

THE PRESS / arts & entertainment

Joni Mitchell, Superstar

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On Sunday night at Cornell, Joni Mitchell recaptured for a capacity crowd the unifying spirit generated by rock music of the sixties. Her performance resurrected the standards of rock concerts in general, long since depreciated by the current showmanship of the Rock Industry, and by former musicians turned apostate to their artistry. Joni Mitchell exhibited that she need not employ gimmicks or rely on her past style to retain the appeal and respect of her audience.

Tom Scott and the L.A. Express, second act also serving as Joni's backup group, contributed significantly to the success of the concert. Instead of exhausting the audience with ninety minutes of preliminary music, the group successfully aroused the audience by performing a limited number of excellent jazz compositions. They later provided a well balanced background for Joni, and ideally accommodated her new style.

Dividing her time between guitar and piano, Joni chose songs from all phases of her development, including material from her new album. Upon seeing her live I concluded that the studio could only serve to inhibit her voice. Her vocals were flawless, perfectly controlled. At one point, Joni's high pitched voice matched note for note a melody played by the organist, such that she was indistinguishable from the instrumentation. Her natural tonal quality attains its full beauty through an equally natural vocal delivery. Joni's songs depicting joy, sadness, or confusion are chronicles of her personal impressions of life.

The cohesion between Joni the artist and Joni the person established a genuine rapport with the audience. Her giggle at the end of "Big Yellow Taxi" is the same giggle that was

heard in excess at Barton Hall in Cornell. The whole crowd was animated with happiness during "You Turn Me On I'm A Radio" and most especially, "All I Want," in which she plays a dulcimer. Listeners were absorbed and almost entranced by songs like "Blue" and "For The Roses." "For Free," done at the piano, was extremely effective with the clarinet accompanist of the L.A. Express. Perhaps her most impressive song was "Cold Blue Steel and Sweet Fire." Its jazz orientation intensifies powerful lyrics describing the struggle of the down and out. "Pawnshops crisscrossed and padlocked/Corridors spit on prayers and pleas/Sparks fly up from sweet fire/Black rust of Lady Release."

For myself and the rest of us who haven't heard her new album, Joni's choice of a backup group foreshadowed the direction she is taking musically. Her newest material is highly influenced by the elements of jazz. While her past strength lie in composing lucid, singable melodies (Circle Game, Both Sides Now), her present emphasis is on realizing the unique capacity of her own voice. Her voice functions as an improvising instrument, exploring pitch, minor modes, and challenging transitions. As opposed to her earlier cyclical melodies, her songs now end to be through-composed. Before I would concede that Joni Mitchell is mellowing out by adopting a jazz oriented repertoire, I would have to be convinced that her highly versatile voice isn't uniquely equipped for this very sort of experimentation. Her new album should be interesting.

Joni is forever conscious of the ambiguous position she is in, making fortunes for singing songs denouncing material aspirations. Songs like "For Free" and "For the Roses" echo her laughing statement at the concert, "I'm such a hypocrite." If she is to feel guilty at all, she should feel the least reproachful of her lot. She does not purport to be a God (ess). At the encore, Joni's choice of "Blonde In The Bleachers" placed her in perspective. The lyrics, "You can't hold the hand of a Rock n Roll man/ Very long/ Or depend on your plans with a Rock n Roll man/ Very long," discourage idol worship. She does not claim to possess the answers to world problems. Her songs are not didactic, but emotive and personal. In dealing with human emotions, simple and profound impressions of life, her songs are universally appealing. Perhaps there ought to be a premium placed on the sort of feeling that such an artist conveys.

Preceding the encore, the matches were lit and held up among the crowd in the tradition of Woodstock. It's rather common occurrence now. Matches might be flaring at a David Bowie concert, but this Sunday night before Joni Mitchell I was moved by a tribute that was heartfelt rather than customary. She is one of the few left that deserves it.



Joni Mitchell captivated the audience with her superb performance. Above, she is seen playing the dulcimer during "All I Want."

Marijuana Vote

(CPS) — The backers of Proposition 19, a referendum on the 1972 California ballot which would have done away with criminal penalties for the use of marijuana, are going to try it again in 1974.

The California Marijuana Initiative Coalition (CMIC), is presently attempting to get the signatures of 325,504 registered voters across California to put a revised proposition on the November, 1974 ballot. The revisions include a more specific wording than that of Proposition 19.

Passage would give persons over the age of 18 the right to use marijuana in private, to possess or transport it, and to grow it for personal use "provided that reasonable steps are taken to shield such cultivation from public access" with no criminal penalties.

The updated proposition further states that "the governing body of any city or unincorporated area shall have exclusive jurisdiction to prohibit use of marijuana in public" with a maximum penalty of \$100

fine.

CMIC is made up of a variety of groups and smaller coalitions from across the state. What they have in common is agreement with the new wording and a desire to see it become law. The state has been divided into

five regions, and fund raising, petitioning, and planning will take place on a regional, rather than state basis.

Supporters of the new initiative are confident that with the right educational campaign, the measure will pass in 1974. Prop-

osition 19, which was attacked for being too general and thus allowing unrestricted growth and public use of marijuana nevertheless received over one-third of the vote. The new initiative accommodates these objections.

The strategy has also changed. In 1972, the emphasis was placed on marijuana itself being the issue. In 1974, the emphasis will be based more on the issue of privacy, the right of an adult to do as he sees fit in his own home.



photos by Donald Davis



CCC Winners

The first set of winners in "The Great Record Giveaway" have been determined. Ticket numbers were drawn at random based on ticket sales to 1:30 p.m. Thursday. Anyone possessing green Jackson Browne/Linda Ronstadt tickets with the following ticket numbers are entitled to a free Jackson Browne or Linda Ronstadt album. You may obtain your prize at the Corey Union Information Desk. More numbers will be drawn next week. So don't despair, buy your ticket before 1:00 p.m. next Thursday and you too may be a winner. Remember, five people at the concert will win pairs of tickets to all the rest of CCC's concerts this semester.

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