

It's A Long, Long Way From Canada

by Nathaniel Koch

Don Juan's Reckless Daughter (Asylum BB-701) has been out for two months now and I'll wager, considering Christmas and all, that most of Joni Mitchell's hard-core fans have listened to her double album and are quite pleased. That leaves the majority of casual record buyers wondering if it is worth risking \$10 or so to hear yet another collection of tortured love songs by the reigning poet-laureate-queen of suburban L.A. My answer is: Probably.

Mitchell's music has weathered dramatic changes in style over the last seven years. It has become more complex, a lot more pretentious and, if you will, slicker, since the sparse simplicity of Blue. Basically a singer-songwriter who grew up listening to the folk music and rock 'n' roll of the late 50's-early '60s, Mitchell's early albums feature her distinct, if somewhat basic, guitar and piano styles. Starting with For the Roses in 1972, and over the next three records, she began an involvement with Tom Scott and the L.A. Express and her music began to take on a "band sound." The arrangements departed from her earlier style, incorporating jazz and rock influences, and Mitchell started to adopt a more full-bodied, expressive approach to singing, for example: bending her notes at the end of a phrase or word. The sound was tasteful, even exciting, but also commercially slick and seamlessly perfect. Some thought Mitchell was beginning to compromise her music by playing with "a bunch of L.A. jazz hacks."

The release of Hejira in 1976 introduced a new set of problems. The album was musically impressive. Mitchell was now playing electric guitar (completely dropping the piano) and had chosen jazz bassist Jaco Pastorius and guitarist Larry Carlton to accompany her on most of the cuts. The music was dense; the



English ballad finger-picking style of "The Silky Veils of Ardor" to the full orchestral arrangement of "Paprika Plains." Jaco Pastorius' fluid bass playing is perfect for Mitchell's slightly choppy rhythms.

She takes risks on two of the album's cuts and gets decidedly mixed results. The aforementioned "Paprika Plains," clocking in at 16:19, attempts to link childhood memories of Indians and the clashing of cultures and times with a rainstorm and activity inside a disco. Unfortunately, the epic sweep of the lyrics is not matched by the embarrassingly dull instrumental center of the song. Mitchell's plodding piano backed by Michael Gibb's orchestra sounds like a clumsy recreation of Dvorak's "New World" Symphony. Only it's boring.

Fortunately, another experiment works. She merges an instrumental called "The Tenth World" successfully into one of her own songs, "Dreamland." A band of percussionists, led by Airtio on a surdo (bass drum), generate a rhythm style somewhere in between salsa and African music. As the call and response chorus fades into animal noises, Mitchell's "Dreamland" begins, her voice rising above the beating drums and Chaka Khan's vocal embellishments weaving in and out of melody. It may not have much to do with "Both Sides Now," or other songs from Mitchell's past, but it is to her credit that her songwriting is able to develop as a social observer. Her description of a woman's washroom in a disco is sweltering and repugnant:

Puffed up and strutting when I think I win
Down and shaken when I think I lose.

The reason I quote at such length from sections of the song is to partially illustrate her impressive command of language and imagery. Mitchell has a knack for including little shocks and creative twists in her lyrics like "I didn't know I drank such a lot / 'Till I pissed a tequila-anaconda / The full length of the parking lot!"

She also has developed strength as a social observer. Her description of a woman's washroom in a disco is sweltering and repugnant:

In the washroom, women tracked the rain
Up to the make-up mirror
Liquid soap and grass
And Jungle Gardenia crash
On Pine-Sol and beer...
It's stifling in here...
I've got to get some air...
I'm going outside to get some air.

Musically, Don Juan's Reckless Daughter varies from the old

songs seeming to lack any memorable tunes; the lyrics centered around a complex personal imagery of travel and flight. It requires work to separate and absorb each song, an effort I'm afraid the average record buyer isn't comfortable with.

That brings us to Don Juan's Reckless Daughter, which may be Joni Mitchell's most ambitious effort to date. As do most double albums, it contains its share of filler, like the extended instrumental passages of "Paprika Plains" and an unnecessary studio recording of "Jericho" (I prefer the simplicity of the original arrangement on Miles of Aisles).

The album resists adopting any central concept like the social commentary of The Hissing of Summer Lawns, or "The Road" in Hejira. Mitchell's forte has always been the strength of her lyrics. She is perhaps unparalleled in her ability as a song writer to observe the complexities of social interaction and ro-

mance. Her insight and awareness of the contradictions embodied in her lifestyle create an exciting tension in the best of her work. Nowhere is this more evident than in the title cut, "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter." Her central metaphor equates "The Eagle" with the clarity of her upbringing in rural Canada and "The Snake" with the carnal desires and decadence of her city lifestyle. Her contrast of the two images is remarkable:

I come from open prairie
Given some wisdom and a lot of jive!
Last night the ghost of my old ideal

Reran on channel five
And it howled so spooky for its eagle soul
I nearly broke down and cried
But the split-tongued spirit just laughed at me

He said, "Your serpent cannot be denied."
Our serpents love the whiskey bars
They love the romance of the crime

We are all hopelessly oppressed cowards
Of some duality
Of restless multiplicity
Restless for streets and honkey tonks
Restless for home and routine
Restless for country-safety—and her

The eagle and the serpent are at war in me
The serpent fighting for blind desire
The eagle for clarity
What strange prizes these battles bring
These hectic joys—these weary blues

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Ujoma Week



Tinie Lewis demonstrates a Tae Kwon-Do side kick in perfect form.

by Sonya Suggs

The UJAMAA Society is proud to announce its third annual presentation of Black pride, Black awareness, and unity. UJAMAA (pronounced oo'-ja-ma) is Swahili for co-operative effort and UMOJA (pronounced oo'-mo-ja) is also Swahili for unity. The week of February 13th thru the 18th is slated for guest speakers, musical expression, karate demonstrations, and fashion displays.

Commencing February 13th at 12 noon in Lecture Hall V, Milele Amili and Zakiya Stewart will speak on "Pan-Africanism As It Relates To The Black Movement In America: Past, Present, and Future." Ms. Amili and Ms. Stewart are instructors at the New Afrikan Parents' Co-operative, a Seattle-based organization that provides cultural training for the citizens of the Central Area and supplements the basic education theory taught in public and parochial schools.

The organization is unique in that it offers three programs of study, each named after a major empire in the Islamic Era of Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. The Co-operative was founded in January, 1975, and its student body ranges from pre-schoolers to adults.

On February 16th at 12 noon on the second floor of the Library lobby, five All African Drumming Troupes will provide entertainment. Members of the troupes are junior and senior high school students from the Greater Seattle area. The drummers will also be accompanied by a dance ensemble.

The finale on February 18th at 8 p.m. on the second floor of the Library lobby, will be highlighted by a Karate exhibit, singing, and a fashion show-disco. The Northwest Chapter of the Falcon's Karate Club will demon-

strate various techniques and forms of an ancient Korean martial art, Tae Kwan Do.

The Seattle club is a community-based school of martial arts serving the needs of individuals who can't afford to meet the financial obligations of other commercial schools of self-defense. Participants range in age from 6 to 60. Under the direction of Mr. Gregg Aiech, the Falcon's have placed first in the AAU regionals in Portland for two years running. "We don't teach kicking and punching. We teach about self, self-discipline and self-control. Kicking and punching is the vehicle," explains Mr. Alex. Also assisting in the instruction is Mr. Choi, a third-degree black belt from Taiwan, and Ms. Tinie Lewis, 24, an architecture major at the University of Washington.

Also for your listening pleasure, song-stylist Charlissa Wade, 18, will perform a selection of hit tunes. Ms. Wade hails from Los Angeles and is currently a member of Chataqua here at Evergreen.

Spotlighting the evening's event will be Black Glamour. Fashion designer and coordinator Phyllis Adrienne, along with four models, will exhibit her original designs in women's wear. Ms. Adrienne is a native-born Seattleite who has traveled extensively throughout the United States, and has acquired considerable experience through modeling for television, newspapers, and magazines.

A disco dance will follow the program. Admission for the evening performance will be 50 cents and refreshments will be served. The UJAMAA Society encourages each and every one of you to come and participate in UMOJA Week. What better way to display UNITY among people!

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Upward Bound student Ricky Richardson

In addition to his administrative duties, Briscoe does some tutor-counseling himself. This enables him to stay in tune with those who work under him, rather than becoming lost underneath a pile of paper work. Tutor-counselors meet with each of their students (no more than six) for a minimum of two hours each week. During this time they assist the students with basic skills such as reading, writing, and math. UB counselors also help students with career decisions and family or other emotional troubles.

STUDENTS TALK ABOUT UPWARD-BOUND

Upward Bound student Ricky Richardson tells the CPJ emphatically: "I'm going to finish (high school) no matter what. (UB) gives me the edge over most students."

Sid Murphy says: "My goals have changed a lot. Basic education is my only problem. Upward Bound has helped me with decisions... to go to college. Before Upward Bound I didn't think I'd make it. The staff did bring me through."

Upward Bound is not all work, however. When talking about the summer program Ricky told the CPJ: "Want the inside scoop? We did a lot of night creeping. The summer program was sort of co-ed. A lot of things took place at night. We never got caught leaving the dorms, but we got caught coming back in."

Tutor-counselors are not always able to influence their students' opinions, either. Ricky says: "This summer we had a discussion on who was dominant

—I said men were, and they (UB women) didn't believe me. They say women are equal to men but it's not true. Men are superior to women."

At this point Bob Woolf interrupts and asks Ricky if the summer's discussions didn't have any effect on his opinion.

"Hell," says Ricky. "If men didn't work women wouldn't get no food."

Dennis has the final word on the subject. He says:

I think the farther sex has got it made. They're the brains, we're the brawn. Why else is it that the woman decides where the 200 lb. hide-a-bed goes and the man moves it? I wouldn't mind saying, "Try it over there, won't you?" I wouldn't mind that at all."

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