

Joni in a Giant Living Room

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As expected, Joni Mitchell, one of the most respected lyricists in contemporary pop music, scored a convincing knockout—both artistically and as a crowd-pleaser—Monday night at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, her first local concert in two years.

The concert's relaxed, informal atmosphere gave the Pavilion the feeling of a giant living room in which Miss Mitchell was visiting with friends, each of whom seemed intent on expressing his respect affection for the Canadian folk singer-songwriter.

Audience Approves

The audience, which bought all the concert tickets within hours of their being placed on sale two weeks ago, roared its approval at the first notes of Miss Mitchell's familiar works (such as "Both Sides Now" and "Big Yellow Taxi") and roared equally strong approval at the end of the several new songs.

Though there are a variety of themes to her songs, many of her works revolve around love and romance, from the times of semidesperation and re-

gret to those of comfort and celebration.

In "All I Want," for instance, her lyrics create a lively, forceful image of a woman's desire for romantic fulfillment/adventure: "Alive, alive, I want to get up and jive, I want to wreck my stockings in some juke box dive."

More Reflective

On the other hand, "Both Sides Now," one of the most acclaimed songs in recent years, is a more reflective song, a less confident statement about the uncertainties facing us all: "I've looked at life from both sides now/From up and down and still somehow/It's life's illusions I recall/ I really don't know life at all."

Of the new material, the most interesting song was "For the Roses." Inspired by the idea of a racehorse's moment of glory (winning the race for the roses) and his eventual decline, Miss Mitchell uses the song to tell about the rise and fall, the rewards and loneliness, of pop music stars.

Sung with the tenderness and depth that can be put into a new song (as opposed to a song that has been sung so many times that some of the vocal feeling begins, understand-

ably, to fade), "For the Roses" proved to be, for me, the highlight of the evening.

Miss Mitchell, suffering slightly from a cold, accompanied herself on acoustic guitar, piano and dulcimer. The concert was produced by Doug Weston & Associates.

Opening the show was Jackson Browne, the excellent young singer-songwriter ("Rock Me on the Water," "Song for Adam") whose recent concert at Cal State Long Beach was reviewed favorably in these pages.

Browne, whose debut album on Atlantic is getting much attention, accompanied Miss Mitchell on the 12-city tour. He'll be at the Troubadour for six days starting Tuesday with Linda Ronstadt.