

FINE ARTS

She Played Real Good ... But Not for Free

By Geoff Lindsay

Last Tuesday night, a crowd of 10,000 anxiously filtered into Syracuse's War Memorial Auditorium, magnetically finding their seats in expectancy of what some would refer to as rock 'n' roll's leading lady, Joni Mitchell.

When the concert was over, she received what by now she has long been accustomed to—the ritualistic applause, the match-in-hand audience stomping for an encore, and her money.

Her strong yet ethereal soprano, accompanied either by her resounding acoustic guitar, or grand piano or L.A. Express, disguised an underlying cynicism; she contemptuously sang about that which she herself embodies, like a rich whore who no longer must walk the streets.

Don't get me wrong, I love Joni Mitchell just as much as you do, she has a marvelous ability to transfix an audience into permanent worshippers, myself included. But she does it with gimmickry and pomposity and it's almost sickening. (All you Mitchell followers read on, the worst part is over).

In a profession of rumpled informality, Joni marshalled her elegance on stage by appearing in a black satiny pantsuit, an embroidered rose attached to each sleeve of her lapelled jacket, as a gangster-like chapeau sat atop her shining blonde hair.

Illuminated by the hazily colored rays of the spotlights, the Canadian-born singer premiered with "Help Me," and from that point on her flawlessly flowing music spoke for itself.

She plunged into a varied mixture of her work, delving mostly into cuts from her LADIES OF THE CANYON, COURT AND SPARK and THE HISsing OF SUMMER LAWNs albums. She also sang a number of as yet un-

released songs, such as "Coyote, Coyote," "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter" and "Ferry Sings the Blues," all of which assured me that Joni has not yet reached the dry well stage of her career, after which songs are pumped out sounding like Motown Music rejects.

After singing "Free Man in Paris," a piano was carried on stage only to be carried off again when one of its legs broke off. Clapping off the minor confusion, Joni sang "Cold Blue Steel and Sweet Fire," with David Louell on woodwind, the newest member of her back-up band, The L.A. Express.

Donning a taximan's cap, which she said was given to her for free advertising by the Memphis Yellow Cab Company, she sang an invigorated rendition of "Big Yellow Taxi."

Setting aside her guitar, Mitchell piano-soloed on a somewhat ad-libbed version of "For Free":

"I've got a black limousine
And two gentlemen
And the L.A. Express
And the wives of the band
And the girls they pick up..."

explaining later that that was the romantic version of the tale.

She told the story behind the blind clarinet player in that song who, when she asked him why his clarinet was busted, replied that it got jostled in a crowd. After she had bought him a new one, a friend of hers went back and saw that his clarinet was again busted, and he again claimed that it had been jostled in a crowd. Her friend told her that she was a very naive person but Joni maintained, "He played real good for free, though."



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Joni was preceded by a minus-Tom Scott L.A. Express, and his absence showed. The group stagnated through a one-hour jazz-like mire, spewing forth a number of compositions from their recently released album.

They even had the gall to do a drum solo, something reminiscent of high school and Iron Butterfly days. But what they lacked when they played alone, they made up for as back-up to Mitchell, adding bosom and complementing her technique.

The intricate system of guitar tunings which David Crosby helped her develop, make Joni's music difficult to duplicate. Only two of her recorded guitar songs are played in standard concert tuning and some songs are impossible to play on a normally tuned guitar.

Joni played for a little over two hours, encoring with "Twisted."

Bijou Enthusiasm Contagious to Audience and Crew

By Juliet Parker

For a good time over the weekend the place to be was the Experimental Theatre. The Blackfriars did a wonderful job shaping an enjoyable evening out of "Bijou," a musical cabaret that was written, directed and choreographed by Patrick Loperfido.

The costumes were bright and colorful, the music lively, and the dancing well-staged and well-performed. All of this went together to produce a show that prompted a standing ovation from an enthusiastic audience.

Some of the high points were Craig Kellas' performance as a magician and "Magic To Do," a song closing the first act, done by Phyllis Whitehouse, Barbara Street and the cast.

Opening the second act was Ted Hanly, Barbara Street and the cast in "Raisin," an exciting dance routine that received a hearty applause.

Laurie Atlas had the audience chuckling with her rendition of "Nobody Does It Like Me," and to finish the show the whole cast danced to a number from "Chorus Line" that was called "An Audition." Here the dancing was at its best, reflecting the talents of a cast who looked as though they were thoroughly enjoying themselves. The audience obviously was also, and it seems that the technical crew was caught picking up their feet and doing their own show as the audience left the theatre!

"Oracle Requests Volunteers

The Student Reaction Survey Committee, working through the Student Association, is looking for volunteers to administer a survey during the week of April 19 through the 23rd. All classes must be evaluated and this will take quite a number of volunteers.

The purpose of the survey is to provide feedback on faculty competence to aid students in the selection of courses and instructors. This Stu-

dent Reaction survey will be published as the "Oracle" by the beginning of Fall semester to be used by undergraduate students during registration.

If anyone is interested in helping the committee with these surveys, please call and leave your name and number with either Fawn Ring at 4493 or Marianne Wunder at 4487. You may devote as little or as much time as you like.

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