

Friday, March 3, 1972

Joni Mitchell

"A Case of You"

By Bob Gilmartin

It was snowing on 57th Street, but when Joni Mitchell walked out on stage in her light avocado green jump suit, it was pure California sunshine. The first time I saw Joni Mitchell (her first Carnegie appearance also) neither Woodstock, nor the song of the event had happened yet. A lot has happened since then, and it was great getting back with her music again. She has maintained her development since those "Both Sides Now, "Chelsea Morning" days.

She started her sold-out concert with "Starbright", a song with that unique combination of positive, full chords, fine lyrics and a melody that climbs the musical scale gracefully.

An objection many people have to Ms. Mitchell's songs is that they all sound the same. The two new numbers she played, which had some really nice bluesy riffs, came as a real surprise for the audience. While the lights were down low, she played this eerie base line, that she balanced out with the higher strings, kept in the ever-present open-tuning.

There were many Joni Mitchell fans at the concert. She satisfied them with "Both Sides

Now", "Big Yellow Taxi", and other favorites. While she moved from one instrument to the other, the crowd kept her on her toes with shouts of "we love you," and "you're beautiful," with an occasional kiss from a fan.

When she sat down to play "Woodstock," the high point of the concert was reached. Whether she was playing "Henry You Turn Me On, I'm a Radio", or "A Case of You", she flawlessly kept you with her. She's so together, but doesn't leave the audience behind. Some other real highlights of the concert were the numbers Joni played on dulcimer.

The only objection I had about the concert was the sound system, which muddled the vocals considerably. Yet, even the acoustics could not turn her concert into a disaster.

As she came on for her second encore, she mellowed out the whole evening with the "Circle Game," accompanied by eight male friends. When she skipped off stage, with the flowers, notes and other gifts, there was nothing to say, because it had been said by a really fine woman.