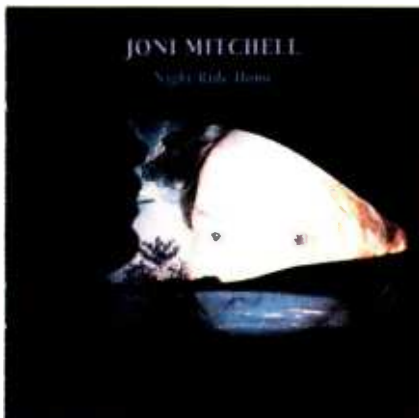


Fresh Tracks

Joni Mitchell: "Night Ride Home"



Label: Geffen

Produced by: Joni Mitchell and Larry Klein

Mixed by: Mike Shipley and Dan Marnien

Engineered by: Dan Marnien

Additional engineering: Tony Phillips, Steve Churchyard, Julie Last, Henry Lewy, Richard Cottrell, Julie Last, Paula Garcia, Kristen Connelly, Jim Hill, Bob Voght

Recorded and mixed at: Kiva Studios, A&M Studios, One on One Studios

Mastered by: Bob Ludwig, Masterdisk (New York)

SPARS Code: AAD

Comments: Consistency reigns throughout the latest release from J.M., in musicality, artistic message and production. Mitchell has recorded one of her more mainstream works with catchy hooks and melodies that are embellished by a uniform, engineered mix.

Of special interest: The popularity of Kiva as the studio for creating some of the latest creative works must certainly be a deliberate choice among the artists who voice where they want to track. Many of the albums recorded at Kiva (and those subsequently reviewed in this department) have exhibited the variety of the mixes and significant consistency of the productions merit recognition. ■

Riff

Label: SBK

Produced by: Dennis Lambert, Pam Reswick, Steve Werfel, Monty Seward, Winston Johnson, Dale Van Rensalier, Ron Robinson, Brooks Arthur, Steve Lindsey, David Lawrence, Faye Greenberg

Engineered by: Brian Malouf, Jeremy Smith, Gabe Veltri, Frank Roszak, Charles Alexander, Winston Johnson, John van Nest, Gabe Moffat, Eric Anest, Tom Fritze, Dave Jenkins, Steve van Arden

Recorded at: The Zoo (Encino, CA); Can Am (Tarzana, CA); Marathon (New York); Studio Ultimo; Westlake; Winsonic Digital; the Hit Factory; Steve Lindsey Studio (Los Angeles); Image Recording (Hollywood); Valley Center Studios (North Hollywood); Ground Control

Mastered by: Bob Ludwig (Masterdisk, New York)

SPARS Code: N/A



Comments: Machine tracks with some tasty guitars and saxophones. The vocals by this five-piece are phenomenally impressive. Their blending brings to mind at once Take Six and the Temptations. Riff ought to take the Grammy next year for group vocals. It's amazing to hear what kind of record you can make with vocalists who can really sing.

Of special interest: "All Or Nothing" is the funky track with some cool rhythmic and sampling effects. "If You're Serious" is a velvety smooth romantic ballad, reminiscent of Stevie Wonder. ■

Material Issue: "International Pop Overthrow"



Label: Mercury

Produced by: Material Issue and Jeff Murphy

Engineered by: Jeff Murphy

Mixed by: Jeff Murphy

Recorded at: Short Order Recorder (Zion, IL)

Mastered by: Greg Fulginiti, Artisan Sound Recorders (Hollywood)

SPARS Code: AAD

Comments: Good, tight pop songs, solid writing, with a young idealistic edge; a cross between Shoes and REM. The real achievement of the production is in the casual ambience captured while still getting all of the details just right; the vocal performances sound natural and effortless. An alternative band with great promise; it may be a few albums before MI cross over to the mass appeal which REM is now receiving, but it will be fun on the way.

Of special interest: There is a lot of obvious care in the production and engineering, yet the recording smartly avoids sounding "slick" or overproduced. "Valerie Loves Me" is a good radio track. ■