

# Pop world fears throat troubles may silence Joni

**C**ONCERN for the health of legendary singer Joni Mitchell — the muse of stars such as Prince, Mick Jagger and BRITS Awards winner Seal — are growing after she suffered serious throat problems.

Her famed smoky voice may finally be showing the strain of numerous cigarettes and demanding recording sessions. There are doubts over whether she will continue her career.

During promotional tours for her latest album *Night Ride Home* some months ago, a string of interviews had to be cancelled. No reasons were given at the time, but it was anxiety over her health that was the real cause of her return to the Californian home she shares with husband



**TROUBLES:** Joni Mitchell

Larry Klein, a jazz musician 13 years her junior. Chain-smoker Joni, 48, has turned to painting — her pictures can sell for up to £30,000 — for solace and has also taken up photography.

Last night, a source at her record company, MCA, admitted: "The planned rounds of publicity for Joni's album were cancelled because of her

health problems. Nobody was told exactly what was wrong, but we knew she had extremely serious problems with her throat.

"Everybody was very concerned. She was obviously very distressed and saw various doctors and specialists. Apparently, the illness was so bad that no one knew if she would sing professionally again.

"Now we don't know if there will ever be another Joni Mitchell album, or what will happen to her singing career."

Seal, who has just completed a new song for Joni, which will be on his forthcoming album was shocked when told of her illness. Some of the words on the soulful song have a prophetic slant and Seal told me: "It's terrible that she could be so ill — I had no idea when I wrote the song."