



The Hooters:

Nervous Night

Producer: Rick Chertoff
 Engineer: John Agnello, William Wittman
 Columbia CK 39912 (AAD)
 Total disc time: 40:02

Like, say I was getting ready for a big party. I'd play *Nervous Night* by the Hooters 'cause it has a good beat. You can dance to it. And if I was throwing the party, I'd be sure to spin this disc.

Take the first cut—"And We Danced"—you've heard it on the radio. But listen to it on disc. Know the beginning lick, that old-timey mandolin and accordion phrase and how the song shifts into rock'n'roll? On disc, that phase shift is a rocket blasting into the future.

Some nights I go to bed so frustrated with Eric Bazilian and Rob Hyman 'cause I just can't get their melodies out of my head. I mean, how many times can you hum "All You Zombies"? I'd feel better about it if I could make some sense from their lyrics.

The mix on "Zombies" is really cool. Lots of space between the instruments, as if Bazilian, Hyman, Andy King, John Lilley, and David Uosikkinen were floating in separate bubbles. Uosikkinen's drumming is great. Somehow he manages to make reggae rhythms fit with the Hooter's use of traditional white folk instruments. Imagine floating the Emerald Isle in the Caribbean, then make the whole thing rock.

Lots of variety on this disc; every song sounds different. The ballad, "Where

Do The Children Go," isn't so great. Neither is their attempt at getting political, "Blood From A Stone." But two songs on this disc are already hits and at least two more could be—check out "Day By Day" and "Don't Take My Car Out Tonight." That second one sounds as if it was written for *Miami Vice*.

Too often, when I buy a disc because the guys on the cover are cute, the music stinks. Or I buy the disc 'cause I like the single, then find there's nothing else listenable. *Nervous Night* isn't like that. The Hooter's first on a major label is good music and good fun. Buy it.

Nina Artbrut



Joni Mitchell:

Dog Eat Dog

Producers: Joni Mitchell, Larry Klein, Mike Shipley, Thomas Dolby
 Engineer: Mike Shipley
 Geffen 24074-2 (ADD)
 Total disc time: 42:05

Is anybody really listening?

It should be no surprise that quick-draw critics from *Rolling Stone* and *Newsweek* (among others) loudly panned Joni Mitchell's *Dog Eat Dog*. Apart from its obvious political bent, the work blatantly defies the easy listen and the quick summation. In Mitchell's own words, it's not music for the "land of snap decisions, land of short attention spans."

But it is surprising that no one has come out and acknowledged *Dog* for

what it is: a powerfully evocative crowning achievement for one of pop music's most vital poet/songwriters.

Dog Eat Dog was one of the unheralded triumphs of 1985. A possible explanation for its widespread misunderstanding might be its density—on vinyl, *Dog Eat Dog* sounds cluttered and closed in. The CD's extended dynamic range allows more accurate reproduction of the multi-level spatial concept Mitchell was working toward.

The production on *Dog Eat Dog* always matches the intensity of the message. Mitchell set out to work in the synthesized medium with full understanding of its limitations and inherent drawbacks. Not only have Mitchell and co-producers Larry Klein, Mike Shipley, and Thomas Dolby humanized the idiom, they've also expanded it.

Placement across the sound spectrum, especially on the theatrical works like "Tax Free," reaches an almost three-dimensional level. The voices come from all directions, and each one rings distinct and jarring. Mitchell's array of chirping and braying vocal personalities gets resourceful, surround-sound treatment.

More significantly, there's none of the tell-tale direct-box closeness that plagues many synth-heavy analog-to-disc transfers. *Dog Eat Dog* breathes, it has depth, and it actually sounds *live*. While credit for this belongs to the production team, it also goes to Mitchell's clever, economy-minded arrangements: She has immersed herself in the synthesized medium and understands how to make sweeping dynamic changes, how to isolate instruments and maintain intensity, how to use nonmusical sounds to reinforce the musical whole.

If, hearing the LP, you had doubts about Mitchell's grasp of this field, give the CD a spin. It's a shining testament to the musical wonders of the studio that capture Mitchell's pointed vision at its best.

Tom Moon

Though Joni implies that her new album is not for the uncerebral, I still say the Emperor is wearing no clothes.

Eldred James Elkins, NY