

Dark clouds on the horizon for Tom Petty

By Brian Garrity
Editor-in-Chief

For Tom Petty, love is a series of fits and starts, not one smooth ride. The same can be said for *Wildflowers* Petty's first solo effort since *Full Moon Fever*. While the album is at times inspired, it lacks an overall strong consistency.

Petty is quick out of the gates on the first four tracks, but it's hit or miss the rest of the way.

Producer Rick Rubin takes out the cutesy feel that was all over Don Was's Willberry-style production of *Full Moon Fever*. *Wildflowers* is a much more sober effort. Unfortunately, Rubin, who is known for his work with the Red Hot Chili Peppers, apparently isn't exactly comfortable with the sober feel. His influence is all over the reved up guitars in the ridiculous "Honey Bee" and "Cabin in the Woods."

Wildflowers is in its element when Petty works with the lower key and acoustic arrangements.

On "You Don't Know How It Feels," the best song among the 15 on *Wildflowers*, Petty takes his traditional mid-tempo pace driven by a thumping drum beat and a wailing harmonica.

As an artist Petty seems to be fighting for his vitality and his musical niche, singing lines like: "My old man was born to rock/ He's still tryin' to beat the clock/ think of me what you will/ I've got a little space to fill."

Thematically, Petty's lyrics are strong but familiar as he sings about the fragile nature of love and the disillusionment that surrounds it.

The album leads off with the sweet, wistful title track. Petty



Photo: Martyn Atkins

Warner Brothers recording artist, Tom Petty performs music from his new album, "Wildflowers."

sings to a simple acoustic strum: "You belong in the wildflowers/ You belong in a boat at sea/ You belong with your love on your arm/ You belong somewhere you feel free."

"You Don't Know How It Feels" is a defensive expression against love. "Turn the radio loud/ I'm too alone to be proud/ You don't know how it feels/ You don't know how it feels to be me," Petty sings.

The Dylan-esque "Time To Move On" is a melancholy declaration of perseverance. And "Don't Fade On Me," is a sparse appeal for love to hang on.

Wildflowers isn't a love-lorn dirge however. Petty and com-

pany also shine on more uptempo tracks like "You Wreck Me," "To Find A Friend" and "A Higher Place."

Petty still isn't exactly cheery when the pace picks up as he sings that "It's hard to find a friend."

He's downright fatalistic on "A Higher Place" as he sings: "And we gotta leave by night/ Before that river takes us down/ We gotta find some place that's dry/ We gotta run like we've never run/ Or we're gonna lose the light."

That stanza sums up *Wildflowers* pretty well. Petty's hopes for the best are threatened by dark clouds on the horizon.

Lion King revisited

By Dave Thomer
Staff Writer

When advertising begins to stress what a good idea it would be to see a film a second time, then it is a sure sign of a film's success. Of course, the fact that everyone has seen it *once* is just assumed. Walt Disney's *The Lion King* reached that level of success fairly quickly over the summer; by the end of the first month of release, print ads were saying, "If you've only seen it once, you haven't seen it all!" Now the film is back in theaters after a brief hiatus, and Disney is telling us all to line up at the box office again.

The hype is nice, but is it accurate? Is it really necessary to rerelease a movie three months after it left theaters the first time?

Let me put it this way: I saw it three times. In one week.

The Lion King is not merely a kids' film, and it certainly isn't just brain candy. The animation is stunning — even on the third viewing, the opening sequence is a jaw-dropper. The wildebeest stampede that marks the film's turning point is equally as breathtaking. From a purely aesthetic point of view, *Lion King* is worth seeing again.

But the story is where the movie really shines. Watching Simba evolve from an arrogant cub to a true leader, even if the actual aging process takes only about thirty seconds, makes multiple viewings worthwhile.

Even though I knew what was going to happen, I still felt Simba's guilt and sorrow over his father's death. I still admired the contrast of James Earl Jones' Mufasa and Jeremy Irons' Scar.

In addition to the drama, *Lion King* is an outright fun movie. My second viewing was in a packed theater at 10 p.m. with a primarily adult crowd, and there were points at which the laughter drowned out the next line of dialogue. When you still laugh at a joke the third time you hear it, it's probably a good one.

Pumba and Timon (a warthog and a sirrakut, respectively) are primarily responsible for this. Without them there would be no "Hakuna Matata," nor would there be the requisite wise guy to make light of the situation. Watching their banter is like listening to "Who's on

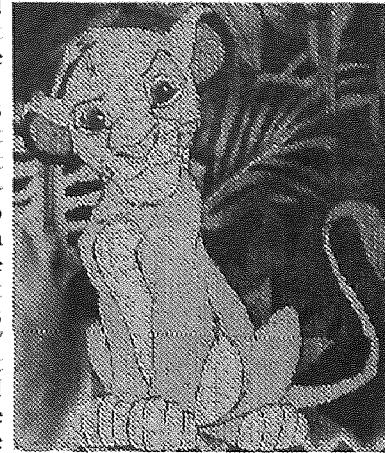


Photo: Disney

First?" over and over—you know the punch line, but it's still fun to see the execution.

You could analyze the movie forever, and in fact it seems some critics have done just that and found some politically incorrect ingredients. Myself, I think it's enough to note that my boss over the summer—who is almost thirty years old and has a degree from Harvard, and no kids—was quite proud of the fact that he acquired an official 32 oz. *Lion King* cup at his local Burger King.

And he was jealous when he found out I had a better one.

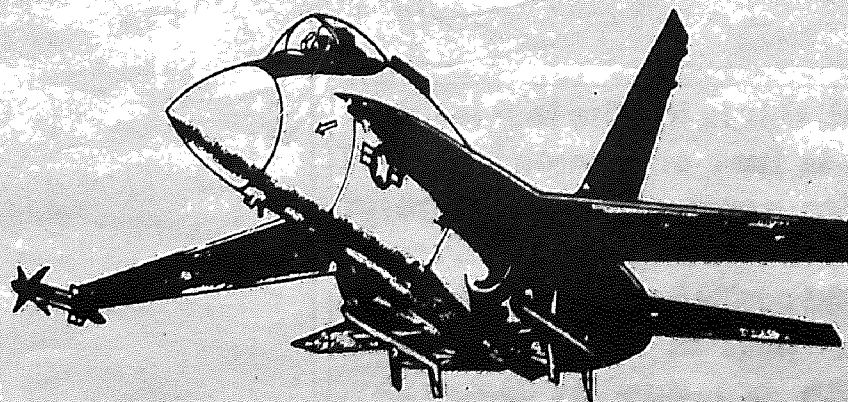
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