

Joni Mitchell

Singer Shares Her World

By Jim Bellshaw

She strums the first chord, and a wispy strand of blond hair peeks over her shoulder then nestles on her arm.

Now it's head back and the misty voice of Joni Mitchell drifts cleanly into the audience like the fragrance of a newly opened flower in spring sunshine.

Then the same voice comes ringing down and gives out all the qualities of soft fertile earth — a strong warm-colored sound that catches you in rapture and transports you with this slim girl to her own unique land of song.

When she sings "icicle" the word is cold and round in her mouth, and when she sings "sun" it comes shining forth, tender, caressing, and full of joy.

Mellow sounds, sad sounds, happy sounds, high and low sounds, they're all part of Joni's world and she shares them with you freely and confidently — that's the way she is.

And when you meet her in person the feeling that you've known her before is stronger, like the sudden happiness of seeing something familiar in a new light.

In her dressing room, Joni sits in what looks like a big old chair. When she gets up you see it's a pretty average size chair. She seems smaller here than on stage.

"I'm not a folksinger," she says. "I'm afraid of the word."

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WHEN SHE talks her hands move quickly, moulding, shaping and weaving some invisible material.

"I've tried to interpret all the songs and their presentation and state them with one guitar and one voice. I'm a female tributary to that brand of music."

Joni stops weaving for a minute and fingers the long-chained pendant she wears.

"At first my goals were modest. I kept them within easy sight, but I'm glad success didn't come too soon. My financial success will come this year."

She's merely stating a fact.

Long blonde hair gets her attention now. She chooses a strand and coils it around her finger.

"Lots of people in the business are financially comfortable but artistically unfulfilled, like The Monkees."

Her chin lifts slightly.

"I'm going to be successful on my own terms," she says. And the way she says it tells you she's thought it out and it's no empty decision.

She pours soft drinks and changes tack.

"A lot of my songs are character sketches — little slices of life. They should leave you with a feeling and a philosophy. And I'm not a protester. I call myself a poet-singer and my songs are simply human relations."

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SHE WRITES the songs herself; so far 40 of them, and they portray the same honesty and sincerity that makes Joni Mitchell master of her music. Free-flowing songs stamped indelibly with the soul of an artist, and sent winging on the voice of a girl

who says "Music is hungry for the individual."

She winds another strand of hair onto her finger.

"Usually I write my songs late at night — that's my quiet time — between midnight and five in the morning."

Joni's late night composing vigil can be heard on her new album "Song to a Seagull" and people like Harry Belafonte, Jan and Sylvia, Buffy Saint Marie and Judy Collins are also singing her songs.

And this singer who likes "to do things for myself in my own way" even created the cover for her own album.

"I would like to learn the sitar," she smiles, "but right now I'm re-teaching myself piano. I played piano when I was about six or seven and hated it. Never got gold stars or anything."

She shakes her head in mock disapproval and it's time for the next set.

Stepping onto the stage she seems bigger again. Her voice reaches out and captures the audience . . .

"I awoke today to find the frost perched on the town, it hovered in a frozen sky then gobbled summer down . . . I get The urge for goin' . . . But I never seem to go."

The audience closes its eyes and prays hard she won't.



A King of Soul

And Rufus Had a Daughter

By Mike Gormley

And Rufus called her Carla. Carla Thomas is a five-foot, four-inch, 125 pound pecan pie-loving girl whose philosophy in life is "good things come to those who wait."

She's also the Queen of Memphis soul. And when the Queen holds court, the world listens.

In 1968 Carla was voted the most promising female vocalist by the National Association of Radio Announcers. Recently she was selected as the favorite

female vocalist of American GIs in Viet Nam.

Carla now lives in Washington, DC. When she isn't travelling around North America and Europe or recording in the Stax-Volt studios in Memphis, she's at school. She's already received a degree in English and presently is working towards her masters degree in English Literature at Howard University in Washington.

In 1960, at 17, Carla had her first million seller. It was called "Gee Whiz." Others

ding and Carla Thomas — King and Queen."

From this album came "Tramp," a big summer seller for Otis and Carla. And when you turn on your radio next, chances are you'll hear "Lovey Dovey." It's the King and Queen giving it all to you.

But the Queen is alone now.

To figure out her future, sit back and see what's happening. It looks good. Carla is a member of the Stax-Volt family which includes Sam and