

Joni Mitchell: 'A sweetheart of a lady'

By Michael H. Ryan

Review

The audience in St. John Arena was pleasantly surprised by the absence of the usual half hour to 45 minute wait between acts at the Joni Mitchell concert Friday night.

Tom Scott, of Tom Scott and the L.A. Express, finished the last number, walked to the microphone and introduced Joni Mitchell. The audience was surprised because the L.A. Express had only played for a half hour before introducing Mitchell.

Remembering groups backing up big name artists in concerts earlier this year, I was not expecting much from Scott and the L.A. Express. However, their stage presence and talent captivated most of the audience.

Discussing their music Scott said he "doesn't want to call it jazz because that immediately turns off some

people.

"We'll just have to come up with a new word for it," he said.

Once Mitchell began her concert she proved her talent with her voice and her ability to play musical instruments with guitars, a piano and a dulcimer. She also proved to be a quick change artist, changing her outfit three times and her musical style in the last number.

Among the old favorites were "A Case Of You," "Both Sides Now," and "Queen Of The Parking Lot."

Mitchell also played some cuts from her new release "Court and Spark," recorded with Tom Scott and the L.A. Express.

After intermission Mitchell returned and performed solo for 10 numbers before the "Express" returned to accompany her. During the solo performance she talked and

joked with the cooperative, responsive audience. At one point, she peered past the stage lights and asked "Where does everyone go? They're going in the doors and out the doors! Humm. OHHH! I know where they're going."

Mitchell explained how she got ideas for lyrics to a few songs. Once, at a party of "bigwigs" in New York City she began withdrawing into herself as the party lingered on. This led to the lyrics of "People's Parties." Mitchell explained.

Another time while in a cabin in western Canada she told the audience how a tree's leaves brushing together sounded like applause.

"So I stood up and took a bow." This led to "For The Roses."

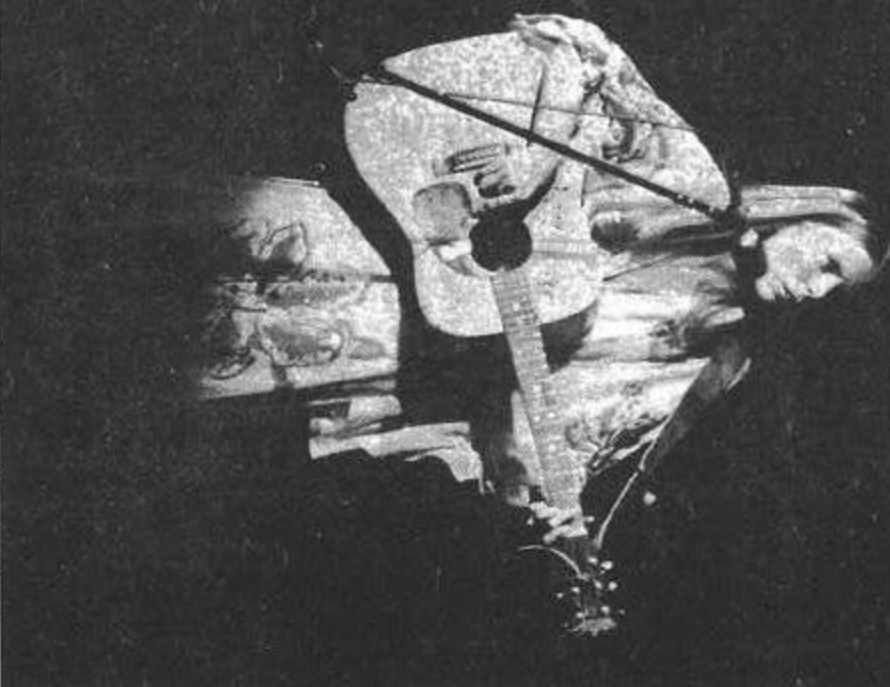
Tom Scott said that Mitchell was "an out-a-sight sweetheart of a lady." They have been working

together for a little over six months, and after finishing this tour of the East, they will tour the West for three weeks.

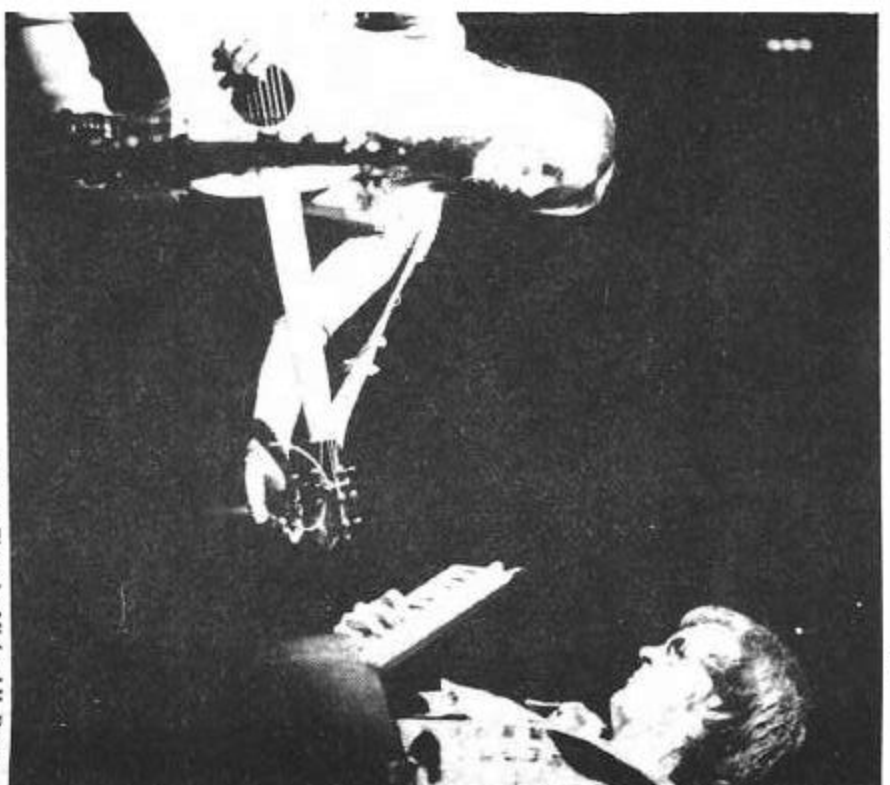
Unlike many accompanying groups, Tom Scott and the L.A. Express were well worth the \$5 admission price, judging by the audience's acceptance. Scott said he would like to return to Columbus and Ohio State because the audience was "very warm and receptive." Many audiences are used to rock bands and aren't patient with other types of music, Scott said.

The small silver sax that Scott played is an "old King Saxello," which Scott, who plays 16 different woodwinds and reeds, said "few people have and not many people play."

The "Express" recorded an album last September but it's release has been delayed because of a vinyl shortage.



Lantern Photo by Robert Donnelly
Joni Mitchell



Lantern Photo by Michael H. Ryan
Joni Mitchell with Tom Scott of The L.A. Express