



JONI MITCHELL

# Mitchell has shaky Green Peace night

By BRIAN McLEOD

It was a concert on a tightrope. The performers of folk music teetered treacherously above the heads of a sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile crowd. And much of the music played, with the exception of the opening rock set by Chilliwack, appeared fragile, and almost pale, as a result.

Joni Mitchell was the headliner. And despite the fact she sounds like something just short of an angel on records, she was nervous and stiff and anything

but at ease in her first concert at the Pacific Coliseum.

Her voice couldn't get out of second gear long enough to set sail out into the cavernous depths of the Coliseum. Songs, particularly songs with deep black pools for words, require something more than plain singing to communicate meaningfully.

And Joni Mitchell's songs are among the most beautiful moments of music of today. But throughout her set Friday night, those same rich words appeared to be little more than dried skeletons. She sang Chelsea Morning, like the window was attached to a hospital.

Similarly in her satirical Big Yellow Taxi song, her voice was lacking in the small girl tongue-in-cheek punch necessary to make the song have any impact. It was very much a case of trying to make merry with a two dimensional, rather faded, yellow balloon.

Instant miracle of the concert was James Taylor. He ambled onstage like an animated rubber band, wrapped himself somewhere between an easy chair and a microphone, and began to play after midnight songs.

Taylor is. And that's about all that you can say about him. He has his own style, his own songs, his own philosophy and his own sense of humor. And you can listen and laugh. And all he will do is say "thank you," somewhat sarcastically.

Opening the concert were the rock and roll stylings of Chilliwack. And they too were a refreshing few minutes in quality playing and original musical thought, mainly drawn from their latest LP.

## —a pure romanticist

By LAWRENCE CLUDERAY

sometimes a little shocked by the extravagance of the expression, but my senses were also calmed by that rare spirit of tranquillity, that special sort of vibrancy which is at the core of Messiaen's invention.

And then of course there was the playing of the composer's wife, Yvonne Loriod, who is France's most distinguished woman pianist. What a prodigious technique she has — and a fabulous command of tone color.

My one regret about the first half of this exciting program was that there were only three selections from Vingt Regards, Noel, with its exciting clangor of bells, Premiere Communion

de la Vierge, and Regard de l'Esprit de Joie, with its ecstatic opening and closing sections and a curious middle episode with nightclub overtones.

Needless to say Yvonne Loriod played all three pieces for all they were worth — and maybe a bit more — and the audience responded to music and performance with tremendous enthusiasm.

Visions de l'Amen, a prodigiously difficult large scale work for two pianos in a similar mystical vein to Vingt Regards, brought composer Messiaen and his wife together in the role of du-pianists and provided a breathtaking conclusion to an excellent concert.

Readers planning to attend the seminar with Olivier Messiaen at SFU this afternoon are reminded that it begins at 3:30 p.m. and not 1:30 p.m. as originally announced.