

# Record Reviews

## Tyson's *Wagon* is comfortable

Ian Tyson  
*I Outgrew the Wagon*  
Stony Plain Records

by Randal Smathers

Ian Tyson is not the kind of artist to surprise his listeners. Nor is he the type to change something that is working. *I Outgrew the Wagon* is, therefore, not an innovative album.

The fourth of his "cowboy culture" series on Stony Plain, this album is very reminiscent of his last—*Cowboyography*. Tyson features what have always been his strengths: his voice and his lyrics. He sings about things which are familiar to anyone who knows the Canadian prairies, in a style which accents the narrative element of his lyrics. Songs like "Adelita Rose" and

"I Outgrew the Wagon" follow the tradition of Western musical storytelling, which is familiar to fans of roots c&w.

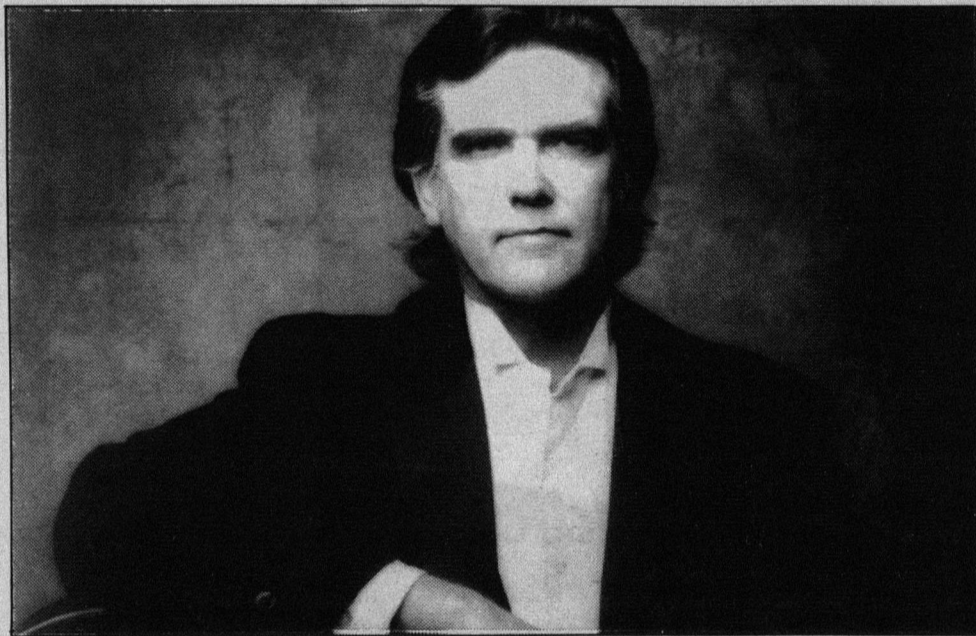
As with *Cowboyography*, this album also sees Tyson rework one of his old standards, and as with that album, the self-cover works well. "Four Strong Winds" benefits as much from Tyson's maturity as a singer as "Summer Wages" did on the last record.

The new music, especially "Cowboys Don't Cry" and "Irving Berlin (Is 100 Years Old Today)" has a strong element of Tyson's folk-sensible philosophy, which matches "Four Strong Winds" well and bridges the time gap between the songs. All three could have easily been written in the same sitting.

My only quibble with this album is that,



Ian Tyson continues doing his "cowboy culture" with a new album and two shows at SUB Theatre, tonight and tomorrow.



Guy Clark is a Texas swing legend. His latest release is called *Old Friends*, and is on Edmonton's own Stony Plain label.

by duplicating *Cowboyography* so closely. Tyson risks falling into a formula. From first listen, this album felt like slipping into an old chair, and it is possible that, like an old chair, it might not have that much more wear left in it. For now though, it is merely comfortable, familiar, and enjoyable.

I'd also like to mention another album on the same label in the little space and time I have left in this year's *Gateway*. Guy Clark, familiar to Edmonton Folk Fest fans, has recorded a new album called *Old Friends*, also on the Stony Plain label.

Clark continues to be one of the best Texas singer/songwriters, and this is a strong album. It has one of the great hurtin' songs in memory: "All Through Throwin' Good Love After Bad"; songs

about life in general, featuring Clark's easy good humor; and a classic called "Heavy Metal." Clark's definition varies from Billy Squiers, though: "I can push the Rocky Mountains into the sea/ You know heavy metal don't mean rock and roll to me." It's not every day you hear a song about driving a D8 Cat.

With some luck, Guy Clark will be back to the Folk Fest any year now. Ian Tyson is due in SUB Theatre this weekend.

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gratuitous  
space!**

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