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records

## Joni Mitchell, breaks from the mold

Court and Spark  
Joni Mitchell  
Asylum 7E-1001

By Rick Pope

changed style, and it is well to reserve judgment accordingly.

After the first hearing I thought, "Nice, but just where is it going?" But as time wore on it began to grow on me quite a bit. I found myself taking to it much more easily than her earlier work.

For the most part the music is light, jazzy rock, combining catchiness with the potential to explore more than a 4-4 rhythm and a sharply defined verse-chorus. Most of her songs flow smoothly along in a rich texture of instruments and voices, although several melancholy piano peeces are reminiscent of her earlier material.

The first side begins with one such song—"Court and Spark"—followed by a sprightly "Help Me." As is her custom, she thinks she's falling in love again. But the convincing treatment of the line "didn't it feel good?" makes you wonder who really needs the help.

"Free Man in Paris" features David Crosby and Graham Nash on some excellent background harmonies, with Ms. Mitchell's voice reaching its usual heights.

The side is rounded out by a skillfully connected "People's Parties" and "Same Situation."

Held together by a leisurely acoustic guitar and gentle melody, the first song of the two paints a sensitive picture of people's parties, as seen from the outside looking in.

The song slide gracefully into "Same Situation," a haunting, passionate piece with Ms. Mitchell accompanying herself on piano. It alternately soars with hope and falls back into questioning despair at the futility of love. Somehow, the lyrics manager to verge on both the crystal and the trite in the space of one short verse:

"Still I send up my prayer  
Wondering where it had to go  
With heaven full of astronauts  
And the Lord on death row"

While the millions of lost and lonely ones

Call out and clamor to be found  
Caught in their struggle for higher position

And their search for love that sticks around."

The second side, although not as quite as strong as the first, continues in the same general vein. It is highlighted by "Raised on Robbery," an AM boogie with the Band's Robbie Robertson snapping out some fine work on electric guitar.

Ms. Mitchell has lost something of her uniquely personal style in this attempt to break out of her mold. But she has brought a solid sense of craftsmanship along with her turn toward commerciality—so something's been gained, too. What emerges is an eminently playable album full of music with class. At one point, she defiantly sings

"Everybody's in it for their own game"

You can't please them all."  
She managed to please at least one.

## Top trumpeter brings it all together

I don't know if anyone has ever said it, but it would seem to be one of those truths that are self-evident. Great jazzmen don't come from Indiana.

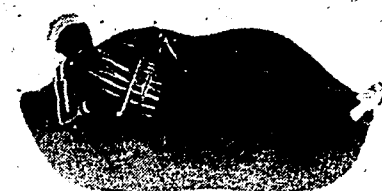
Wrong. At least one of the reigning jazz dynamos does emanate from that outlying province, and if Freddie Hubbard's abilities have anything to do with his origin, we can only hope that more Hoosiers are planning to get into the jazz business.

Although most listeners would still rate Miles Davis as the supreme virtuoso of jazz trumpet, most of the recent credible polls have been awarding Freddie the top spot in the category. Even if votes are being withheld from Miles because he has been branching away from the mainstream of listener tastes, this doesn't take anything away from Freddie.

In the late fifties Freddie Hubbard burst upon the scene, playing beside many of the famous names in jazz.

Around the middle of the last decade Freddie began to realize his own leadership and compositional abilities, and started fronting a regular parade of alignments over the next five years. His earliest efforts were recorded on Blue Note, Impulse, and Atlantic.

In 1971 he began to work within the context of the CTI "stable," playing trumpet for the likes of Stanley Turrentine, Hubert Laws, George Benson, Ron Carter, and Airto, and indeed, having these same folks back him on his first four CTI albums.

Keep Your Soul Together  
Freddie Hubbard  
CTI 6036Freddie Hubbard  
Keep Your Soul Together

By Danl Ruby

Keep Your Soul Together is the fifth CTI album, and it could be the best yet. For the first time Freddie is not backed by a cast of stars, but is instead working with his own well-disciplined band. And this new band showcases the four new Hubbard compositions to perfection.

Freddie has always managed to stay to the fringes of the avant-garde, and nearer to the mainstream of tastes, so in the present era of jazz-rock fusion we are not surprised to see him incorporating a few of the elements, but basically rejecting the frenzied guitar and simple rock rhythms. Freddie has always been primarily concerned with melodies and meaning, so the prettiness of these new compositions is fully expected.

Side one has "Brigitte" and "Keep Your Soul Together." Both are slow melodic pieces, with Freddie capably stating the themes and variations and relying on his rhythm section (electric piano, acoustic and electric basses, drums and other percussion) for support and variety. On "Keep Your Soul Together," a second horn in the person of Junior Cook's tenor provides excellent counteraction to Freddie's line.

The second side is somewhat more experimental. "Spirits of Trane" obviously alludes to the verticality of John Coltrane, and appropriately the piece is uptempo with the bass and drums supporting the tune on a kind of be-bop structure. Pianist George Cables is as versatile as McCoy Tyner in playing around a chord to help his soloist find direction.

"Destiny's Children" is the most rock oriented tune on the album, and while it maintains a basic rock beat, it offers Freddie the best opportunity to take off. His solos on this final cut alone justify his rating as one of the top trumpeters in the business.

Keep Your Soul Together is going to appeal to a wide variety of listeners. Newcomers to the field of jazz will find it one of the most pleasant (i.e. listenable) albums of the recent crop. More sophisticated fans already know about Freddie's abilities, but will be pleased to discover that everything has finally come together for him in composition, production, and performance.