

# Canadian croons

by Paul Gazzola

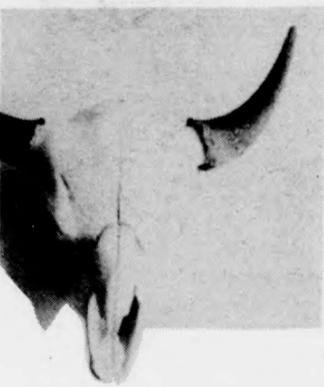
The problem with Ian Tyson's latest record isn't that he has the voice of a crooner—soft, smooth and low. After all, there have been a number of those in country and western music, from

the ever-emoting Marty Robbins to the latest cry-in-his-voice, Chris Isaak.

Tyson's problem is that he sings his songs with all the intensity of a lullaby. "Ballad of Jack Link," a song about an old cowboy (most of the songs are about cowboys), comes across as a children's song due to Tyson's phrasing and tone, not to mention its dipsy-doodle beat.



**music**  
Ian Tyson  
*And Stood There Amazed*  
Eastern Slope Records



Worse, Tyson's delivery and arrangements often cheapen his strong lyrics. Whatever power "Magpie" could have held, for instance, is sacrificed to a totally inappropriate reggae bass line. "Lights of Laramie" ends with a piano passage that could have been written by David Foster.

A few songs do survive, though, especially "Spring Time in Alberta," "You're Not Alone Anymore" and "Black Nights." In the last, Tyson sings "I could dive into the bottle, but I ain't built that way."

Too bad he doesn't have the same good sense to leave off a cover of "Home on the Range."

# Marley's bounty

by Robert Klint

*Jahmekya*, the third album by Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers, is by far the band's strongest release to date.

The album covers much more musical territory than their 1989 release *Conscious Party*, joyously returning with a rich bounty of wonderful songs.

It seems as if Ziggy has been liberated from the daunting legacy of Bob Marley. The result is the breaking of new ground; rather than producing weak venerations which rehash his fathers' memory, Ziggy has finally acquired his own voice. Unlike many other offspring of famous parents, he actually holds his own.

Sixteen songs are offered on *Jahmekya*. "Raw Riddim," the first track, is the only weak number. The rest are well-crafted songs which manage to be uplifting even while talking about oppression, injustice and exploitation.

Ziggy and the Melody Makers transcend bleak situations, finding hope within them. They talk about the struggle for freedom and desperate

political situations, and how these are reasons for positive change. The sentiment is grounded in reality; there are no vacant dreams or apathetic responses, there is action in the music. The main source of this is their Rastafarian faith, which provides them with inner strength and resilience; the music provides joy and healing.

Ziggy has plenty of help from the Marley clan, with brother David Marley emerging as an extremely gifted and talented writer. He penned the two strongest songs on the album, "Drastic" and "Problem with my Woman." Both are funky, spirited ventures which showcase everybody's talents and give rise to a new wave of powerful Marley heritage.

Ziggy sings "I've become a slave to my purpose," which is undeniably to privilege us with his exceptional music.



Top-40 rockers the Crash Test Dummies played the Student Centre pub last Tuesday. Biff the security guard (centre) was careful to prevent any undue frivolity or dancefloor disenhelicidacularity. The audience received a special award for good behaviour and perfect posture.

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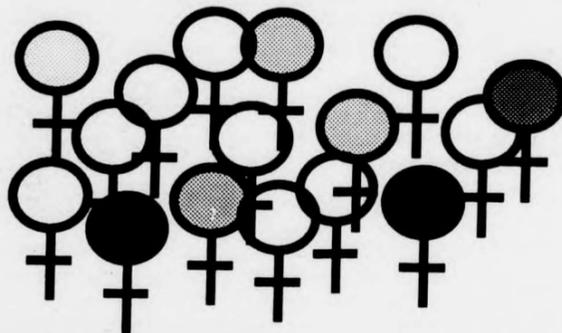


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