

Joni Mitchell

The Persuasions

Red Rocks — Denver, Colorado

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The fact that Joni Mitchell's music never fit comfortably within a single category is testament to her originality as an artist. While many of the most successful and respected songwriters have difficulty coming up with fresh and honest works, Ms. Mitchell consistently produces works of richness and value.

The main reason Mitchell is so consistent in her excellence is her willingness to explore her emotions and experiences in a fashion which strikes the universal heartstring. Her latest recorded effort is no different.

About one year before his death, bassist and composer Charles Mingus contacted Joni. He requested that she write lyrics to his melodies. After several meetings with Mingus in New York and Mexico, Joni succeeded in putting words to some of his music, including Charles' Jazz standard "Goodbye Porkpie Hat." They then collaborated on some new pieces and Ms. Mitchell composed "God Must Be A Boogie Man," using as thematic material the first four pages of Mingus' autobiography *Beneath The Underdog*.

The resultant album, *Mingus*, was recorded by Joni along with the able assistance of Jaco Pastorius, Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Peter Erskine, and percussionist Don Alias.

In commenting on the recording of this lp Joni says, "I finally realized what I was looking for, an integral relationship with the band. We all seemed to be one organism on this music. If you look at it, you'll see how entwined we are, and I thought that was a beautiful accomplishment.

"I've listened to it many times, I've gone through so many changes about it, it's like quicksilver! It's very dependent on the mood you're in, it'll change on you like a chameleon. Like good poetry, it requires many listenings."

As to the "commerical potential" of such an ambitious work. Mitchell sums up, "I dare not have any expectations. If I had any expectations or hope, it would be that people find it accessible. I'm talking now about the context of the Pop field. I would be surprised if it wasn't accepted in the Jazz world because it contains all the best elements of that music. It's very spontaneous, creative and fresh.

"You can't really say it's Jazz or Pop. It's not an obviously classified sound, and that will give it a better chance to be explored."

Performing with Ms. Mitchell this evening are Don Alias, Pat Metheny, Jaco Pastorius and Michael Dreckey.

—Radio Pete—