

NEW RECORDINGS

DON JUAN'S RECKLESS DAUGHTER
Joni Mitchell
Asylum 701

It's not a good thing to cross a Joni Mitchell fan. There are parallels to be drawn between their passion and the unbreakable bonds of a perfect love.

That is why it is particularly odd to hear rumbly from the rank and file of her legion. Some of them are disturbed by her present direction which is actually the maturation of a departure she made about the time of *Court and Spark*.

Don Juan's *Reckless Daughter* is her most experimental work yet, even more than last year's *Hejira*. The album features members of Weather Report: Wayne Shorter on sax and Jaco Pastorius on bass most notably and John Guerin and Larry Carlton of the Crusaders. The record is sophisticated and occasionally quite heady backing

music for her compositions and the orchestrations by Michael Gibbs, most prominently displayed on the second side, "Paprika Plains." The 16-minute cut is definitely Mitchell's most ambitious undertaking to date, and it is the single most impressive thing about the album.

This is not to say that the usual passel of beautiful melodies and inspired poetry is not included: "Jericho," "Off Night Backstreet," or "Cotton Avenue" all fit this bill. If anything, their melodies are more mature and more haunting than anything she has done.

Her sound is never lost behind an overly loud backing mix either. Her voice, guitar and piano are up front, never buried.

The lyrics all show Joni at the top of her form. She yearns for the "shiny me" of Cotton Street; she wanders back through her Canadian childhood to her infancy in "Paprika Plains;" she wishes she had seen through the "Silky



Mitchell

Veils of Ardor."

The depth of symbolism achieved on "Dreamland" is as important as her work on "Paprika." The symbolism she uses in talking of the tropical Caribbean is as warm as the locale. The best measure is to read her poetry without the music.

Don't be put off by the jazzy or classical tones of the sides of Don Juan's *Reckless Daughter*—they are just the sounds of Joni expanding some more.

JOHN ATKINSON

SHOT IN THE DARK
Bill Quateman
RCA APL 2434 B

Guitarist, pianist, organist—synthesizing Bill Quateman may be on his way to rockin' gold.

His new album, *Shot in the Dark*, has some timeless cuts. The title song, "A Shot in the Dark," and "It Won't Matter Tonight," both Quateman originals, are right for now and could be around for later.

Quateman does a decent version of Jimi Hendrix's "Wait Until Tomorrow." Caleb Quayle and he do some guitar work on the cut that makes the feet move.

"All Over Now," another of Quateman's writings, is the most calm cut on the album. The lyrics are especially soothing as he sings of dreams, loneliness, roses, romance and illusions.

Overall, Quateman's *Shot in the Dark* is a delightful album. It is definitely rock with just a cool touch at the end to bring the listener back to reality.

SONYA LEWIS

TEN YEARS OF GOLD
Kenny Rogers
United Artists LA 835 H

Kenny Rogers aficionados will welcome this album with open arms. As "best of" collections go, this one is hard to beat.

Regardless of Roger's recent surge in popularity, the songs that made him and the First Edition famous are not neglected. Although the cuts were recently recorded in Nashville, Rogers made a point of keeping them as close to the original recordings as possible.

The only exception to that rule is "Just Dropped In," and even it is not drastically different. The

background vocals on the original flowed a little more smoothly than those on the new version. Not to say that the latter is bad, but it isn't consistent with the other cuts in the album. It definitely doesn't sound anything like the more recent material Rogers has released.

It almost goes without saying that "Lucille" is included in the collection. Anyone with a radio has heard the tune at least once, and to have left it out would have been like forgetting to put "El Paso City" on a Marty Robbins collection.

An even more recent release is "Daytime Friends," and it is just as deserving. With the new style that has put him back in the limelight of the country music industry, Rogers takes the catchy rhythm of the song and creates a country-rock tune that evades the banality of country-pop.

Not surprisingly, "Ruby, Don't Take Your Love To Town," and "Reuben James" are both on the album. Both are as good as the originals.

A good many "Hits" collections tend to cover only the material that the artist has turned out in recent years. The fact that this one does not is its strongest point, as both old and new fans of Kenny Rogers should find it an album worth buying.

LARRY BOZKA

MY AIM IS TRUE
Elvis Costello
Columbia JC-35037

My Aim Is True is a very intriguing album by an artist who is, to say the least, unusual.

Elvis Costello is the best thing New Wave rock 'n' roll has brought us, although they haven't brought us much. Blondie is attractive, the Ramones are amusing degenerates, but you can dance to Elvis Costello.

A lot of Costello's music is reminiscent of the 1960s. The arrangements are simplistic but not primitive. Costello's music seems to borrow licks and inspiration from the Stones, Presley and the Ronettes.

Like many '60s musicians, most of Costello's songs are no longer than three minutes. This is irritating to most album-oriented music fans who are used to songs which are less abrupt.

The most prominent example of his abbreviated style is

"Welcome to the Working Week," which is a tight, driving rocker with fascinating lyrics. For as many strong points as this brief song has, it leaves the listener feeling cheated.

In contrast, Costello's best song is "Watching the Detectives," a pseudo-reggae piece which is predominated by heavy, almost sinister bass lines. It's a very cutting examination of our television-dominated society, and the callous yet involved attitudes which people exhibit toward television. In "Watching the Detectives," a gorgeous heroine is at home watching "Baretta" or "Kojack" and:

She's filing her nails while they're dragging the lake she's watching the detectives oh he's so cute they beat him up until the teardrops start but he can't be wounded because he's got no heart

Side two can't deliver all the energy and vitality the majority of side one contains. For



Costello

example, the strongest song here, "Angels Wanna Wear My Red Shoes" sounds more like a parody of Costello's music than something he wrote. The back-up singers do their wisecracking harmonies with feigned innocence which counterbalances the cynical emphasis in the song.

My Aim Is True has flaws in several areas, but this album will create a strong cult following. It is not for everybody. Perhaps Costello's aim will be more true on his second album.

TERRY ANN BENCZIK

B'nai B'rith Hillel

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