

Toronto's reaction to Joe Jackson:

As different as night and day

Brian Hayes & Kim Broadfoot

*Music has charms they say
But in some peoples hands
It becomes a savage beast
Can't they control it
Why don't they hold it back*

Joe Jackson, *A Slow Song*

Music, in Joe Jackson's hands, is as smooth and cool as a shuck and jive dance. He is a man of many different moods and faces, and to his credit, has the ability to take his listeners' moods with him. He's proven it on vinyl and to no-one's surprise, he proved it live.

Jackson is planning to be around for a long time. He recently admitted that being typecast as a rock performer was too narrow a definition for him. "I don't like to think that my records only get played on rock radio stations 'cause I'm sure if they were played on black and Puerto Rican stations, a lot of those kids would like them too."

Jackson's music has covered many different styles and eras. His first two, and most commercial l.p.'s, *Look Sharp* and *I'm The Man* are responsible for linking his sound with the "spiv rock" of Elvis Costello and Graham Parker. Then came *Beat Crazy* and *Jumpin' Jive*, two era-influenced types of dance albums.

His most recent album, *Night and Day*, from which most of his concert material was taken, is Jackson's strongest album to date. It's a modified salsa sound arranged for a

small combo. The album is filled with woozy synthesizers, sensuous percussion and like the concert, no guitars (except for a bass) were recorded.

Jackson and his five-member band—a bassist, two keyboardists, a drummer and a percussionist—succeeded admirably in emulating their recorded sound onstage. Vocals blended beautifully when they played numbers like *Real Men*, *It's Different for Girls* and especially, *Is She Really Going Out With Him?* Jackson introduced this song as an "experiment" while all of his band stood centerstage in front of microphones with only a tambourine in the drummer's hand. They proceeded to sing an a capella version of this best-selling single, with the vocals taking care of the instruments used on the recording. Not only were they in perfect pitch, they also appeared to be enjoying themselves as much as the crowd that would later give them three standing ovations.

Joe Jackson is really a "jack of all trades". It's obvious from the way the band operated that he is its nucleus, not just the vocalist. He played the saxophone, glockenspiel and the synthesizers well, and the piano, exceptionally.

It was evident that Jackson's music is maturing faster than many of his fans. They didn't seem to realize that he wants to be, and should be, taken seriously. He repeatedly lipped off to the audience, telling them to stop clapping, giggling and if they wanted to

continue they should "go see fucking AC/DC." Applause, applause.

With his fists clenched, his neck stretched and his heart in his throat, Joe Jackson can belt out a pleading love song and he can shout electro-pop, yet, more importantly, he can also soothe his listeners while he plays with his vocal chords, sliding up and over notes just like the synthesizer the two keyboardists "operated" so well. The wound-down, less complex version of *Fools in Love* showed Jackson at his finest; his words wrapping 'round Graham Mabys richly synthesized bass lines. Throughout the entire evening, he was able to alter the mood of the capacity crowd with just a few bars of a song, whether he demanded it or not.

Education was the problem when Joe Jackson opened the Who concert two days later. Many of the people there apparently still think he's a cynical man with a receding hairline who plays assured, cocky pre-pubescent dance-pop. That's why he and his band were pelted by the thick-headed hordes of "real men" in the crowd of almost 70,000.



Joe Jackson: A performer who prefers a polite audience.

London Contemporary at Ryerson

J. Brett Abbey

It's difficult these days to detach oneself from this mechanized world. According to the London Contemporary Dance Theatre, however, it is by no means impossible. Making its Canadian premiere Tuesday night at the Ryerson Theatre, LCDT gave their opening night audience a glimpse of the natural, spontaneous movement that is a part of deeply rooted emotions.

This European-based company took no chances on foreign soil: they

provided a programme of tested works, most of which were born some five to seven years ago. *Stabat Mater*, a piece choreographed in 1975 by Artistic Director, Robert Cohan, opened the programme, and established the audience's confidence—something to which the dancers have been accustomed. Cohan's motivation for the piece came from a Jacophone da Todi quote: "The Mother, sorrowing stood weeping near the Cross while her Son was hanging." Here, Cohan places the Mother figure surrounded by other women dancers who

represent various parts of the Mother's sorrow and experience; they are not fellow mourners, but rather human emotion personified.

Another Cohan piece brought us closer to nature: *Forest* is performed to the sounds of rustling leaves and echoing winds. Eight dancers dressed in body stockings of soft woodland hues, playfully run through forest and find themselves in tune with nature. The discipline of these hard working dancers is exemplified in their precise timing, and solid technique in this relatively playful romantic piece of work.

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