

and Wayne Perkins, whose oh-so-beautiful guitar work on "Car On The Hill" makes it one of my favourite tracks from the whole of "Spark". The whole feel of this album is one of craftsmanship and class, running through the whole range of Joni's amazingly versatile voice from full, round and warm and then to the other end of her scale — stretched and painful — and the delicate and carefully constructed piano parts add the essential dramatic areas of light and shade, shown particularly well on "Just Like A Train". You could never mistake a Joni Mitchell album for anything else, it's immediately identifiable but you can't fault the lady for dull sameness either. Her attempt at Annie Ross's "Twisted" doesn't work, doesn't fit into the pictures and settings that Joni has worked and weaved through the rest of the album. "Car On The Hill" is the outstanding track though with perhaps "Trouble Child" following it very closely and while the jab at jazz doesn't really work, it's still perfectly performed. All right so Joni might lay down more in her songs than you want to know about but here's the greatest singer in her style, and most other styles too, so can you afford not to listen? — B.W.

### **JONI MITCHELL: "COURT AND SPARK" (ASYLUM)**

**Import.**

BEFORE ANYTHING else you must remember Joni isn't just a simple singer / songwriter with all that the title suggests, but a storyteller of the highest calibre; a poet of modern times; an open-hearted lady who lays her innermost feelings bare to those who care to listen — a rather frightening and sometimes off-putting honesty and heart - on the - sleeve attitude that must account for some of Joni's critics who find this look into the artist's life too much to take. For anyone who's followed Joni's progress from that first album, "Song To A Seagull", to date it's almost certain they didn't expect her to surpass "For The Roses" too easily, a work of great depth, and it must have seemed that here she had reached the ultimate of her talents but not so, for "Court And Spark", while not as immediately striking as "Roses", is also an outstanding work from a consummate artist. The album follows a rather predictable path of laid - on - the - line love tales but isn't any the worse for it. The musicians taking the bulk of the duties include Tom Scott, Joe Sample, Larry Carlton and John Guerin with the odd name popping in like Mil Holland, Jose Feliciano, Crosby & Nash, Robbie Robertson

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