

Singer Cat Stevens Creates Easy Listening Music

by Kim Nelson

In this age of perpetual changes, many former rock fans have cast aside their ear-splitting, glass-shattering albums to enjoy a new, mellow side of music. One of the greatest masters of this soft rock is Steven Demiori Georgiu, better known as Cat Stevens.

Stevens was born in London in 1948 to a Greek-born father and a Swedish-born mother. He lived in a noisy part of London, over his parents' restaurant. While in school, his main interests were in the fields of music and art.

At the age of 17, he was "discovered" by a fast-talking promoter who tried to mold him into a star. Steve's life then became filled with instant press build-up and social demands that accompany most stars. The pressure was too much. In 1969, Cat was hospitalized with one collapsed lung and a case of tuberculosis.

A New Style

After a long period of convalescence, Cat returned as a different type of musician. His rollicking and bouncy style gave way to new lyricism and sensitivity. "Mona Bone Jakon," one of his first albums released after his illness, has been compared by critics with medieval ballads because of their clarity and simplicity. "Teaser and the Firecat" and "Tea for the Tillerman," both produced in 1970, feature Cat at his best with the mellow sounds of "Moonshadow," "Peace Train," and "Wild World." "Teaser" sold over one million copies and was

THOUGHTS

His eyes always sparkle when she's near.
Her laughter makes him a boy again.
He climbs hills and trees;
sheds his clothes for a swim in the creek ---
and it's because he loves her in a way that no one can understand.

His laughter makes her a woman.
His soft touch and reassuring works
make her see the beauty of life---
and she feels its beauty as no one else can.

Some say they're wrong to love each other but I understand and I see the beauty in their special relationship. Because I love them both. And I understand.

made into a children's book with illustrations by Stevens who also illustrated several of his album covers. By the end of the year, the book had been translated into 11 languages. These albums were followed by a coast-to-coast tour of the US which was highly plaudited by audiences as well as critics.

A Shock Element

After the US tour, the slim attractive musical realized that his style was becoming too predictable. The solution? Cat said, "I said I've got to stop this and introduce an element of shock." And shock it was. Many fans were startled by "Foreigner," an album released in 1973. This album, instead of featuring the soft, melodious sound that had become characteristic of Cat Stevens, blasted out a new sound backed by a trio of talented young black girls. Stevens' true feelings and frustrations seemed to surface on this album. While in New York, he observed that

people wander through the streets and instantly wrote the song that started off his album, "Foreigner."

"How many times must I get up
Look out and see the same old view
How many times must I wear the same old things
And hear the same old things that I do"

Cat seems to write lyrics wherever and whenever he feels the time is right. He wrote the words to the song, "To the Eighteenth Avenue" from "Catch Bull at Four" as he was running for gate 22 in the Kansas City Airport. But Steve does most of his work in his London home. On one floor of his house is a recording studio and a living area on another floor. His loft bedroom, with a skylight that makes the stars clearly visible, inspires many of his ideas. The songs, "Freezing Steel," "Longer Boats," and the unforgettable "Moonshadow" were written in this environment.

New Fall Television Premiere Reveals More Trite Programs

The new fall premiere on television, instead of bringing viewers a totally different choice of programs, has revealed basically the same type that has been shown for many previous years. Although many new shows are premiering, most of them deal with the same trite subjects -- police, private detectives, and "hip" do-gooders; medicine and the personal problems within a hospital; or goody-goody family shows and situation comedies.

Aside from these run-of-the-mill subjects, two others are steadily gaining popularity. Television programs reflecting the lifestyle of the 50's seem to entertain a great number of viewers. But many wonder why these shows, dealing basically with problems of the 50's and fads of the time, can't be set in the 70's. Turning back the hands of time even farther, there are several shows depicting the simple lives of closely-knit families in times of hardships, families who had to struggle to feed the

kids and send them to school. But these families aren't the "typical" poverty-stricken ones characteristic of their particular era.

Contemporary television broadcasts a bundle of programs concerning life in the big city, various criminal rings, and people with supernatural powers and talents, but the majority of viewers can't relate their lives and activities to these. Many avid TV watchers would like to see some really unusual shows on their screen, programs that show the real side of life as ugly as it may be, programs in which the "Good guy" doesn't always come out on top. Such a trend in television programs might appear to be a little outrageous, but viewer response could possibly double if more shows dealt with life's true problems instead of the way Agent X tracks down the arch-killer or how innocent little Johnny confesses that he broke the neighbor's window. Most TV fans are ready for a change.



Singer-composer Cat Stevens pours his soul into his music.

Although many of his works have a mystical and magical touch, somehow Cat Stevens can persuade the listener to enter his world and see the joy that he has found.

Traffic Changes Cause Problems

Rocky Mount Senior High is now advocating a one-way policy. Nash Street has been converted into a one-way street and we now have a one-

way rule for commuting from the 100 hall to the Tillery building. Both new rules have caused problems. Some people do not remember these

rules and other disregard them. Failure to comply with these rules results in a severe reprimand from either a policeman or teacher for first offense. A citation, from the policeman, or a detention slip, from a teacher, is issued for second and following violations.

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