

hot licks | Oldfield's musical genius 'explodes' in 'Ommadawn'

Mike Oldfield/Ommadawn/Virgin Records

If you're a devotee of "progressive music" and know anything about Pavlov and his dogs, mention the name Mike Oldfield and the word "Genius!" will explode in your mind like the release of thousands of balloons.

A glance at the liner notes reinforces Oldfield's Wunderkind status. Besides composing all the music on this album, he also plays harp, electric guitar, acoustic bass, electric bass, acoustic guitar, 12-string guitar, classical guitar, mandolin, bodhran, bazouki, banjo, spinet, grand piano, electric organs, synthesizers, glockenspiel and assorted percussion.

Genius? Time will tell. Oldfield definitely is taking music onto untraveled paths. This album deserves listening because it is fresh and different. It's not rock—it really can't be classified in any category. It's an attempt at gulp, serious—music that transcends rank-and-file popular music.

He relies heavily on the technique he has used since his first album, "Tubular Bells." Layer by layer, he adds new instruments to the texture, giving more depth to the theme until he sweeps into a climax.

At the base, there's usually a droning ostinato, usually filled by vocal parts. This intrudes at times, hampering the nuances of the melody, making it all seem simply repetitious.

But there's one nugget here that, even if the rest of the album were pure trash, would make it all worthwhile. On Side One, Oldfield breaks into a Fied Piper-type section, using just acoustic piano and flutes. If music like this happens in the name of innovation, let's hope nothing ever stands in Mike Oldfield's way.

Gary Wright/The Dream Weaver/Warner Bros.

Gary Wright should arouse from the slumber depicted on this fey album cover when word of this release spreads. The former Spooky Tooth keyboard player has produced a collection of nine commendable tunes, with no flat-out turkey to sour the bunch.

The liner notes state, "This is an album of keyboard music." On this level, the album succeeds. Wright and his other keyboard players, David Foster and Bobby Lyle, use almost all of the conveniences Arp and Moog brought to the music industry.

Wright also emerges as a credible vocalist. He sings the ballads well, as in "Dream Weaver" and "Feel for Me." But he also gets gritty, as in "Can't Find the Judge," where he sings about desolation and privation without sounding as though he just learned about the concepts in a psychology class.

Which brings us to the title cut, "Dream Weaver," a marvelous song. If KFMQ-FM radio doesn't wear the very grooves out of the tune—as they are wont to do with any piece that shows some merit—it will remain fresh for some time.

Phoebe Snow/Second Childhood/Columbia.

Phoebe Snow's much awaited second album reveals a

jazz interpreter of verve and imagination. What she does with "No Regrets," "Goin' Down for the Third Time" and "There's a Boat That's Leavin' Soon for New York" is to breathe new life—relevancy, if you will—into good songs that have been relegated to near-obscure. Snow's flexible voice—first gutsy, then ethereal—twists around melodic lines, weaving something that comes just short of being magical.

Too bad the magic didn't spread to the album's seven other cuts, all Snow originals. Viewed in toto, the batch suffers from melodic lines that do the same tricks too often, horns and strings used to camouflage vacuous music—substituting slickness for emotion—and lyrics not distinctive enough to rescue the music.

This music could be the soundtrack for one of those intimate bars where couples huddle in candlelit corners and gaze soulfully into each other's eyes. That is the most disappointing aspect of most of the album—it can easily be ignored.

—Deb Gray

arts & entertainment

Female comedy team visits Sunday

America's only professional female comedy team will perform Sunday night in the Nebraska Union Ballroom. Harrison and Tyler's performance, sponsored by the Nebraska Union Program Council, the Women's Resource Center and the University Women's Action Group, is scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

The comedy team was born nine years ago. Patti Harrison was a model in New York City and Robin Tyler was a struggling young producer, playwright, singer and comedienne. During one of Tyler's performances, audience member Harrison started heckling her. Tyler invited the unknown heckler to join her on stage.

Their act started as traditional stand-up comedy, but it quickly took on feminist overtones. Success with this

approach, along with their interest in the women's movement, inspired the act's increasingly radical and outrageous satire on sexual stereotypes.

Appearances on the National Broadcasting Co.'s *Tomorrow and Not for Women Only* led to a contract with American Broadcasting Co. where Harrison and Tyler have just completed a prime time variety show pilot.

Folk singer Diedre McCalla will provide a short opening act for Harrison and Tyler's performance. McCalla, who has performed in New York, Chicago and several local clubs, also shared the stage with Harrison and Tyler at last fall's national National Organization for Women conference in Philadelphia.

Concert freebie Friday at Neihardt

A free public concert by the Sheldon Trio Friday at 8 p.m. in Neihardt Residence Center's Raymond TV Lounge will be the first program of the new "Music in the Dorms" series.

"We hope to have two or three concerts this semester of chamber music of various kinds," said Nelson Potter, UNL associate professor of philosophy and organizer of the series.

After each concert, Potter said, refreshments will be served in an adjoining room and the audience will be able to discuss the concert with the performers.

Half the money to support the "Music in the Dorms" program, about \$200, will come from the Lincoln Musicians Union, Potter said. The union has a fund "to

promote the cause of live music in Lincoln," he said. Matching funds will come from the Centennial Education Program, International House, and other residence halls, Potter said.

Friday's concert will be of music by American composers, including "String Quartet," by Benjamin Franklin. Jack Snider, UNL band director, will join Sheldon Trio members Arnold Schatz, Cary Lewis and Dorothy Lewis for the Franklin piece.

Planned for April is a concert by the Emanuel Wishnow Quartet, a prize-winning group of UNL undergraduates, and *Sioux Opera*, written by two former UNL students, Bill Wallis and Dick Moore.

Harpsichord dedication will be festival highlight

Three concerts will conclude the Keyboard Festival this weekend in Lincoln. Highlights include the dedication of a new harpsichord at the UNL School of Music, and a concert by Virgil Fox, world famous organist.

A recital by Eugenia Earle Saturday at 8 p.m. in Kimball Recital Hall will honor the UNL School of Music's newly acquired two keyboard B.M.W. Benn harpsichord. Tickets for the dedicatory recital by the New York City harpsichordist cost \$1.50 for students and \$2.50 for the public.

The harpsichord, modeled after late 18th century English instruments, has inlaid burl walnut panels, keys of ebony and ivory, and inlaid myrtle burl and satinwood in the keywell and jackrails.

"The instrument is an example of unusual visual and tonal beauty," said John Moran, School of Music director. "The university is fortunate to own a harpsichord of this exquisite quality."

The school was able to buy the \$6,500 instrument with a bequest from the estate of Rosanna Carson. Carson, who died in 1966, was a longtime Lincoln resident and member of the NU class of 1901. She is perhaps best known for her restoration of the historic Carson home in Brownville.

Earle widely respected

Eugenia Earle is a widely respected scholar, teacher and performer of baroque music. On her recital program are works by 18th century composers Jean-Philippe Rameau, George Frederick Handel and others.

Earle also will give a lecture and demonstration on "Melodic Ornamentation in Baroque Music" Friday at 3 p.m. in the Westbrook Music Bldg.'s Organ Studio.

Fox, critically acclaimed as America's greatest organ virtuoso, will perform at First-Plymouth Congregational Church, 20th and D streets, at 8 p.m. Friday.

He studied at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and with Marcel Dupre in Paris and was organist for New York City's Riverside Church for 19 years. Since 1965, he has become one of the only organists to devote all of his time to concert work.

Fox has performed as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony and many other major orchestras.

His approach to organ music has been somewhat unorthodox, giving concerts in places like the Fillmore, a rock music auditorium, with light shows and intuitive interpretations of composers' music.

Romantic composers featured

Friday's concert will be music of the Romantic composers. Tickets are available at Brandeis Dept. Store, Hoepfe's Mr. Music, Miller & Paine Dept. Store, Kimball Recital Hall and the First-Plymouth Church.

"An Immigrant's Tribute to the Bicentennial" is the title of the free piano recital by Audum Ravnann, UNL professor of piano, on Sunday at 8 p.m. in Kimball Recital Hall.

Ravnann, who came to the United States from Norway

in 1947, said he usually performs music by Beethoven and Brahms. He said he selected Sunday's program of music by living American composers to honor the country not of his birth, but of his choice.

On the program is the world premiere of "Music for Audum Ravnann," written in 1975 by Randall Snyder, UNL assistant professor of theory and composition. Ravnann called it "a virtuosic piece—it uses almost every trick in the bag."

Also on Sunday's program are five ballads by Roy Harris, "Piano Variations," by Aaron Copeland, "Five Pieces for Piano," by George Crumb, and "Piano Sonata No. 4," by Benjamin Lees.



The dedication of the UNL School of Music's newly-acquired \$6,500 harpsichord will be one of the highlights of the Keyboard Festival this weekend in Lincoln. The festival also will include a concert by Virgil Fox, world famous concert organist.

Photo by Keith Highty