

Chasing Rainbows
Released 1977
By Wendy Fraser
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Can anyone sing a sad song better than Jane Olivor?

Listening to Chasing Rainbows, I'd answer no.

Released between her dazzling First Night debut and Stay the Night with its polished pop production, Chasing Rainbows was a more subdued, moodier and darker effort from Jane.

This may, in part, have been due to the switch in producers from Jason Darrow, who produced First Night, to Tom Catalano, Neil Diamond's longtime producer.



There's some lighter material here, including the lilting and lovely "The French Waltz" and the mellow "You," which became an enduring salute from Jane to her fans. But the brassy and overbearing "The Big Parade" sounds like a programmed show-stopper and has not worn well, as Jane herself has acknowledged in interviews.

The real core of the album is the slow, sad songs. Consider her world weary take on Donovan's "Lalena," about a streetwalker living on the edges of society; or the poignant break-up song "It's Over Goodbye" with its heart-breaking realization that "it hurts so bad to find the love you lost you never had." Jane's reading of the lyrics, "There's children you know and that makes it so hard to go" is especially evocative.

Other favourites are Beautiful Sadness, with its exquisite phrasing; her gorgeous version of the title tune; and the ballad "Come in from the Rain," which displays all the vocal power at her command. Together, these are songs for a dark and melancholy night when the windowpane is spattered with raindrops.

The album earned rave reviews. Billboard said, "This outstanding vocalist offers an impressive packager of distinctive and flawless interpretations."

The Los Angeles Times stated Chasing Rainbows was "not only one of the season's finest mainstream pop collections, but also one of the most exciting collections of any stripe. Even more than Olivor's First Night debut last year, the highlights here have that captivating emotional thrust that is usually meant when the term 'magical' is applied to a pop performer."