

Three New Albums Reviewed - Dunbar, Joni Mitchell, The Who

by Dave Hirschberg

The Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation is not just another British blues import. In its first album entitled simply "The Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation" the group manages to add excitement and power to a music type that has lately been the victim of incompetent or just plain boring imitators.

This record is a subtle yet unaffected performance of a traditional type of material treated in a tasteful straight forward way. The band is almost always tight as it provides solid support for its soloists. Often the bassist and drummer work together, providing a still heavier body of sound. The vocals, done by either of the group's two vocalists, are powerful, yet the emotion is a result of their accuracy; it does not obscure the melodies.

The material is traditional in form but distinctly Dunbar-styled with respect to treatment. "Watch and Chain" begins as a purely rhythmic venture, an Afro beat with percussion and bass. Then, after the mood of the piece has been established, the chorus comes in with a kind of chant, followed shortly by the main vocalist. It is a cut rather atypical of the album, yet still quite moving. More characteristic, but no less excellent is the extended bass solo, "The Sage of Sidney Street", the country blues sound of "Double Lovin'", and "Memory Pain". Too bad there is

not less blues recorded and more like this.

"Clouds" is Joni Mitchell's second album, a second collection of special songs. Once again Joni displays her imagination and dexterity with words. Her poetry has maintained its mystic though airy feeling which her voice enhances. Songs on this album that have already been recorded as "Tin Angel" and "Both Sides, Now" that have been heard and, in some cases overheard manage to take on new meaning through her own interpretations. Again, as on the first album, with the exception of the haunting "Blue Roses" (on which mandolin is used) and "The Pipe and Drum" (done a capela), Joni accompanies herself on a single guitar.

Everything works together: the innocence of her voice, the simplicity of accompaniment, the complexity of her melodies, and the vividness of her imagery. All of this is what makes Joni Mitchell so special.

Too long overdue was an exciting new album by The Who. "Tommy" brings things up to date. This two record set, complete with libretto, is an attempt, successful if not so much in form as in content, to utilize the operatic form in rock. The

form is not a completely new experiment for the group, as it has shown in what they call their "mini-operas" "A Quick One While He's Away" and "Rael", but more of an enlargement.

"Tommy" consists of two albums, a seventy-five minute summary of the past and present life of Tommy Walker, a deaf, dumb, and blind boy, who overcomes his blindness by insight and a miracle. The characters are excellently portrayed, whether it be his confused and distrusted father, his cousin Kevin, the bully, his wicked Uncle Ernie, or the boy himself.

Rather than a unified whole, "Tommy" paints pictures of usually non-temporally related incidents in the boy's life. As for the music and performance, it is typical of the Who, electrifying. No other rock group could even attempt, much less succeed at such adventure.

Jeannie Nutter, senior in Arts and Sciences, will give a special year-end performance and reading of black poetry and prose this Wednesday at 8:30 p.m. There is no admission for this final "dramatic" program. It will be held in Studio 101, and the public is cordially invited!

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faculty artist at UC's College-Conservatory, will give a special all-Beethoven recital on Wednesday, May 28, at 8:30 in Corbett Auditorium. There is no admission charge.

She will perform two of the composer's late piano works -- "33 Variations on a Theme by Diabelli, Opus 120"; and "Piano Sonata, Opus 111, "last of the 32 Beethoven Piano Sonatas.

Mme. Dayas received her diploma as concert pianist from the conservatory in Cologne. She has performed an extensive repertoire, including 30 concertos, with principal orchestras throughout Europe and the United States. She was soloist with the Cincinnati Symph Orchestra under Fritz Reiner.

A member of the CCM faculty since 1926, Mme. Dayas holds the University of Cincinnati's highly valued Mrs. A.B. "Dolly" Cohen Award for Excellence in teaching.

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