

Joni ready for stardom

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It was just about two years ago that I first wrote about a young lady named **Joni Anderson**, a folk-singer fresh from Alberta trying to make it in Toronto.

She was unknown and only playing a few small gigs. I caught her one night when she filled in for an ailing act at the now-defunct **Place**.

Today, Joni's last name is Mitchell. She lives with her actor-singer husband in Detroit and she's appearing until Sunday at the **Riverboat**.

But that doesn't necessarily mean that Joni is now famous, she isn't. And that's a shame.

She is almost ready for stardom now with a developing identifiable style and sound, performing ease and songwriting talent.

Joni has lately assumed an increasing confidence every time she mounts that

stage. And her voice is growing richer and surer.

Some of her songs are very good indeed. We've all heard (either by her or by Tom Rush) Get the "Urge for Goin'," her most famous.

And it's a song that's representative of her writing style, with a gentle lonely sound yearning to get away, not necessarily from it all, but at least to something a little better.

Her songs have the lonely sound of the Prairies, moved to the city, but more than that, they have the feel of this get-away decade.

Her music is firmly based in the traditions of North American folk music with its simplicity, its directness.

You'll find no cluttering poetic devices or self-conscious metaphors. Rather you'll hear a direct, descriptive song-writing style that uses the transferred epithet as its favorite device.

Therefore in her songs, "all the trees stand shiverin' in the naked wood" and "the sun turns traitor cold." The device leaves the lines clean and straightforward so that they flow along naturally with the gentle melodies.

Joni's sets at the Riverboat show a warm, gentle style both in the patter between songs and in the singing.

Her voice has limitations in strength and endurance but it also has a natural clarity and easy familiarity. It is a rich alto with some interesting color effects and an aristocratically elegant vibrato in the higher registers.

She also has a pleasing way of letting her voice spiral and shift between the two.

Joni accompanies herself on a guitar — mostly in simple strums — unsure in the few runs she attempts.