

# CONCERT IS GIVEN BY JONI MITCHELL

Excels in Song Program—  
Unorthodox on Guitar

By DON HECKMAN

A concert appearance by Joni Mitchell is not only rare, it is a rare delight. Her performance at Carnegie Hall Wednesday night was her first New York appearance in nearly two years; for anyone who values popular music in its finest form, the interval has been far too long.

Presumably, one of the reasons Miss Mitchell dislikes concentrated performance tours is because of the implicit requirement to repeat the same songs over and over. Her Carnegie audience would have liked to hear all of Miss Mitchell's old hits, but to her credit she insisted upon including a batch of new songs.

They revealed that her invention has not flagged. Among the best were an interior study called "The Banquet," a whimsical, blues-tinged "Baby, You Turn Me On, I'm a Radio" and a multileveled song about the ambiguities of fame called "Run for the Roses."

Miss Mitchell has matured since I last saw her. The guitar playing is as unorthodoxly excellent as ever, but she strums now with a rhythmic vitality that was not always present before. Her voice has a far greater range of timbre and articulation, especially in its ability to resonate with warm, dark chest tones.

But what makes Joni Mitchell really special is the great esthetic density of her music. Starting from a base that is rooted deeply in her own psyche, she builds metaphoric excursions-through-life trips that are common to us all. And she does it with a brilliant harmonic sense, lyrical melodies and almost effortless poetry.

I suspect that in her own way Joni Mitchell may be one of the most genuinely gifted composers North America has yet developed. That she chooses to express her art in small forms and personal sentiments in no way reduces either its impact or its importance.

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