

It's A Long, Long Way From Canada

by Nathaniel Koch

Don Juan's Reckless Daughter (Asylum BB-701) has been out for two months now and I'll wager, considering Christmas and all, that most of Joni Mitchell's hard-core fans have listened to her double album and are quite pleased. That leaves the majority of casual record buyers wondering if it is worth risking \$10 or so to hear yet another collection of tortured love songs by the reigning poet-laureate-queen of suburban L.A. My answer is: Probably.

Mitchell's music has weathered dramatic changes in style over the last seven years. It has become more complex, a lot more pretentious and, if you will, slicker, since the sparse simplicity of Blue. Basically a singer-songwriter who grew up listening to the folk music and rock 'n' roll of the late '50s-early '60s, Mitchell's early albums feature her distinct, if somewhat basic, guitar and piano styles. Starting with the Roses in 1972, and over the next three records, she began an involvement with Tom Scott and the L.A. Express and her music began to take on a "band sound." The arrangements departed from her earlier style, incorporating jazz and rock influences, and Mitchell started to adopt a more full-bodied, expressive approach to singing, for example: bending her notes at the end of a phrase or word. The sound was tasteful, even exciting, but also commercially slick and seamlessly perfect. Some thought Mitchell was beginning to compromise her music by playing with "a bunch of L.A. jazz hacks."

The release of Hejira in 1976 introduced a new set of problems. The album was musically impressive. Mitchell was now playing electric guitar (completely dropping the piano) and had chosen jazz bassist Jaco Pastorius and guitarist Larry Carlton to accompany her on most of the cuts. The music was dense; the



Nathaniel Koch

songs seeming to lack any memorable tunes; the lyrics centered around a complex personal imagery of travel and flight. It requires work to separate and absorb each song, an effort I'm afraid the average record buyer isn't comfortable with.

That brings us to Don Juan's Reckless Daughter, which may be Joni Mitchell's most ambitious effort to date. As do most double albums, it contains its share of filler, like the extended instrumental passages of "Paprika Plains" and an unnecessary recording of "Jericho" (I prefer the simplicity of the original arrangement on Miles of Aisles).

The album resists adopting any central concept like the social commentary of The Hissing of Summer Lawns, or "The Road" in Hejira. Mitchell's forte has always been the strength of her lyrics. She is perhaps unparalleled in her ability as a song writer to observe the complexities of social interaction and ro-

mance. Her insight and awareness of the contradictions embodied in her lifestyle create an exciting tension in the best of her work. Nowhere is this more evident than in the title cut, "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter." Her central metaphor equates "The Eagle" with the clarity of her upbringing in rural Canada and "The Snake" with the carnal desires and decadence of her city lifestyle. Her contrast of the two images is remarkable:

I come from open prairie
Given some wisdom and a lot of jive!
Last night the ghost of my old
ideals

Reran on channel five
And it howled so spooky for
its eagle soul
I nearly broke down and cried
But the split tongued spirit just
laughed at me

He said, "Your serpent cannot
be denied."
Our serpents love the whiskey
bars
They love the romance of the
crime

We are all hopelessly
oppressed cowards
Of some duality
Of restless multiplicity
Restless for streets and
honkey tonks
Restless for home and routine
Restless for country-safety—
and her

The eagle and the serpent are
at war in me
The serpent fighting for blind
desire
The eagle for clarity
What strange prizes these
battles bring
these hectic joys—these
weary blues

Puffed up and strutting when I
think I win
Down and shaken when I
think I lose.

The reason I quote at such
length from sections of the song
is to partially illustrate her im-
pressive command of language
and imagery. Mitchell has a
knack for including little shocks
and creative twists in her lyrics
like "I didn't know I drank such
a lot / 'Till I pissed a tequila-
anaconda / The full length of the
parking lot!"

She also has developed strength
as a social observer. Her descrip-
tion of a woman's washroom in
a disco is sweltering and repug-
nant:

In the washroom, women
tracked the rain
Up to the make-up mirror
Liquid soap and grass
And jungle gardenia crash
On Pine-Sol and beer...
It's stifling in here...
I've got to get some air...
I'm going outside to get some
air.

Musically, Don Juan's Reckless
Daughter varies from the old

English ballad finger-picking style
of "The Silky Veils of Ardor" to
the full orchestral arrangement
of "Paprika Plains." Jaco Pastor-
ius' fluid bass playing is perfect
for Mitchell's slightly choppy
rhythms.

She takes risks on two of the
album's cuts and gets decidedly
mixed results. The aforemen-
tioned "Paprika Plains," clocking
in at 16:19, attempts to link
childhood memories of Indians
and the clashing of cultures and
times with a rainstorm and ac-
tivity inside a disco. Unfortun-
ately, the epic sweep of the lyrics
is not matched by the embarrass-
ingly dull instrumental center of
the song. Mitchell's plodding
piano backed by Michael Gibb's
orchestra sounds like a clumsy
recreation of Dvorak's "New
World" Symphony. Only it's
boring.

Fortunately, another experi-
ment works. She merges an in-
strumental called "The Tenth
World" successfully into one of
her own songs, "Dreamland." A
band of percussionists, led by
Airtio on a surdo (bass drum),
generate a rhythm style some-
where in between salsa and Afri-
can music. As the call and
response chorus fades into ani-
mal noises, Mitchell's "Dream-
land" begins, her voice rising
above the beating drums and
Chaka Khan's vocal embellish-
ments weaving in and out of
melody. It may not have much
to do with "Both Sides Now," or
other songs from Mitchell's past,
but it is to her credit that her
songwriting is able to develop
and integrate a variety of mus-
ical forms.

It is sometimes tempting to
lump Joni Mitchell in with The
Eagles, Linda Ronstadt, and
other musicians from L.A. True,
their albums all exhibit a certain
slick professionalism and a
similar "studio sound," but the
comparison ends there. Mitchell
is one of the few great poets of
popular music along with Dylan,
and possibly Bruce Springsteen,
Patti Smith and Jackson Browne.
It was the worst effort one has
to initially make to appreciate the
complex imagery in her music.



CPIJ

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Upward Bound Cont'd

"Is there any way to rescue 7-10 million people labeled as the American Underclass from a life of poverty, crime, welfare, and unemployment? Granted, not one federal or state program can solve such a complex problem as the American underclass, but post-secondary education has been shown to be an effective tool to mitigate the onus of high government expenditures in unemployment and welfare benefits."

This is the goal of Upward Bound: to help the underprivileged escape the boundaries of monetary societal dependence

and alleviate self-doubt, through encouraging each individual in pursuing his/her own objectives and goals.

One of the objectives of UB is "to provide a real college experience by enrolling a minimum of 10 students in at least one modular Evergreen course." Along these lines, Evergreen hopes to recruit some Upward Bound students for eventual full time enrollment. Director Briscoe is wary of this, however, and says: "I understand the policies of this program in terms of being a possible feeder area for new students coming into Evergreen."

Ujoma Week



Tinie Lewis demonstrates a Tae Kwon-Do side kick in perfect form.

by Sonya Suggs

The UJAMAA Society is proud to announce its third annual presentation of Black pride, Black awareness, and unity. UJAMAA (pronounced oo'-ja-ma) is Swahili for co-operative effort and UMOJA (pronounced oo'-mo-ja) is also Swahili for unity. The week of February 13th thru the 18th is slated for guest speakers, musical expression, karate demonstrations, and fashion displays.

Commencing February 13th at 12 noon in Lecture Hall V, Milele Amili and Zakiya Stewart will speak on "Pan-Africanism As It Relates To The Black Movement In America: Past, Present, and Future." Ms. Amili and Ms. Stewart are instructors at the New African Parents' Co-operative, a Seattle-based organization that provides cultural training for the citizens of the Central Area and supplements the basic education theory taught in public and parochial schools.

The organization is unique in that it offers three programs of study, each named after a major empire in the Islamic Era of Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. The Co-operative was founded in January, 1975, and its student body ranges from pre-schoolers to adults.

On February 16th at 12 noon on the second floor of the Library lobby, five All African Drumming Troupes will provide entertainment. Members of the troupes are junior and senior high school students from the Greater Seattle area. The drummers will also be accompanied by a dance ensemble.

The finale on February 18th at 8 p.m. on the second floor of the Library lobby, will be highlighted by a Karate exhibit, singing, and a fashion show-disco. The Northwest Chapter of the Falcon's Karate Club will demon-

strate various techniques and forms of an ancient Korean martial art, Tae Kwan Do.

The Seattle club is a community-based school of martial arts serving the needs of individuals who can't afford to meet the financial obligations of other commercial schools of self-defense. Participants range in age from 6 to 60. Under the direction of Mr. Gregg Alex, the Falcon's have placed first in the AAU regionals in Portland for two years running. "We don't teach kicking and punching. We teach about self, self-discipline and self-control. Kicking and punching is the vehicle," explains Mr. Alex. Also assisting in the instruction is Mr. Choi, a third-degree black belt from Taiwan, and Ms. Tinie Lewis, 24, an architecture major at the University of Washington.

Also for your listening pleasure, song-stylist Charlissa Wade, 18, will perform a selection of hit tunes. Ms. Wade hails from Los Angeles and is currently a member of Chateau here at Evergreen.

Spotlighting the evening's event will be Black Glamour. Fashion designer and coordinator Phyllis Adrienne, along with four models, will exhibit her original designs in women's wear. Ms. Adrienne is a native-born Seattleite who has traveled extensively throughout the United States, and has acquired considerable experience through modeling for television, newspapers, and magazines.

A disco dance will follow the program. Admission for the evening performance will be 50 cents and refreshments will be served. The UJAMAA Society encourages each and every one of you to come and participate in UMOJA Week. What better way to display UNITY among people!

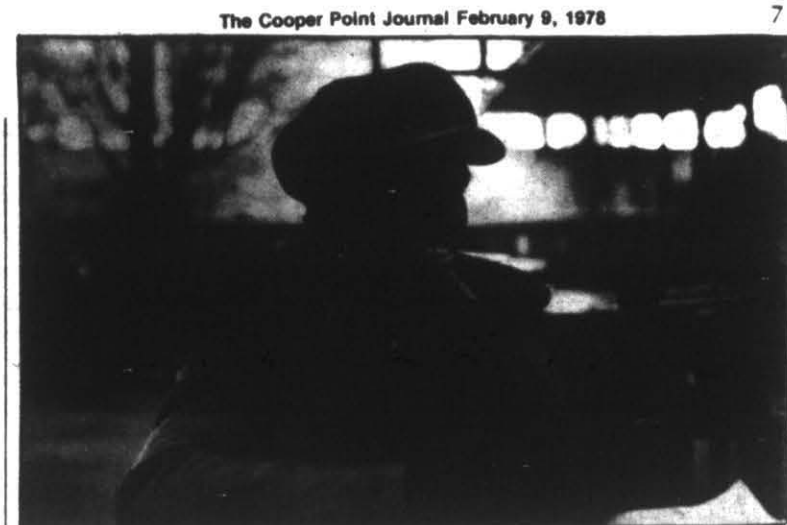
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Upward Bound student Ricky Richardson

In addition to his administrative duties, Briscoe does some tutor-counseling himself. This enables him to stay in tune with those who work under him, rather than becoming lost underneath a pile of paper work.

Tutor-counselors meet with each of their students (no more than six) for a minimum of two hours each week. During this time they assist the students with basic skills such as reading, writing, and math. UB counselors also help students with career decisions and family or other emotional troubles.

STUDENTS TALK ABOUT UPWARD BOUND

Upward Bound student Ricky Richardson tells the CPJ emphatically: "I'm going to finish (high school) no matter what. (UB) gives me the edge over most students."

Sid Murphy says: "My goals have changed a lot. Basic education is my only problem. Upward Bound has helped me with decisions... to go to college. Before Upward Bound I didn't think I'd make it. The staff did bring me through."

Upward Bound is not all work, however. When talking about the summer program Ricky told the CPJ: "Want the inside scoop? We did a lot of night creeping. The summer program was sort of co-ed. A lot of things took place at night. We never got caught leaving the dorms, but we got caught coming back in."

Tutor-counselors are not always able to influence their students' opinions, either. Ricky says: "This summer we had a discussion on who was dominant

—I said men were, and they (UB women) didn't believe me. They say women are equal to men but it's not true. Men are superior to women."

At this point Bob Woolf interrupts and asks Ricky if the summer's discussions didn't have any effect on his opinion.

"Hell," says Ricky. "If men didn't work women wouldn't get no food."

Dennis has the final word on the subject. He says:

I think the fairer sex has got it made. They're the brains, we're the brawn. Why else is it that the woman decides where the 200 lb. hide-a-bed goes and the man moves it? I wouldn't mind saying, "Try it over there, won't you?" I wouldn't mind that at all."

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