

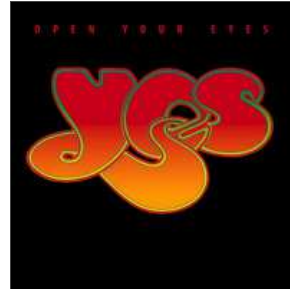


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Yes: Open Your Eyes (2012)

By [GLENN ASTARITA](#), Published: August 11, 2012

Not well-received among diehard Yes fans, *Open Your Eyes* was originally released in 1997, and reissued here, in LP format, in 2012. Nowhere as prominent or striking as the band's classic '70s outings, here keyboardist Rick Wakeman is absent and replaced by keyboardist/guitarist Billy Sherwood, who lines up with eminent guitarist and longtime member [Steve Howe](#). The bulk of this material lies between progressive rock and pop-rock, with most of it largely forgettable romps, sans memorable hooks or intriguing song forms. They're diametrically opposed to Yes' classic pieces, often modeled with complex time signatures, ambient/symphonic dreamscapes and British folk music.



In 1982, when guitarist [Trevor Rabin](#) joined the band, Yes morphed into a high-end pop-rock unit, and enjoyed extensive radio airplay with the hit "Owner of a Lonely Heart." Personnel shifts once again followed, leading to this outing, primarily designed on solid backbeats and a few odd-metered diversions. However, the prog factor faintly underscores the majority of the program.

"Fortune Seller and "Man in the Moon" are noteworthy compositions, borrowing from pop and featuring vocalist Jon Anderson's tuneful overtones and catchy lyricism. But filler material such as the 23-minute "The Solution" is little more than an electronic backwash, treated with the sounds of nature and vocal choruses that weave in and out every five minutes or so.

The only saving grace pertains to the musicians' superior chops amid Howe, bassist Chris Squire and drummer [Alan White](#)'s enviable technical faculties and signature stylizations. Unfortunately, this isn't enough to keep the album from sinking into murky waters.

Track Listing: New State of Mind; Open :Your Eyes; Universal Garden; No Way We Can Lose; Fortune Seller; Man In The Moon; Wonderlove; From the Balcony; Love Shine; Somehow... Someday; The Solution.

Personnel: Jon Anderson: lead vocals; Chris Squire: bass, harmonica, vocals; Billy Sherwood: guitars, keyboards, vocals; Alan White: drums, percussion, vocals; Steve Howe: guitars, steel, mandolin, banjo, vocals.

Record Label: [Sireena Records](#)

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[Wardencllyffe](#) wrote on August 11, 2012

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I can't imagine why such a record would have to be reviewed on "ALL ABOUT JAZZ" !



[John Kelman](#) wrote on August 11, 2012

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All About Jazz has an open policy about tangential and, in some cases, completely non-jazz reviews, within reason. Yes, we're a jazz site, but like many of us who work at it and write for it, we know many of our readers are fans of music beyond even its broadest purview. So, a small percentage of non-jazz content adds, we think, to the richness of the site.

Also, just like many jazz festivals today, including *some* peripheral/non-jazz coverage will bring readers to the site who might otherwise not have known about us. And some of those folks like what they see, and stick around for the jazz coverage, so running a certain percentage can also bring folks to jazz. And in the case of progressive rock, speaking for myself, it was certainly a major "gateway drug" to jazz for me, when I was coming up in the late '60s/early '70s. So prog, in particular, has some relevance even if it's not in the stylistic sphere, as a lot of folks who like prog discover they also like jazz, too, once they are exposed to it.

I can understand your questioning it, but hopefully this explanation makes sense. It's certainly worked, as I know very specifically of prog folks who came to aaj through coverage of yes, genesis, king crimson and, for more recent folks, steven wilson, and are now regular readers who are expanding their own purview, as they explore the breadth and depth of jazz.

Best!

John