James Gangesque cut, features some of Andes' best guitar work, and "Wait a Thought for a second that he was Keith popstar. In the best Spirit tradition, side eternally-bemoaned perils of being a rock Zoorj "Mr. Skin" vein. While the subject yielding keyboard (usually piano) backing "60 unique to Jo Jo; Ferguson must have rasping guitar, and Ferguson's solid, un- While Jo JO Gunne is less prone to the idio- present by a band called Jo Jo Gunne, and they're just about convinced me that they are the Best American Rock Band, a little which, if indeed they, is dropped into their laps by Alice Cooper, after they went Broadway on their latest, Billion Dollar Babies.

You can't deny they're qualified. De- mined from the great band, Spirit, and taking their name from an obscure Chuck Berry tune, JoJo is: Jay Ferguson on keyboards and lead vocals, Matt Andes on guitar, Curly Smith on drums, and Jimmy Ruffin on bass, replacing Matt's brother Mark. Bite Down Hard is their second album, and good as was Jo Jo Gunne, this one cuts it, being less idyl- syncretic, more mainstream (but kitchen) tude, most of their material sounds like Spirit, especial- they let album before the departure of Ferguson, Andes and Randy California. The Twelve Strings record, While Jo Jo Gunne is less prone to the delightful electronic gimmickry of Sardonicus, the vocals, Andes' assaying, rasping guitar, and Ferguson's solid, un- yzing keybord (usually piano) backing have the Spirit energy.

The music also does more of the writ- ing, so JoJo's material is in the "Animal Zone"/"Mr. Skin" vein. While the subject matter on Jo Jo Gunne was pretty ran- don, Bite Down Hard is about the eternally-bemoaned perils of being a rock popstar. In the best Spirit tradition, side one: the chorus, "Ball Game No. 1" is unique to Jo Jo; Ferguson must have thought for a second that he was Keith Emerson, for his synthesizer really rocks. "60 Minutes To Go" reminds me of Dave Bowie's "Five Years." It begins with the same type of track, heartbeat, drummin- and both build to an ultimate over- powering chorus. "Rock Around the Symbol" is my favorite on the album, almost a modified rockabilly tune like Traffic's "You Can All Join In," but with an increa- sively unique double-time rhythm line that whisks the listener right along.

On side two, "Special Situations," a James Gang-esque cut, features some of Andes' best guitar work, and "Wait a Lifetime" has a melody and harmonies that recall very early Spirit.

But the old Spirit magic, despite the piece that went off with Randy California and this twirly-birdical neo-acid rock, and the hit that singers with the max-defense new Spirit, is present and blooming other again in Jo Jo Gunne. Bite Down Hard comes a good 18 months after their first, and a lot has happened since then to recreate and redefine the future of rock. Slide, Machine Head, Ziggy Stardust to name but a few. And if Jo Jo Gunne is the best we can come up with statewide, then we ain't all that far behind.

Cyrano — worth reviving? by Dennis Mill

What can you say about a musical that does almost everything right, and still leaves you cold! It doesn't happen often with drama, and probably less often with both music and drama, but it happens with Cyrano. Basie it on the play by Edmond Rostand, Anthony Burgess has attempted a rewrite plus lyrics, trying to reconcile interest in the sentimental and tragic story of the long-nosed French poet, soldier, and novelist.

According to a Rostand authority, Burgess has changed very little of the original work (which itself took with the actual life of Cyrano), and the result is heavy going. The music by Michael Lewis is a somewhat refresh- ing relief from what could have been a very painful three-hour experience, but it is not enough to make this play a success. It is not enough to make this play a success.

The character of De Bergerac is played by Christopher Plummer, a Shake- spearean actor probably best known for his performance in The Sound of Music. It is definitely Plummer's play, as he provides us with an excellent portrayal of the witty, courageous, and individualistic De Bergerac. Plummer engages in every- thing from one of the most extravagant and physically demanding sword fights ever staged, to reasoning like: "A lie is almost a myth and a myth is almost a truth, therefore this lie will be almost a truth," and much more. But his greatest achievement is in convincing the audience of Cyrano's overwhelming love for his cousin Roxanna, while at the same time being himself to convince that no one could love someone as ugly as he, that he keeps his feelings from her for fourteen years.

Cyrano is nearly a technical master- piece, with virtually stark scenery done in persimmon colors being the only persimmon colors. The whole cast, es- pecially Plummer, deserves all the favor- able notice they will get. Yet the matter is raised — Cyrano de Bergerac is living again, but was he worth reviving? photo by Roger Goldstein —

Professor David Epstein conducted the MIT Symphony Orchestra on Tuesday night in Kresge Auditorium. The concert featured Petes and Naiges by Debussy and Brahms' Symphony No. 2, and was taped by WGBH-TV for future broadcast.