

# Getting better

Wild Things Run Fast  
Joni Mitchell  
Geffen

By Pamela Kramer

TIME WAS, you had to feel a certain dread every time Joni Mitchell came out with a new album—God alone knew what it would hold. She went through this, like, y' know, artistic phase, and the result was a stream of incredibly bad music. Hejira, an album that came in the middle of it all, is the only bearable remnant of those days.

Well, the "artistic" stuff is over with now. The recently released *Wild Things Run Fast* may not be particularly innovative, and it certainly isn't filled with the obscure nonsense some call creativity. But it's the best thing to come from Joni Mitchell in about 10 years, and it's a real pleasure to listen to—even if there aren't many acoustic guitars and pianos, like in the good old days.

In many ways, *Wild Things Run Fast* is similar to *For the Roses* and *Court and Spark*, the two albums preceding Joni's great leap into the abyss of Music Unpleasant. It's got more of a "pop" sound than her recent music, and she's returned to themes of love and life. (Don't laugh—it isn't sappy. We're not talking Barry Manilow here, we're talking Joni Mitchell.)

Of course, there are plenty of differences between 10 years ago and now. For one thing, the voice that sang "Cold Blue Steel and Sweet Fire" is older now, and sounds it. No matter. It's still a more versatile instrument than many artists could hope to possess.

If she sounds a little like Pat Benatar at the beginning of the title cut, that's just part of the fun. It only lasts a few

bars, and throughout the rest of the album, you know no one but Joni could sing like that. So what if there's a lot of fuztones, Joni's in there somewhere.

A more important similarity—and difference—is the return to plain old emotions, exposed through delving, warm, through, personal, reaching, holding lyrics.

Unlike earlier, instead of spending most of her time lamenting lost love in mournful tunes of minor chords or melancholy words, Joni's got a downright cheerful outlook. Before this, she had—at best—eight songs that could be considered even barely approaching happy.

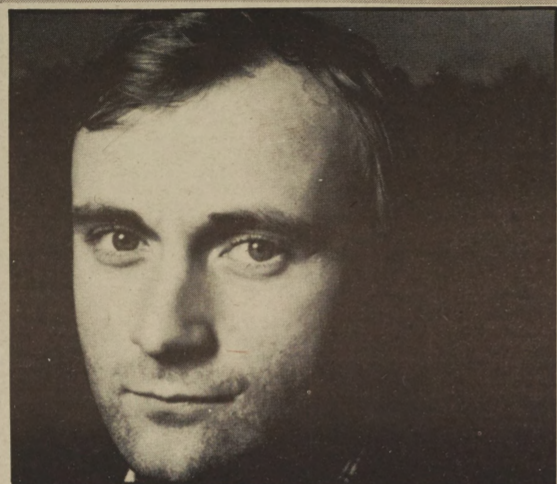
"Moon at the Window" seems almost a reminiscence of those feelings. "Sometimes the light/Can be so hard to find/At least the moon at the window—/The thieves left that behind."

But the moon at the window sheds enough light for the rest of the album, which sometimes surpasses even "Help Me" in its schoolgirl flights. "Yes I do—I love you!" she shouts, and proceeds to swear it by everything from the stars above to the truck at the stoplight. She says she's got a solid love ("hot dog, darlin'"). And if she keeps this up, she's going to have a solid following for the first time in a long time.

Joni has returned to pop music. But anyone who says that pop music isn't art when Joni does it has a lot of explaining ahead. The album isn't particularly innovative—it's an expansion of what she does best, a Music Pleasant that few other people really know how to do.

*Wild Things Run Fast* is art. It tells things in a concrete kind of way, a way that at once exposes common feelings yet gives them a unique expression.

Joni's voice may not be what it was. She's growing old, this woman who wrote in "Woodstock" that life is for learning. She's even incorporated an old Righteous Brothers tune into one of her songs, "Chinese Cafe." "Caught in the middle/Carol, we're middle class/We're middle aged/We were wild in the old days/Birth of rock 'n' roll days. Nothing lasts for long." And it's one of the best songs she's ever written—from *Song to a Seagull*.



Phil Collins: Repeat performance

# Hello, goodbye

Hello, I Must Be Going  
Phil Collins  
Atlantic

By Andrew Porter

PHIL COLLINS' new solo effort, *Hello, I Must Be Going* is conclusive proof that he turns his worst material over to Genesis. In 1981, he surprised the record market with the year's most enjoyable LP, *Face Value*, and it is evident that he's achieved a repeat performance for 1982.

For the new album he re-hired studio extraordinaire Hugh Padgham to handle the production and removed Earth, Wind, and Fire from the brass section in order to use a lesser known, but just as quality, horn quartet.

The collection is introduced with a repetitive number that demonstrates Collins' ability to assemble simple lyrics with straightforward guitar licks and manufacture enjoyable songs.

Entitled "I Don't Care Anymore," he screams over-emotionally about his feelings of spathy and ends up repeating the title 42 times in just under four minutes. (Judges have ruled that on a words per time scale this surpasses David Bowie's "Fame," the previous recordholder.)

Collins' next tune, "I Can't Believe It's True," is a lively melody that serves to debut his brass regiment. Needless to say, the song is terrific—a poppy, pepped-up love song à la EWP's "September" that dominates the A side of the album.

Even better, the transition to the next tune, "Like China," is a beautiful contrast of the incredibly wide range of styles that influence the music on the LP. A legitimate rock 'n' roll bit with a Springsteen-like lyric (the tales of a

young boy anxious to woo a young virgin girl), the song is pleasure to have on the turntable.

The flow of the album is interrupted suddenly by an obvious Genesis reject ("Do You Know, Do You Care") that exists as living proof that getting carried away with synthesizers can be dangerous to the listener's health.

Fast forwarding to the final song enables the new collection's first side to end on a happy note. A re-make of the old Supreme's hit "You Can't Hurry Love," Phil Collins leaps from synth-funk to traditional Motown and performs commendably with the help of his band's appealing background vocals and studio work.

The album cover leaves us wondering what's in store for future solo efforts and thus the continuation of what has become a dull joke. The pictures on *Face Value* are taken from the front and back of Collins' head; the pictures on *Hello, I Must Be Going* are taken from the profiles. Maybe next we'll be treated to either top and bottom or inside and outside shots. Phil has also decided to handle the printing again and hence the beautiful script that embellishes the inside layout (which not to mention is also carbon copied from the first LP).

The second face is just as listenable as the first, but doesn't contain nearly the variety. It opens with a powerful brass-oriented song, "It Don't Matter to Me," and glides into "Thru These Walls," the single from the album that's got a bit of a *deja vu* ring to it. The unmistakably present drum motive that commences the faster section of "In the Air Tonight" is used as the cantus firmus and appears several times in this continuing saga. The two songs are clones of each other—anyone who has heard only Phil Collins' singles will be convinced that he plagiarizes himself in order to develop new material.

The new album stands nearly flawless and leads us to ponder the apparent uselessness of Genesis. Phil Collins definitely works better by himself and having now scheduled a solo U.S. tour he has taken his independent status one step further.

# Alphabet of love

ABC  
Royal Oak Music Theater  
Wednesday, December 15

By Mare Hodges

HOW DO I love thee? Let me count the ways. Ask this question of Martin Fry, singer and leader of Britain's ABC, and the result would be a combination of pop-disco love ballads entitled *Lexicon of Love*.

ABC, a current English Success, has hit the American scene with a forceful new dance music style that is creating further successes for them, as evidenced by the popularity of their recently released single "The Look of Love." This single is only a taste of the tantalizing tunes offered on the album. ABC has combined the orchestrating talents of Trevor Horn (previously of Yes), with their own abilities to write love lyrics that verbally break the heart, to create, as Fry once stated, "a dance music that would be powerful and dignified again, goin' in the opposite direction of most of the Saturday Night Fever discotheque schlock that was hangin' around."

ABC has taken a step in a new direction with their debut LP and other dance music artists have begun to follow.

ABC's new hit single in Britain, "Poison Arrow," is typical of the songs responsible for ABC's overseas success. Strong on verbal insight, this single combines a smoky soprano sax, an oriental marimba figure, and a synthesized drum roll that explodes into a dynamic uproar as Fry gets dumped by his fantasy friend in the song.

Along the lines of a slower tune, free of the high pump of the other songs, Fry offers "All of My Heart." This song follows the classic tragic romance story with lyrics such as "I hope and pray/That maybe someday/You'll walk in the room with my heart/Add and subtract, but as a matter of fact/Now that you're gone I still want you back."

Fry's lyrical expression as well as vocal talent makes "All of My Heart" one of the best songs on the LP.

ABC seems to have created an original style of music, but their real roots can be traced to American R & B. Hints at this are evidenced by such lyrics as "I second that emotion" (from "Show Me"), and the name ABC itself, suggestive of an old Jackson Five number.

These origins do nothing but enhance the quality of this new group, however, and saves them from falling into any particular trend. As Fry once said, "We just liked the idea of a big glamorous name. We thought it'd be timeless: something that had international application but wouldn't tie us down to any one trend or fashion."

The band is made up of studio-



ABC: Love story

oriented musicians and has only performed 18 live concerts to date, but this hasn't hindered their success. Fry claims that they have set goals for themselves as far as live performances go, and these goals are comparable to

the standards they set for themselves as studio performers. With this in mind it seems safe to conclude that their lives shows will be as dynamic as their debut album *Lexicon of Love*.

# Classic jazz

David Eyges  
University Club  
8 p.m. Saturday, December 4

By Robin Jones

HEARING David Eyges play cello is like hearing a rhythm section, supplier of harmonies, and "horn" soloist rolled into one. Eyges and his "Crossroads" ensemble of notable jazz musicians William Byard Lancaster and Sunny Murray appear in concert at the University Club Saturday at 8 p.m. The concert is sponsored by Eclipse Jazz.

Eyges began his musical career at the age of five, when he studied the piano. At nine, he switched to cello. He studied cello and composition at the Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of Benar Heifetz. In 1972, following a deep desire to play jazz, Eyges joined Gunter Hampel's group. He stayed with Hampel for a year and a half, and toured throughout Germany, Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.

Eyges formed his own group in 1975, and has been making jazz waves ever since. He has two recordings out on his own Music Unlimited label: *The Arrow*, and *Crossroads*. *Crossroads*' brightest moments occur when the cello and alto play intersecting lines—when they improvise simultaneously. Eyges and saxophonist/flutist Byard Lancaster show the influence of Ornette Coleman in the bluesy, playful irregular originals.

In the title track of *Crossroads*, Eyges rebounds from a plucked vamp in double-stops to counterpoint, with Lancaster in the alto register, to a tenor-register countermelody, like an agile, clear-toned bassist. On "Nothing has changed... Yet everything has changed..." he bows a melody alongside Lancaster on flute as if the two are breathing in unison. Later, Eyges strums guitar-like chords, bows doubletime melodies, and gives a pizzicato background while Lancaster solos.

Eyges imitates other instruments with ease—walking basses, country fiddles, and first violins, wailing saxophones, lead and rhythm guitars. He is willing to be innovative in his use of the cello, which is rare among most classically-trained cellists.

Eyges' sidemen in *Crossroads* have prestigious reputations of their own. William Byard Lancaster is a reedman of few equals. He is one of New York and Philadelphia's most in-demand saxophonists. Byard has played and recorded with Doug Hammond, Sun Ra, Philly Jo Jones, Khan Jamal, Leroy Jenkins, and Ronald Shannon Jackson.

Percussionist Sunny Murray's list of engagements is simply awesome: Albert Ayler, Cecil Taylor, John Coltrane, Khan Jamal, and David Murray. Sunny had his own band, the Untouchable Factor.

Eyges, Lancaster, and Murray all have extensive teaching experience and will conduct a free workshop on Sunday at 2 p.m., at the William Trotter House.

Tickets for the December 4th concert are \$3.50 general admission and are available at the Michigan Union ticket offices, P.J.'s records, Schoolkid's Records, and all CTC outlets. For more information, call Eclipse Jazz at (313) 783-6822.



David Eyges: On the road again



Joni Mitchell: Being cool