

## PHIL COLLINS

Both Sides

ATLANTIC 82550-2 • 1993, 67:17

Performance ★ ★

Sound Quality ★ ★ ★ ★

If familiarity breeds contempt, Phil Collins is in grave danger. On his own and as a member of Genesis, he's been a constant presence on the charts for more than a decade. Genesis began with art-rock pretensions, and his solo career began as a modest side project, but both have long since merged into a never-ending stream of

hits such as "That's All," "One More Night," and "Throwing It All Away."

If you can't always remember which are his and which are Genesis, you're hardly alone. If you can't imagine trying, then *Both Sides* is not the album for you. Collins maintains his persona as the amiable Everyman with a knack for melody and a wee bit of social conscience. Nothing in this low-key, ruminative album will entice newcomers or startle longtime fans.

Recorded alone in his home studio, *Both Sides* does contain some raw, affecting vocals. And, naturally, he's come up with a handful of winning tunes: "Everyday" glides by on a lighter-than-air chorus, "Can't Turn Back the Years" is nicely plaintive, and "Please Come Out Tonight" serves as a genuinely moving plea to an old lover.

But just as many tracks blur in the mind, with "I've Forgotten Everything," "There's a Place for Us," and far too many others leaving no impression at all. Taken as a whole, the album seems weighted down by the late-night melancholia that inspired it. Well before it's finished *Both Sides* becomes overly familiar. That may not be contemptible, but it is boring.

—Michael Giltz



## LEMONHEADS

Come on Feel the Lemonheads

ATLANTIC 82537-2 • 1993, 54:36

Performance ★ ★ ★

Sound Quality ★ ★ ★

This may be the first band to benefit from the re-release of an old movie. When *The Graduate*'s 25th anniversary rolled around, the Lemonheads recorded a swift no-frills cover of "Mrs. Robinson" and a video was tacked on to the commemorative home video and laserdisc. Suddenly, after four albums, the Lemonheads were getting serious airplay.

Now, with *Come on Feel the Lemonheads*, the band seems poised for even wider recognition. It's a strange way to get ahead, but anything that brings attention to Evan Dando's songwriting is welcome. His pure pop talent is on full display here. The single "Into Your Arms" is a rush of melody and need, "Style" serves as a paean to ambivalence and drug use, and track after track is a marvel of economy and insight.

There are a few stumbles: "Style" is unnecessarily reprised in a slowed-down funk version and "Big Gay Heart"—a song about gay bashing—has better intentions than lyrics. But Dando knows the pleasure of tunes that get the job done with a minimum of fuss. And anyone who can write lyrics as goofy and charming as

those in "Being Around"—"If I was a front porch swing would you let me hang?/If I were a dance floor would you shake your thang?"—clearly deserves all the success he can muster.

—Michael Giltz