



## RECORDS

### For the Byrds

FOR THE ROSES by Joni Mitchell (Asylum SD 5057). I do wish Joni Mitchell wouldn't take herself quite so seriously. The monotonous seriousness, and unnecessary pretentiousness of this new album takes the edge off an otherwise interesting and impressive collection of songs.

The first thing one notes about any Joni Mitchell recording, of course, is Joni's breathtakingly beautiful and amazingly flexible singing voice.

Then there are her songs. Her formless (yet carefully, complexly structured) and artless (yet lovingly, and painstakingly crafted) songs about people and places she has known, or very personal lyrics about life and what it means to her. All of them are really "people" songs.

They are the kind of songs that grow on you after repeated — and careful — listening. They are the kind of songs that sometimes come across better as poetry, when printed (as they are on *For The Roses*) on the cover, than they do when they are sung.

That is the case here. Miss Mitchell's sombre, humorless rendering of many of her songs is quite oppressive. *Woman Of Heart And Mind* succeeds in spite of its "serious" nature, perhaps because it is one of the most musical, tightest written of the free-form creations. Most of the others don't succeed.

The best songs are the somewhat whimsical, totally unpretentious lyrics called *Electricity* (a marvellous mingling of love and electrical physics theory) and the hit single, *You Turn Me On I'm A Radio*.

*For The Roses* isn't Miss Mitchell's best album, not by a long shot. But anything she records has to be of more than passing interest, and if you're willing to take the time to really listen to the music, some of the songs are liable to start growing on you, slowly but surely.

—Jim Rennie

★ ★ ★

not hard-rock enough to appeal to rock addicts, nor is it all that syrupy sweet for the easy-listening crowd. But it's still a vastly listenable collection of Kellaway's compositions, arranged and conducted by Kellaway himself.

Most of the numbers incorporate brassy horns, a boogie piano, some pretty fair electric guitar, and rhythm that really moves. *La Cookeria* combines brass and a Latin beat; *On Your Mark, Get Set Blues* (four different versions) are jazz-blues and boogie compositions for piano; *Song Of The Earth* ends the album with more of Kellaway's throbbing rhythm and a rousing chorus singing about "love is. . ."

*Lay Karma Lay* (listed as not suitable for AM airplay) is poor-man's Mothers of Invention — quite amateurish, quite pathetic. But it's an exception. On all the other cuts on the album Kellaway concentrates only on making beautiful music. It's a lively, inventive recording that is something just a little bit out of the ordinary.

— J. R.

★ ★ ★

LAST SONG by Edward Bear (Capitol ST 6387). Edward Bear, a Canadian rock trio, has been around for a few years now, still trying to make it big. *Last Song* is a very pleasant collection of Edward Bear's own compositions, and it certainly won't hurt the group's reputation. But it won't help it all that much, either, I'm afraid.

The trio specializes in soft rock ballads. The band includes the inevitable guitar, drums and keyboards, but most of the songs also include romantic strings and a touch of brass. Nothing fancy, really, just easy-listening rock. And if the songs are usually a bit bubblegummy, that's all right, too — it's superior bubblegum.

Some of the original song lyrics are a bit forced, and a bit contrived, but the boys add their smooth harmonies and gloss on over the rough edges.