter's rapport with the audience between songs that has now become the O'Malleys trademark.

"Peter is responsible for the mayhem at our gigs," claimed Ger.

Ger described the present music scene in Limerick as very healthy and singled out 'Perfect Moment'; 'Up the Downstairs' and 'Private World' as bands of the future.

"Up and coming young bands play every Sunday night at McKnights. And Ger urged people to come along and support these young groups.

A tour of Europe is now on the cards for the O'Malleys.

"Because the country is so small, you can only go around and tour so many times.

"It's very difficult to survive in the music business. No matter who you are you have to leave the country," Ger claimed.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals can be a problem for this versatile group. Ger admits that all the members suffer from laziness where rehearsals are concerned.

"Usually we rehearse a song once or twice before we try it out on our audience. And it doesn't seem to work after a few nights we don't do it again."

And while the O'Malleys concentrate almost wholly on original material, written by band members, Ger said that one of the biggest mistakes made by many bands to-day is that they play original music just for the sake of playing original music and often it's not good original music.

"They would be much better off playing good cover versions."

And there was some good news for their many Limerick fans - the O'Malleys promised that a three to four week residency here sometime after Christmas.



The O'Malleys, from left: Brian Mulcahy, Peter Donnelly, Eddie Clancy, Joe Maguire, Ger Costelloe and Tom Cronin.

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