

Carly Simon attains spotlight with 'best ever'



Rivers do such nice things, they roll to the sea. When I am a river, they'll want to listen to me. (Carly Simon Bob Cox photo)

By RICHARD LEE
Review Writer
Singer-composer Carly Simon is only 29, but she has provided us with an awful lot of good music. Songs like "The Way I've Always Heard It Should Be," "Anticipation," and "You're So Vain" are typical of the excellent kind of material she produces.

Now, after a long period of silence, we have a new album from this beautiful lady entitled "Hotcakes." It is by far the best thing that Carly Simon has ever recorded.

Carly returns

"Hotcakes" marks a return for Carly back into the public spotlight. The daughter of the publisher Simon (and Schuster), she never overcame an early problem of stagefright. To this day she prefers playing to small audiences, but ever since the success of her "No Secrets" album and her highly publicized romance and marriage with James Taylor, small audiences have been an impossibility. As a result, Carly's been virtually unheard from for over a year.

A more important reason for Carly's silence, however, was that she and her folksinger husband were expecting a baby. The child, born in early January, was named Sarah Maria. "Hotcakes" released a few weeks later, comes to us almost as a baby announcement from Carly and James. On the cover we see Carly

looking out at us with that ever-present bright smile of hers. Everything in the picture, from the walls to the table and chairs, is a pure white color. Even Carly, who usually manages to look sexy on her album covers, is clad in a simple white maternity dress — a model of maternal purity.

So we put the record on wondering how she's been for a year — a year full of Watergates and gasoline shortages and Mid-East wars — and right away in the very first song, she mentions everything from drugs to women's lib to naked motorcycle gangs and tells us not to worry about her. "We're safe and sound," she sings. "The world's just inside out and upside down."

Hasn't changed

That sets the tone for the album Carly hasn't changed. We know she's not about to solve any of the world's major problems. She's just going to sing about herself. Carly's songs are personal. She writes as if everybody who'll hear them is her friend and, indeed, we all are.

One of her favorite subjects is childhood. It's a theme that's been present on all of her albums, but here it seems more dominant than ever as Carly's come up with two really brilliant insights into the mind of a child.

The first of these is a song called "My Older Sister." Carly was the youngest of three girls

and here she captures perfectly the image of the big sister whom all little girls yearn to be. She describes her as the one who gets to wear all the new clothes, to ride in the front seat of the car, and to stay up later than she can.

'Grownups'

Also in this category is "Grownup." This is a song where Carly relates to us what it was like for her to suddenly discover that she's become one of those people that children label "grownups." She finds this awfully difficult to comprehend. Although she admits she's gotten older and taller, she still doesn't feel like she should be a grownup.

Well, whether she likes it or not, Carly is a grownup, even when she sings about grownup things like love, her songs remain personal. We know who she's singing about and many of us actually watched the relationship between James and her grow into what it is now.

In "Mind On Man," she sings about "a northern baby and a southern child" that can't be anyone else but James Taylor, and she promises him "a place in my heart anywhere."

Then there's "Just Not True." This is a playful song in which Carly teases James by saying she doesn't really like him, but ends up admitting, "Sometimes, just sometimes you can see the softness in my eyes and you know, it's just not true."

Review

There's also a song called "Haven't Got Time For The Pain." Here, Carly sings about the unhappiness that characterized her life before she met James. Since he's come into her life, though, she says she's had neither the time, the room, nor the need for any pain.

With meaning

Coming from anyone else, these songs would probably seem awfully trite and sentimental, but when Carly sings about her lover, we know she means what she sings. This is true particularly in "Forever My Love" — a love song which Carly and James wrote for each other.

Taylor helps

James Taylor, however, has more than a passive role on this album. In addition to co-authoring "Forever My Love," he plays acoustic guitar on most of the songs and his influence can easily be detected on the album's title track "Hotcakes." This is a jazzy tune featuring Mahavishnu drummer Billy Cobham and the legendary Howard Johnson one of the jazz world's leading hornmen.

Taylor's presence is most apparent on a song called "Mockingbird." This is the old "Hey, everybody, have you heard Daddy's gonna buy me a mockingbird" song with a couple of updated verses added by James. He shares the lead vocals with his wife and, as if

that weren't enough talent, Robbie Robertson of The Band plays lead guitar and Dr. John plays the piano and organ.

Also featured on "Mockingbird" are well-known session men Bobby Keyes, Klaus Voorman, and Jim Keltner. Voorman and Keltner, best known for their work with ex-Beatles George Harrison and Ringo Starr, play, respectively, the bass and the drums on almost every song on the record.

Rumors say . . .

Richard Perry produced this album. He also produced Ringo Starr's current hit album as well as Carly's last effort. Rumors had it that Carly was dissatisfied with the final versions of several of the songs from "No Secrets," but I doubt that any such rumors will persist about "Hotcakes." Here it seems that Perry has used his technical skill to present Carly Simon in the best way possible and to produce a really excellent album.

So you pick me up, and you tune me up,

And you wind me up and play me,

You talk about heart, and you say you know soul,

And the way to treat a lady, you're puttin' out two phonograph records,

I think I'm gonna have a baby, a baby,

That's Carly Simon — how can anybody not love her?

Mitchell croons, courts Rochester audience

By PATTY RYAN
And JIM VAN DEVELDE
Review Writers

A lady sang in Rochester on Feb. 14.

And the moon swept down the black water like an empty spotlight.

Joni Mitchell, "For the Roses"

That Thursday night in the Dome Arena in Rochester, Joni Mitchell filled that empty spotlight.

She sang for close to two hours, her voice going from fast to slow and high to low, all which put the capacity crowd under the spell that her music and voice weave.

Tom Scott and the I A

Express started the show by taking the audience on a blues-jazz ride. Their excellent sax and flute playing makes for interesting instrumentals.

Scott who played woodwinds and reeds in "For the Roses" album, also does some arranging on Court and Spark album.

After Tom and his express finished their opening, they turned us over to Joni.

She picked up her guitar and took the audience with her on "This Flight Tonight." And we didn't come down and we never landed.

Miss Mitchell did a quick half hour then broke and returned for an hour and a half including a two-song encore. She told us of her life and career of her

several attempted retirements, all introducing songs and revealing a part of herself.

Stories introduced her songs. She told us about parties and arbutus trees and people, and of course, how she felt.

You knew who the blonde in the bleachers was and who the woman of heart and mind was. You knew that she was human, she had doubts about her life and that's why she gives us so much of herself in her songs.

Miss Mitchell sang most of the new album "Court and Spark" much of the fifth album "For the Roses," and some from "Blue."

Going from piano to guitar to clarinet and back again, she crooned such familiar as

Woodstock "All I Want," "Clouds and Blue."

It was a disappointment that Miss Mitchell did not sing other old favorites like "Michael From Mountains," "I Had A King," and "The Circle Game."

All through the audience was quiet, subdued and listening. Only when Miss Mitchell went offstage did the familiar foot-stomping, match-lighting, concert-rallying take over.

Encore, quiet piano and "Blonde in the Bleachers." Silence. She stands up saunters over to the microphone and sings "Twisted" for the finale.

"The lights go down and it's just you up there getting them to feel like that."

Joni Mitchell, "For the Roses"



Joni Mitchell sings a song in Rochester. (Jim VanDevelde photo)

Author bares self

Hellman fills 'Pentimento' with honesty

By GLENN PERSON
Review Writer

PENTIMENTO, by Lilian Hellman \$7.95 Little Brown and Co. 1973

Stark honesty crams the pages of Lilian Hellman's newest piece of non-fiction, "Pentimento."

The Hellman honesty, in fact, reaches an all-time high, superseding the honest plays, some of which have become classics, another widely-acclaimed memoir, "An Unfinished Woman."

"Pentimento" even prompts one to wonder if Miss Hellman has ever heard of an inhibition. She is 69 but no sweet lady, she is the cliff-hanger of a

generation of talented, unleashed writers.

She remembers Hemingway and Fitzgerald, her casual friends, and Dorothy Parker her best friend, in her non-fiction, but mostly she remembers her family and herself. A skilled writer who's led a wild life, Miss Hellman draws from experiences more weird than one equates with today's young generation. "An Unfinished Woman." If Miss Hellman rambles too long, her memories become dull, confusing babble. And is she sometimes using "leftovers" from her first memoir, groping for thoughts?

A chapter entitled "Theatre" is surprisingly the most vague of the portraits in "Pentimento." More is expected of Miss Hellman, America's leading female playwright. But,

as the honest lady herself admits, she was drinking too heavily through her Broadway years to know what she was doing then, let alone now.

She had twelve plays, some of them flops but enough of them hits ("The Children's Hour," "The Little Foxes," among others) to establish herself as a literary leader. The scanty theater memories center on Miss Hellman but also include very honest glimpses of people like Tallulah Bankhead who acted in the plays.

Her straightforwardness, then, is consistent.

Miss Hellman's readers have also proven consistent. "Pentimento" costs eight bucks, a steep price even for honesty, and has been lounging on bestseller lists since the Fall of 1973.

Honesty evidently still pays



Fontilla belts out a tune in Campus Ministry. (Audrey Pia photo)

Favorites return

Artists use song, wit to entertain

By MARIAN BARONE
Review Writer

Two of Bonaventure's favorite coffee house players returned last week to recreate their special sounds, entertaining enthusiastic audiences in the University Center (UC) cafe and the Campus Ministry green room.

Fontilla was here on Saturday of Alumni Weekend. Robin Williams followed her two days later.

It seemed natural to see Fontilla during Alumni Weekend. She played here twice, last year and last semester. In her own way, she can be considered an alumna.

Fontilla keeps up a rapport with her audience. Intertwined with her songs are jokes and light conversation. The effect is a relaxed atmosphere.

way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

Fontilla sang mostly well-known songs adapted to her style. When she does a song, it is more than just music and words. She always gets the meaning behind the songs across.

When she did Ringo Starr's "With a Little Help from My Friends," you were drawn away from the usual Beatle adaptation of the song and for once the words had definite value and real meaning. She seemed to make the words apply to herself.

Perhaps the most meaningful part of her performance was when she sang "Lean On Me." The words "Lean on me when you're not strong, I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on. For it won't be long till I'm gonna need somebody to lean on," put Fontilla in a vulnerable position. She was opening herself to the audience who could either accept her wholly or ignore her. The majority of

the audience seemed enthralled with her and her music.

But there was a small group who decided they had a lot to talk about. They continued to laugh and talk through her songs and it was annoying to the rest. Although the selected few were given looks of warning and even asked to be quiet, the noise never stooped.

Fontilla did not let this bit of rudeness stop her; she ignored her "competition" and continued playing.

When she sang "Never Can Say Good-Bye," you knew she was talking about her music. It is part of her life and if she ever had to say good-bye to it, a part of her would certainly die.

Robin Williams returned to the coffee house two days after Fontilla. He had played here before, with his partner Dakota Dave Hull. This time Dakota was not with him. Instead he brought his wife Linda.

Robin and Linda were married this past June. She had been touring with Robin and

Dakota since March on a trial basis. She enjoyed touring and started the fall 1973 semester alone with Robin.

Robin keeps up a rapport with his audience much as Fontilla does, except that he never settles for a comfortable atmosphere. His audience has to be alive and jumping.

Some of their songs included "Dear Abby," a farce on Dear Abby's lovelorn column, and "Harmonic Song." The latter was a mountain tune using only harmonica and foot stomping as music. The song included a humorous satire on President Nixon.

Robin and Linda performed one song entitled "Granny's Song." In it they did not play their instruments — their voices were their only tools. The effect was a perfect melody of two superb voices. Not many performers could have sung a song so well with no supporting background music. They need nothing except themselves to be able to please any audience.

Typists, tigers play UC to 150 'sleepers'

By WILLIAM LOCKE
Review Writer

A funny thing happened while viewing "a hilarious satire on the intellectual and academic establishments," the people in the audience laughed so hard they fell asleep.

The satire in question was a one-act play entitled "The Tiger." It was coupled with another bomb called "The Typists," both by Murray Schisgal, and presented in the University Center (UC) on Jan. 28 by the Student Activities Council (SAC).

It would be difficult to mention all the great things which one could think of to say about these two plays. It would be so difficult that it would be impossible to count them all on one hand. Actually they could not be counted on one finger.

To put it lightly, the entertainment provided by the two member cast of Donna DiRienzo and James McMahon was about the best example of dialogue to snore by that has been heard at Bonaventure in a long time.

My only wish is that we could have more intermissions such as that seen on the famous night in question. Between that presentation of each work of art the audience was treated to a

unique display of craftsmanship in action — the obvious bewilderment of the four-man stage crew as to what was to go where and why. This served to be the most meaningful bit of entertainment of the evening, as it gave everyone ample time through its 25-minute duration to see how terribly the sets were put together and how professionally lacking the production was.

Come to think of it, "professionally lacking" is too good a phrase for what was seen. It should be more like "meaningless dialogue," "lackluster performances," "shoddy direction," and "drab costuming."

I do not wish to waste your time by going on with more bad notices for enough time was wasted by the approximately 150 people in attendance. I simply cannot see how these two plays ever came to be presented at Bonaventure.

In the past semester, SAC gave Bonaventure two gems of theatrical wizardry "Godspell" and "The National Theatre of the Deaf." It was then the pleasure of this reviewer to compliment SAC's choice of play and sponsorship. That compliment cannot be given to this SAC production.



Robin pauses to chat with the crowd in the UC cafe. (Audrey Pia photo)