



albumreview

Mandy Moore

Wild Hope

Firm Music/EMI Music Canada

BRYAN SAUNDERS

Arts & Entertainment Staff

In 1999, Mandy Moore burst onto the charts with her bubble-gum-pop single "Candy." Since then, in addition to trying her hand at acting, the charming chanteuse has released several albums, all more inventive than the first.

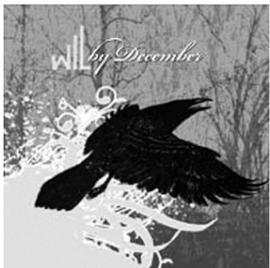
Unfortunately, these have gone largely ignored by the innovation-

wary pop industry; however, instead of giving in and returning to cookie-cutter pop, Moore takes on a completely different direction with her latest release.

Through this mature and sophisticated album, the now 23-year-old Moore shows just how much she has

grown since her very first single. *Wild Hope* is a mellow but rousing and deeply personal collection of songs, all co-written by Moore along with written or vocal contributions by such names as The Weepies, Chantal Kreviazuk, and the up-and-coming Bret Dennen.

The lyrics are meaningful and poetically impressive. The complex instrumentals feature pianos, drums, cellos, violins, wurlitzers, bouzoukis, the odd ukulele, and just about every type of guitar there is. With extraordinary tracks such as "Can't You Just Adore Her?," "Looking Forward to Looking Back," and "Wild Hope," this is actually a Mandy Moore album worth checking out.



albumreview

Wil

By December

EMI Music Canada

MARIA KOTOVYCH

Arts & Entertainment Staff

Have you ever gone out for a run, started out at a nice, strong pace, but then started to poop out after a while? *By December* must know this feeling, because that's exactly what this album does.

The first two tracks, "Tell You Twice" and "Friend of Mine," are upbeat, interesting and catchy; Wil's

voice carries the folk-rock tunes nicely. "Wedding Dress" begins with a beautiful crescendo of strings, while "Rain On" is two steps away from being a country waltz, adding musical variety to this album.

Sadly, by the sixth track, the songs—much like a tired runner—begin to slow down and lose steam. The next

few songs are all boring, nondescript, mid-tempo pieces that sound whiny and interchangeable after awhile. For instance, certain parts of the chorus in "December" sound exactly like parts of the refrain of "The Way I Used To." "Tight Fist" and "Help" lead the pack of sappy and whiny numbers.

However, just as that runner might get a sudden burst of energy towards the end of a long run, this album also presents an interesting song in the second-last position. The twangy, electric-country style of "Honey Pie" is reminiscent of Big & Rich's "Save a Horse (Ride a Cowboy)." Unfortunately, this one catchy tune cannot make up for the last few songs. By the time the last track ends, the listener will probably be waiting for the finish line.



PHIL HEAD

HE'S SO WHITE AND NERDY The sweet polka sounds of "Weird" Al Yankovic rocked the Capital Ex main stage on 25 July, accompanied by frequent costume changes. No death threats were issued by Coolio during the performance.

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