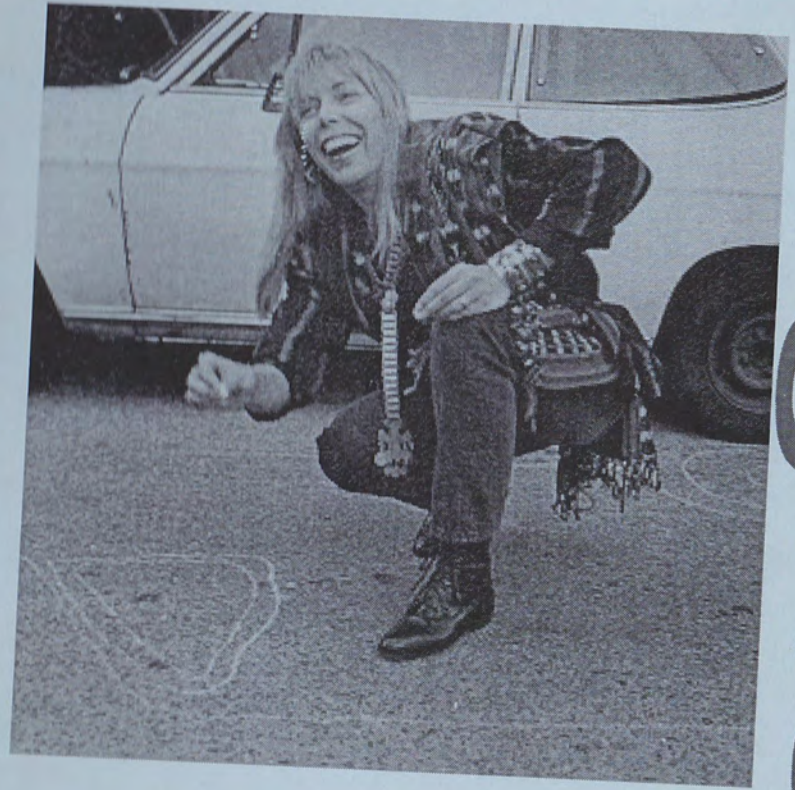




Joni Mitchell

Shadows & Light



Issue 2

October 1996

Editor's Note

Issue 2 - October 1996

Welcome to the second issue of "Shadows & Light".

This busy month marks not only the release of Joni's first ever compilations "Hits" and "Misses", but also the release of Brian Hinton's new biography, "Both Sides Now".

In this issue we feature part one of a two part review of the entire Mitchell album catalogue, and Jeff Hankins gives us his thoughts on the daunting task of making a successful cover of a Joni Mitchell song. We have all the latest Joni news, as well as a list of her live appearances since 1993.

A special "thank you" to those of you who have contributed articles, letters and pictures. Please keep them coming!

Alan Bandle

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News...News...News...

JONI BOOK DELAYED



C a s t l e Publications have informed me that publication of the new Joni Mitchell profile, "Both Sides Now" by Brian Hinton, has been delayed until the end of

October. The book, the first available on Joni in this country for 20 years, will now run to over 300 pages and be priced at £12.95. A&R Booksearch are making a special offer to readers of "Shadows & Light" - see page 3 for details.

JONI ON THE WEB

Those of you lucky enough to be able to surf the Internet should head straight for the Joni Mitchell Homepage. A site has been lovingly created by Wally Breese from San Francisco, California. Wally, a long serving Joni fan, commenced work on the Homepage in August 1995, aiming to be able to share his collection of memorabilia with others, and thus stimulate interest in Joni's music, and respect for her as a musical artist. What has resulted is one of the best artist sites on the web, featuring news, photographs, paintings, lyrics, and a wealth of other Joni information.

Encouraged by Joel Bernstein (Joni's guitar technician for many years) Wally

has received Joni's approval for this site as "she could see that the work was done from a 'heart' place".

In March this year, Reprise asked Breese to "join forces", and become the official link on the Reprise webpage. Reprise have now hired Wally to create a new site to promote the new albums "Hits" and "Misses". All this is in addition to Wally's regular day job, working for the local phone company. Wally told me "Imagine, I now work for Joni Mitchell and I created my own position within her team. Sometimes I think it must all be a dream".

Wally has also been kind enough to allow information from his Joni Mitchell Homepage to be used in "Shadows & Light".

The URL for the Joni Mitchell Homepage is:

<http://www.well.com/user/wallyb/jonihome.html>

NEW CD RELEASES

October 7 saw the release of two Joni compilation CDs entitled "Hits" and "Misses". Whilst the first album concentrates upon her more popular songs ('The Circle Game', 'Both Sides Now', 'Big Yellow Taxi', 'Woodstock' etc.) the second album contains the more challenging works including 'Passion Play', 'Dog Eat Dog' and 'Hejira'.

Selections are taken from 17 of Joni's previous albums, spanning the years 1967 to 1994. In addition, "Hits" also features the song 'Urge For Going', previously

only available as the B side of the single 'You Turn Me On, I'm A Radio'.

Joni will be making several promotional appearances on American TV during early November:

04/11/96 *The Late Show With*

David Letterman

06/11/96 Daytime TV with

Rosie O'Donnell

08/11/96 *CBS This Morning* with

Mark McKewon

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

On 11 December Joni will be presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Songwriters.

This fund-raising event will take place at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in LA. The two other recipients of the 11th annual award are Smokey Robinson, and Lieber and Stoller.

MORE JONI BOOKS

Joni has signed with Random House to produce three books, separately featuring her paintings, her poetry and lyrics, and lastly some anecdotal memoirs.

HALL OF FAME

On 18 September it was announced that Joni will be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The ceremony will take place on 15 May 1997 in Cleveland.

NEW PUBLICATION - DUE OCTOBER 1996

THE FIRST BOOK ON JONI SINCE 1976

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Joni Live - 1993 to 1996

It will probably be news to fans on this side of the Atlantic that, despite not touring in the conventional sense since 1983, Joni has made a number of promotional appearances over the last few years. Below is a list of live performances since the beginning of 1993.

03/06/93	Troubadours of Folk Fest, U.C.L.A., L.A., Ca.
20-22/05/94	Aionoshi Fest, Nara City, Japan
04/08/94	Edmonton Folk Fest, Alberta, Canada
12/09/94	KCRW-FM Studios, Santa Monica, Ca, <i>Morning Becomes Eclectic</i>
23/09/94	Much Music TV Studios, Toronto, Canada, <i>Intimate & Interactive</i>

During the week commencing 23 September 1994, while in Toronto, Joni performed live on the following TV and radio shows:

<i>Morningside</i>	w/Peter Gswoski, CBC Radio
<i>Dini</i>	CTV
<i>Rita & Friends</i>	CBC-TV
<i>Canada AM</i>	CTV
<i>Entertainment Desk</i>	Global TV
<i>Primetime News</i>	CBC

25/10/94	KSCA, Glendale, Ca.
14/11/94	Showcase in London, U.K. for media and record company
14/11/94	On BBC <i>Late Show</i>
05/12/94	At Shawn Colvin show in L.A., Ca.
19/01/95	Aids Project L.A., <i>Commitment To Life</i> Benefit, L.A., Ca.
26/01/95	Wells Fargo Theater, Gene Autry Museum, L.A., Ca (A nationwide radio broadcast)
03/02/95	<i>The Tonight Show</i> w/Jay Leno, Burbank, Ca.
17/02/95	Gavin Convention, New Orleans
24/04/95	<i>The Late Show</i> w/David Letterman, New York, N.Y.
06/05/95	New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, Louisiana Heritage Fair, New Orleans
11/05/95	National Public Radio Studios, Wash., D.C. <i>Weekend Edition</i> w/Leanne Hanson

05/11/95	<i>People For The American Way</i> Benefit honoring Gary Trudeau, Waldorf Astoria, N.Y., N.Y.
06/11/95	The Fez, Greenwich Village, N.Y.C.
07/11/95	At Eric Anderson show at the Bottom Line in N.Y.C.
08/12/95	CBS <i>This Morning</i> taping in NYC
12/12/95	<i>The Tonight Show</i> w/Jay Leno, Burbank, Ca.
08/05/96	In Stockholm, Sweden at the banquet after the Polar Music Prize Presentation to Joni.

It's great to know that Joni has taken up performing in public again. Long may she continue!

JONI TOURS EUROPE IN 60 MINUTES

In Record Collector magazine, Peter Doggett reported on Joni's visit to London in November 1994:

Joni Mitchell's latest European tour began at 6.45pm on Monday November 14th 1994, and ended approximately an hour later. More than 11 years after her last British concert, at Wembley Arena early in 1983, Joni belatedly celebrated the release of her excellent *Turbulent Indigo* album with a stunning 60-minute set in an ambassadorial-style residence just off London's Gloucester Road.

Sadly, the gig was industry-only, which meant that a mere 200 people were privileged to watch her perform solo acoustic renditions of highlights from the new record, plus selections from her back catalogue.

She introduced 'Yvette in English' with a heartfelt message of support for the song's co-writer, David Crosby, whom she described as "fading fast" in a California hospital from a liver ailment. (Thankfully, Crosby received a life-saving transplant a few hours before Joni performed.)

Besides vintage gems like 'Hejira',

'Moon At The Window', 'Just Like This Train' and 'Refuge Of The Roads', Mitchell also debuted two unreleased songs, 'Love's Cries' and 'Happiness is The Best Facelift' (better than its title suggested). The latter pair will be featured on her next record, which is apparently already complete: *Turbulent Indigo* was effectively finished two years ago, but was delayed while Joni extricated herself from her contract with Geffen, en route back to Reprise, where her career began.

Perhaps the best news of all for Mitchell fans was that Joni survived the entire 60 minutes without so much as fingering a cigarette. Rumours a year or two back suggested that she was dying of lung or throat cancer, but she seems to have survived this health scare in style. Her voice is certainly smokier than it once was, but if anything it sounded clearer on stage than it does on *Turbulent Indigo*. No news, though, on an official tour, or the imminent release of another record.

Taking Risks

Mitchell Songs : Cover Versions:

by Jeff Hankins

Probably it's Bob Dylan who has laid down the greatest challenges to the interpretive singer - to pick the jewels of startlingly sweet melodies from the bare rock of his raw, idiosyncratic recordings, and yet somehow try and retain their immediacy and their power. Joan Baez and Judy Collins were two notables amongst a great crowd who took up the challenge with remarkable vigour, and occasional success. (More about Judy Collins in a moment.) Joni Mitchell's work has presented a similar, but different, challenge to the interpretive artist: to take a song which has already had its definitive embodiment and bring from it some new flavour.. It's remarkable the number who have taken up this challenge, though not always with equal degree of adventurousness..

Judy Collins, whether we like it or not, probably did more than any other artist to bring the songwriting talents of Joni Mitchell to a mass audience, through her stirring, strings-augmented version of 'Both Sides Now', lifted from the *Wildflowers* album of 1967. The same album sees her taking a successful stab at 'Michael from Mountains'. I remember seeing Judy Collins during this era doing a spot on some glitzy TV show (Tom Jones Show? Something like that). Playing the piano to accompany herself she sang a song called 'Chelsea Morning', .. I was

arrested very much by the delightful construction of the song - something refreshingly different about the melodic and lyrical patterns and.., well, apparently Collins released the song as a single around this time, but, displeased with the result, had it withdrawn, and had another (indeed, better) bash at it on the semi-live album *Living* some years later. I think I remember hearing an interview with her somewhere where she said she'd have recorded a lot more Mitchell songs if the composer hadn't done them so beautifully already. And there, put very succinctly, lies the problem.

So we tend to find some of the bolder covers in the days before the writer herself had been discovered and put onto disc, and we had no "original" to compare their efforts with! Tom Rush in whose Detroit Club Joni was performing in 1965-66 before her move to New York, recorded three of her songs on his *Circle Game* album. One wonders, if her own recordings had been in existence at the time, whether he would have had the courage. Of the three, for me, only 'Tin Angel' stands as bringing something new and distinct to the song: perhaps what Mitchell herself described (talking in that instance about Dave Van Ronk's version of 'Both Sides Now', the only cover at that time that she actually liked...) as a quality of male sadness. I applaud Rush

for choosing the song, too, acknowledging a classic beauty in it too often overlooked. Of course several people besides Rush were beginning to record 'Urge For Going'.. I've still not heard the George Hamilton IV version which was the earliest, successful (c & w charts!) one. So I'm indebted to Rush because his was the first version of the song I heard.

In this country the folk group The Johnstons recorded it. I've got a single with that song and 'Both Sides Now' back to back. They must have been quite entranced by what they heard when they

met her here in 1968; I believe they also recorded 'Marcie' though I've not heard that cover. (What happened to the Johnstons?) These days you can hear several cover versions of 'Urge For Going'; I believe Mary Black has one on an album. Oh, and I notice

there's a Crosby, Stills & Nash Judy Collins, version unearthed and included on

one of those boxed CD sets. In the late sixties others over here must have got hold of a demo-tape that Joe Boyd or someone was floating around. In one interview I read, Joni says that Julie Felix was doing some of the more obscure songs in club performances, though I've found no recordings apart from the obligatory 'Both Sides'.. Fairport Convention, in one of their earliest incarnations, did 'I Don't Know Where I Stand' and also 'Chelsea Morning', and then on their *What We Did On Our Holidays* album a lovely version of 'Eastern Rain'. And here they really have made something a little different.

Ambitiously they've injected a sort of new busy pace into it, and dropped the lyrics of the bridge section. Not a bad idea: it works well. A bit of risk-taking that the artist would surely applaud.

Because, after all, a bit of creative risk-taking is the only way to do a cover version of a Mitchell song. Witness that sad imitation of 'Songs to Ageing Children Come' from the soundtrack of *Alice's Restaurant*... or witness Buffy Saint-Marie's version of 'Song To A Seagull' which changes nothing, stylistically, and so certainly adds nothing new or fresh to



Judy Collins,

the definitive composer-version. Was it worth it? A hundred mediocre versions of 'Both Sides Now' attest the same thing. But one person who wasn't afraid to make it fresh was Pete Seeger who added his own verse to it. Have you heard that wonderful recording of him and Joni duetting on it

(from some US TV programme in 1969)? Ah, now that captures

the creative spark burning bright! In the same way, however much Ian Matthews' hit single made a rather tamed and comfortable 'Woodstock', I still have to admire him for seeing its potential for a different kind of treatment (even a slightly different melody)! After all Joni herself did the same kind of thing in her guitar-version 80's performances of the song.

There was a time some years back when I started to collect lists of these cover versions (too much time on my hands, obviously!).. but here are some of the quirkier ones I recall:

'Night In The City' by the Athenians
(Nana Mouskouri's band)
'In France They Kiss On Main Street'
by the Swingle Singers!
'Dreamland' by Roger McGuinn
'The Circle Game' by the
Ian Campbell Folk Group
'For Free' by David Crosby
'Big Yellow Taxi' by Bob Dylan
'This Flight Tonight' by Nazareth
(remember that?!)
'Ladies of the Canyon' by Annie
Lennox (only heard that recently)
'I Don't Know Where I Stand' by
Barbra Streisand
My own favourite? Bonnie Raitt doing
'That Song about the Midway'. She gives
it a new soulful quality, and anyway its

such a great, under-exploited song and
Raitt is such a great singer.

You've got the idea by now, I'm sure,
that the point I'd make is; if you're going
to cover a Mitchell song, don't just repeat;
certainly don't try and compete; but do
something with the song which grabs a
hold of the creative challenge that each
song is; creativity renewed and
rediscovered with each intelligent
interpretation; so give me a bold Nazareth
'Flight' to a bland Perry Como style 'Both
Sides' every time.

*Thanks Jeff. Maybe Joni should record
Carly Simons' 'Nobody Does It Better!'.
Seriously, do any of our readers have a
favourite Joni cover version? Please write
to me at the usual address. Ed.*

ROLLING STONE

The following article appeared in the 17 May 1969 issue of Rolling Stone magazine:

Folk music, which pushed rock and roll into
the arena of the serious with protest lyrics
and blendings of Dylan and the Byrds back
in 1964, has re-entered the pop music cycle.
Once again, with a new crop of guitar-
toting composer-singers at the vanguard,
folk is "in".

As with country, jazz, and
other rock music satellites, it is
not 100 percent pure. Joan
Baez is completely off of her
abortive rock-album trip, but
there's a solid country beat to
her Dylan LP. Peter, Paul, and
Mary couldn't have been
serious singing 'I Dig Rock
and Roll Music'; nevertheless,
they used a full complement of
session men (and even backup
voices) in their *Late Again*
album. Dylan is back to the basics, leaving
electronics largely to the boys in the Band,
but his next LP - as with his *John Wesley
Harding* - are Nashville-twanged.

The old names are back, but in more
commercial regalia. Judy Collins, softened,
orchestrated, countrified (and even, on
national TV, miniskirted), is a regular chart
item now, after years of limited success.

The music (someone called it "Art
Rock", but that can be ignored) features a
lighter, more lyrical style of writing, as
exemplified by Leonard Cohen. As if an
aural backlash to psy-ky-delick acid rock
and to the all-hell-has-broken-loose styles
of Aretha Franklin and Janis Joplin, the
music is gentle, sensitive, and graceful.

Nowadays it's the personal and the poetic,
rather than a message, that dominates.

Into this newly re-ploughed field has
stepped Joni Mitchell, composer, singer,
guitarist, painter, and poetess from
Alberta, Canada.

Miss Mitchell, a wispy 25-year-old
blonde, is best known for her
compositions, 'Michael from
Mountains' and 'Both Sides
Now', as recorded by Judy
Collins, and 'The Circle
Game', cut by Tom Rush.

She has a first LP out (on
Reprise). A second album -
recorded during successful
concerts at UC Berkeley and at
Carnegie Hall - is ready for
release, and another studio
album has already been
recorded. She is editing a book of poetry
and artwork; a volume of her
compositions will follow shortly. And she
has received a movie offer (to conceive,
script and score a film).

Not bad for a girl who had no voice
training, hated to read in school, and
learned guitar from a Pete Seeger
instruction record.

Just who - and what - is Joni Mitchell,
this girl who's so obviously perched on
the verge?

To those who don't spend hours in
audio labs studying the shades, tones, and
nuances of the human voice, Miss
Mitchell is just a singer who sounds like
Joan Baez or Judy Collins. She has that



fluttery but controlled kind of soprano, the kind that can slide effortlessly from the middle register to piercing highs in mid-word.

Like Baez, Miss Mitchell plays a fluid acoustic guitar; like Collins, she can switch to the piano once in a while. And her compositions reflect the influences of Cohen.

On stage, however, she is her own woman. Where Joan Baez is the embattled but still charming Joan of Arc of the non-violence crusade, and where Judy Collins is the regal, long-time lady-in-waiting of the folk-pop world, Joni Mitchell is a fresh, incredibly beautiful innocent/experienced girl/woman.

She can charm the applause out of an audience by breaking a guitar string, then apologising by singing her next number a capella, or a wounded guitar at a limp parade rest. And when she talks, words stumble out of her mouth to form candid little quasi-anecdotes that are completely antithetical to her carefully constructed, contrived songs. But they knock the audience out almost every time. In Berkeley, she destroyed Dino Valente's beautiful 'Get Together' by trying to turn it into a rousing sing-along. It was a lost cause, but the audience made a valiant try at following. For one night, for Joni Mitchell, they were glad to be sheep.

In Laurel Canyon, where she shares a newly-purchased house with Graham Nash, Joni sits on an antique sofa and bemusedly shrugs her shoulders. She is talking about an offer from a giant Hollywood film company to write a

movie - "on any theme I want to choose" - for a huge amount of money. She is talking about her book of poetry: "The poems are already written. It's just an eclectic collection of all kinds of things I've done that I don't know what else to do with them. I'm putting them into a book because I don't like to lose anything." And she is showing her artwork - fine pen-and-ink drawing; felt-pen watercolors; a self-portrait for her second LP cover. Some of these, too, will find their way into a Joni Mitchell book.

Whatever she's going to say next will be an understatement.

"I have so many irons in the fire now", she says.

Joni lives in a house filled with the things she loves. Antique pieces crowd tables, mantels, and shelves. There are antique handbags hung on a bathroom wall, a hand-carved hat rack at the door; there are castle-style doors and Tiffany stained glass windows; a grandfather clock and a Priestly piano. Nash is perched on an English church chair, and Joni is in the kitchen, using the only electric lights on in the house. She's making the crust for a rhubarb pie,

"Lately, life has been constantly filled with interruptions. I don't have five hours in a row to myself. I think I'm less prolific now, but I'm also more demanding of myself. I have many melodies in my mind at all times, but the words are different now. It's mainly because I rely on my own experiences for lyrics."

The difference in experiences is the difference between the urban centers of the east - Detroit, Boston, Philadelphia, New

York - and California, where she arrived late last summer.

"In New York, the street adventures are incredible. There are a thousand stories in a single block. You see the stories in the people's faces. You hear the songs immediately. Here in Los Angeles, there are less characters because they're all inside automobiles. You don't see them on park benches or peeing in the gutter or any of that."

Joni Mitchell, after schooling in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, wanted to be a commercial artist. She attended the Alberta College of Art in Calgary. While studying art, she took up the ukulele.

The guitar - with the Pete Seeger record - followed shortly. "But I didn't have the patience to copy a style that was already known." Joni dumped the record and learned guitar by experimentation, so that today she re-tunes her guitar after almost every song, and she plays direct harmony to her own singing.

Her vocal training was no less informal. "I had none. I used to be a breathy little soprano. Then one day I found that I could sing low. At first I thought I had lost my voice forever. I could sing either a breathy high part or a raspy low part. Then the two came together by themselves. It was uncomfortable for a while, but I worked on it, and now I've got this voice."

But the poetry - the writing. There must have been a solid literary background; some early influences and guiding lights.

"The only time I read in school was when it was compulsory, like for a book report."

Miss Mitchell reads more now than ever before. Herman Hesse is a favourite

author; Leonard Cohen her favourite poet, with Rod McKuen also on her shelf.

In short, Joni Mitchell seemed almost totally unprepared for her jump into the United States folkcircuit in 1966. Further, "I started at a time when folk clubs were folding all over the place. It was rock and roll everywhere, except for a small underground current of clubs".

But Joni had been making the Toronto scene for more than a year by the time she hit Detroit, and she had written a number of good tunes. Tom Rush, in Detroit for a gig at the Checkmate, heard some of them and decided to record 'Urge For Going' and 'The Circle Game'. Joni Mitchell had broken water.

She drifted to New York where, in the fall of 1967, she met her manager Elliott Roberts. There, too, she met Andy Wickham. He signed her to Reprise.

Now, despite the current clamor for her time, Joni Mitchell looks forward to writing songs about "peaceful things".

In concert, she does a number called 'Song For America':

Why did you trade your fiddle for your drum?

We have all come to fear the beating of your drum...

And her first LP was produced by David Crosby, the politically-aroused ex-Byrd. "So I can't help but know what's happening. But I also know that I can't do a thing about it".

"It's good to be exposed to politics and what's going down here, but it does damage to me. Too much of it can cripple me. And if I really let myself think about it - the violence, the sickness, all of it - I think I'd flip out."

Joni Mitchell has arrived in America.



BALLAD OF A TEENAGE QUEEN

Joni Mitchell and Johnny Cash

By Peter Lewry

In 1957, producer and songwriter Jack Clement, convinced that the teenage market did not need anymore sagas of the Old West, wrote a teen oriented story song entitled *Ballad Of A Teenage Queen* which many have argued was the worst song Cash recorded during his spell with SUN Records in Memphis. The song was miles away from the sparse sound achieved by Cash, Luther Perkins and Marshall Grant on his previous recordings. *Ballad Of A Teenage Queen* featured an acoustic guitar, played by Clements in favour of Luthers lead guitar, and a vocal chorus and ear-rending soprano by Cyd Mosteller, both of which dominated almost the entire record.

The track first showed signs of life in Canada in December 1957 and subsequently Cash was booked for a series of one-nighters. At the time Sam Phillips, owner of SUN Records, was asked how many copies of the single he thought he could sell. Phillips projection was between 12-15,000 copies, an under estimate as we shall see.

The 15-date tour took them from Prince Edward Island to Vancouver. They filled every hall and the single moved well past the 100,000 mark. Promotion for the SUN licensee in Canada was undertaken by Dan Bass of Quality Records and he set up a Teenage Queen contest. In every city Cash appeared, he would do radio and television promotion as well as signing albums in local record stores. The last promotional appearance each day would be the drawing of the Teenage Queen and runner-up. The only requirement

for entry into the contest was that each entrant had to purchase a copy of the single. During the evenings concert Cash would crown the winner and announce the runner-up. By now you are probably wondering where Joni Mitchell fits into the story... read on!

Just before his appearance in Saskatoon, the winner of that cities contest tragically died leaving the runner-up to be enthroned. The runner-up was already writing and singing her own songs... her name was JONI MITCHELL.

This was not the last time that their paths would cross. By 1969 Cash had been offered his own Network TV series on ABC, this ran from June 1969 through to March 1971. On each show he featured a number of special guests, some well-known, others relative newcomers. Among the guests were Bob Dylan, Burl Ives, Chet Atkins, The Monkees, Liza Minelli, Linda Ronstadt and Joni Mitchell. During the two year run, Joni would make three appearances on the show. On her first guest appearance, broadcast on June 7th, Joni performed her own composition 'Clouds' and, as a duet with Cash, 'I Still Miss Someone'.

Further shows broadcast on July 19th 1969 and October 7th 1970 saw her perform Cash's 'Long Black Veil' and Dylan's 'Girl from The North County', again both as duets. Audio tapes and videos of many of Cash's TV Shows are beginning to appear via fans, and the June 7th Show is being swapped by Cash devotees on audio cassette.



Reviews...Reviews...

In this issue we feature part one of a two part review of Joni's entire collection of albums, courtesy of David Bertrand Wilson (DBA) & John Alroy (JA), two avid music fans who have a "reviews" page on the Internet, "*We listen to the lousy records so you won't have to*". This is their verdict....

A rock performer in the broad sense of the term, Joni Mitchell has ranged from folk to pop-rock to jazz in a three-decade career. What remains constant is her ear for off-kilter melody, her talent for adventurous arrangements, and above all her ability to write lyrics which, though often intensely personal, have a universal appeal, and are rich in relevant detail, engaging both the emotions and the intellect. I could blather on like this for days, but I'll rein it in here. On to the discs... (DBW)

Those unfamiliar with her might mistake Joni for a mere folk singer, or perhaps a jazz-fusion opportunist. It's really more complicated than that. After several years of singing in small clubs and occasionally having her songs recorded by then-more prominent folkies like Judy Collins, Joni was "picked up" by David Crosby, who proceeded to get her a record contract and promote her endlessly with his high-powered L.A. acquaintances. This led to affairs with Crosby, Nash, and James Taylor, and to appearances by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young on various Mitchell records. Despite thereby being much more closely tied to the West Coast soft-rock scene than any other "folkie", Joni maintained a completely independent musical identity through this period. In the 70's, Joni nearly became a full-blown jazz artist, collaborating first with the L.A.

Express, and later with Jaco Pastorius, Larry Carlton and Charles Mingus. Once again, however, her distinctive and highly personal musical vision persisted and even flourished, conceding almost nothing to the jazz-rock fusion movement that was then all the rage. And one problem you'll find with this page is that Joni was *so* solid throughout the 70's that we've rated album after album as really good (****) to downright brilliant (*****). (JA)

There's a marvellous Joni Mitchell site with complete discography, interviews, news, and even some of her paintings. (DBW)

I should add that this may be the single most comprehensive fan site in existence, with endless magazine and newspaper clippings, photos, lyrics, tour dates, even lists of *other* artists' versions of her songs. (JA) (*See article about the Joni Mitchell Homepage on page 2 - Ed.*)

There's also another Joni Mitchell page with a minimal bio and a discography with links to lyric pages and some soundbytes. (DBW)

**1/2 Joni Mitchell (1968)

Already a well-known songwriter with hits for Judy Collins and Tom Rush, she declined to record any of her familiar songs on her debut album, instead releasing sparsely arranged, folky songs that either hit the mark dead on ('Cactus Tree')

or wander off into obscurity ('The Pirate of Penance'). (DBW)

This was "produced" by David Crosby, meaning that he arranged to get her a contract and studio time, and then shielded her from the interference's of record company executives and A & R men. (JA)

Clouds (1969)

***1/2 - Even less instrumentation here, almost everything just acoustic guitar and singing - showcasing a bunch of brilliant songs ('That Song About The Midway', 'I Don't Know Where I Stand') and her own versions of the Judy Collins-recorded 'Chelsea Morning' (Chelsea Clinton was named for Judy's version, not Joni's) and 'Both Sides Now'. (DBW)

***1/2 - The acoustic guitar-and-solo vocal shtick gets tiresome, despite the outstanding songwriting. I personally favour the creepier stuff, and there's a lot of it ('The Gallery', a great put-down of womanizers everywhere; 'Songs To Aging Children Come'). However, an unlistenable a capella piece ('The Fiddle And The Drum') almost single-handedly ruins the record. (JA)

Ladies Of The Canyon (1970)

**1/2 - Here she ventured into more complex arrangements, using woodwinds, backup vocalists and a cello. The brilliant songs ('For Free', 'Big Yellow Taxi', her version of 'The Circle Game') are buried among songs that don't come up to her usual high standard, from older material ('Conversation') to new ('The Arrangement') - she covers territory from social commentary to slice-of-life descriptive to confessional, but without the authority she displays elsewhere in her

(pardon the expression) oeuvre. (DBW)

*** - Okay, so it's got problems. I don't even enjoy 'Circle Game', with its intentionally off-key backing chorus, and Joni's slowed-down electric piano version of 'Woodstock' just plain sucks. But the rest of the record is really more solid than you might think after a first listen. (JA)

Blue (1971)

***** - The album that launched the confessional singer-songwriter craze, but don't hold that against it. She says she was in an "emotionally transparent" state when she made this album - along with John Lennon's *Plastic Ono Band* it's as genuine, as honest and unmannered an album as was ever made. Almost every song here is a classic: 'The Last Time I Saw Richard', 'A Case Of You', 'California', 'All I Want'. (DBW)

***** - That's right. Plus it *rocks*. Wilson forgot to mention my personal favourite, the eerie, doom-laden 'This Flight Tonight'. The production here



alternates between acoustic guitar and piano-dominated arrangements, a step up from the previous records but still more primitive than the following ones. (JA)

For The Roses (1972)

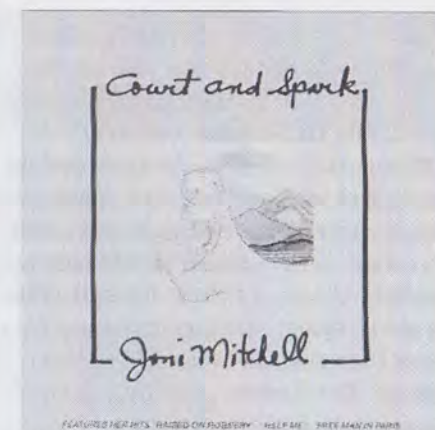
**** - More brilliant songwriting together with elegant pop-rock arrangements, this record has two themes: the difficulties of romance and the contradictions involved in the life of an artist ('The Judgement Of The Moon And Stars', the title track). (DBW)

**** - More obscure both lyrically and musically than the earlier LP's, this is not for beginners. Some of the chord progressions are mind-boggling, and except for 'You Turn Me On I'm A Radio' (with Nash on harmonica), there's hardly a nod towards commercial considerations (that's a compliment). Heavier use of piano and woodwinds ('Judgement Of...') points in the new direction that Joni was about to go in. To my ears, the theme is not so much about romance per se as about James Taylor being an insufferable jerk... (JA)

Court And Spark (1974)

****1/2 - Her commercial highpoint, as her arranging skills and confidence in her voice caught up with her songwriting. Classic songs and guest stars abound ('Help Me', 'People's Parties', 'Raised On Robbery', etc). (DBW)

***** - Not to mention 'Free Man In Paris'. This was Joni's first real effort at serious orchestral arrangements and a full-band, jazz-oriented sound, and her best. 'Help Me' was Joni's biggest hit ever, and this is the record most remembered by the general public. But the songwriting is as rich as ever, as on the wrenching love-song 'Car On A Hill', the complexly arranged suite 'Down To You', and the picaresque 'Just Like This Train'. Plus the record ends on a great gag: the up-tempo jazz tune



'Twisted', with a few snippets of dialogue courtesy of Cheech & Chong, and Joni's voice zooming madly around the rapid-fire melody. (JA)

Miles Of Aisles (1974)

**** - One of the few essential live rock albums, this collection finds Mitchell in dynamic confident voice, backed by the LA Express, reinterpreting her back catalogue. Standout rearrangements include 'Rainy Night House', 'Big Yellow Taxi' and 'Both Sides Now'. Also includes 'Love Or Money', which was never released in studio form. (DBW).

**** - Joni's catalogue was so deep at this point that she could afford to blow off all the hits from a freshly-released five-star record (*Court And Spark*, represented here by only one track in 18) and still leave you gasping in awe. Strangely, she's better on the numerous solo performances than when backed by the L.A. Express, which did do a marvellous job on studio records of the period: 'Carey', for example, is transformed into a distractingly light-weight stab at reggae. But then there's the grooving 'Woodstock', much better here than on

es Of The Canyon. On one CD, this is
again you'd be foolish to pass up. (JA)

Hissing Of Summer Lawns (1975)

*** - The critics' backlash started in
est with this record. The music is
e beautifully realised than ever, and
lyrics range from incredible to
edibly obscure (at least for me). The
songs, though, are pop perfection. 'In
ce They Kiss On Main Street', 'Don't
rupt The Sorrow', 'Harry's House/
repiece'. (DBW)

*** - The backlash was all the more
zing because there's nothing really
g with this record: every track is
l, and it's more stylistically broad and
g than *Court And Spark* while
nuing in the same jazz-pop fusion
. Joni somehow pulls off unique and
lly off-putting experiments like 'The
le Line', driven by authentic African
as; 'Shades Of Scarlett Conquering',
a creepy string arrangement; and
dows And Light', with a deeply
ge melody and bizarre vocal
onies. Much of the rest features a full
e, usually derived from the L.A.
ess and augmented by a classy horn
on. Guests include Crosby, Nash and
s Taylor (all on 'In France They
)', and Robben Ford contributes some
ordinary guitar parts. (JA)

Hejira (1976)

****1/2 - Complete shift in mood for
these songs documenting some kind of
spiritual/emotional journey: mostly just
accompanied by guitar, bass (featuring
Jaco Pastorius - unlike his own records,
here the artist is in control of his technique
rather than the other way around) and
drums. Every song here is a winner; it's
probably my favourite of all her albums,
but since it's so consistent in mood and
timbre, the uninitiated would probably be
better of getting their feet wet with *Court
And Spark* or *Blue*. (DBW)

**** - Yes, every song is a winner;
and yes, every song has much the same
mellow jazzy-acoustic sound. You'll
probably love it like Wilson and I both do,
but you may find that it puts you to sleep.
The shortest track is 4:15 and the
production is tasteful but punchless, with
the more chipper stuff merely reprising
Summer Lawns ('Song For Sharon').
'Black Crow' rocks, though, and the
lengthy lyrics are excellent - Joni's themes
of restless travel and doomed love are
emphasised and augmented here with
quiet broodings on mortality. p.s., despite
the shift in mood, the backing players are
often from the L.A. Express, as before,
including Larry Carlton on guitar; guests
included Bobbye Hall on percussion, and
Neil Young on harmonica(!). (JA)

In the next issue of *Shadows & Light*:

Joni in Germany

Sweet Joni (and Neil Young)

plus all the usual news and reviews

Book Review

"Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young : The Visual Documentary" by Johnny Rogan (Omnibus Press 1996 - £15.95)

*The following book review features a band
whose career was intertwined with Joni's
in the late sixties, and
early seventies:*

I have to admit that I
am cautious when I
see the words "visual
documentary". Books
of this type have
often been hastily
compiled to capitalise
on the sudden fame
of a star with little
history, or the
untimely passing of a
popular artist.
R e c y c l e d
p h o t o g r a p h s,
newspaper cuttings
and the inevitable
tour dates can fill
books with little
dedicated research having to be made.
This book is different.

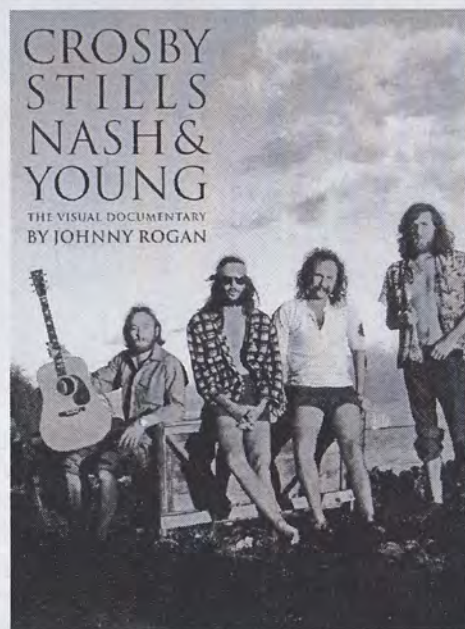
This tastefully glossy presentation
could be called "coffee table", were it not
for the wealth of detail contained,
providing a chronicle/history of David
Crosby, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash and
Neil Young. And in the early days, Joni
was there too!

Having written two books on Neil
Young, and "The Definitive History Of
The Byrds" Rogan moves on to chart the

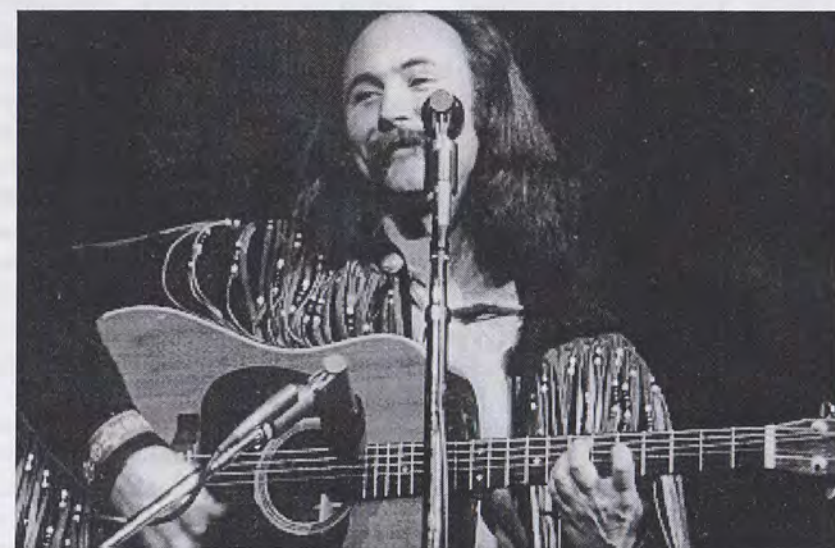
history of a volatile collaboration,
beginning with the individual background
of each member prior to their coming
together. What follows is a day-by-day
account of every significant CSN&Y
moment from
January 1968,
through to Crosby's
release from hospital
after a successful life
saving liver
transplant.

C S N & Y ' s
collaborations and
relationships with
Joni result in quite a
few mentions from
1968 to 1975,
although there isn't
a great deal said
about her. Also, she
only features in one
photograph, taken at
the Wembley
Stadium gig on 14
September 1974,

where Tom Scott & The L.A. Express,
The Band and Jesse Colin Young also
performed. (*Were you there? What was it
like? Has anyone got a tape? Ed.*). But the
four members of this band have all
impacted on her career in a big way, and
this book through it's readable prose and
stunning colour and black and white
photos, paints a vivid picture of what was
happening around Ms Mitchell at the time.
If only we could have a book like this on
Joni!



The Boys In The Band



When I first saw her, she was in a coffee shop in Florida. I walked in and I was singing 'Oh, they call the wind Maria', and there was this girl going, 'I had a king of the tenement castle'. My mind just went 'Oh, my God, I'm in love - and, not only that, she's talented. I can't live!'. So says David Van Cortlandt Crosby, the man credited for "discovering" Joni at the Nut Grove in 1967. Born on 14 August 1941 in Los Angeles, Crosby enrolled into acting school, only to later drop-out to sing in coffee houses in New York and California. Along the way he played with several influential musicians (Dino Valente, Paul Kantner) and in 1963, teamed up with Jim Dickson, recorded demos

for a projected solo album.

Unable to secure a record deal, he came across two like-minded musicians, also huge fans of the Beatles, Jim (Roger) McGuinn and Gene Clark. Together with Chris Hillman and Michael Clarke they formed the Byrds, one of the most respected bands of the 60s.

After much success, Crosby's outspokenness and domineering spirit resulted in him being dismissed in 1967. While holidaying on his boat 'The Mayan', he decided to drop anchor in Florida, where he happened across Joni. Having helped to secure a recording deal, Dave gained a credit as producer on Joni's debut album, which was released on 6 May 1968. He also played guitar on 'Night In The City'.

Dave's next union was as part of the

legendary "supergroup" Crosby, Stills, Nash And Young, contributing some of their most famous songs including 'Guinevere', 'Long Time Gone' and 'Deja Vu'. As they toured, Joni often appeared as support artist, re-appearing on stage for the encore of Dino Valente's 'Get Together'.

As Mitchell developed to become a headlining artist in her own right, CSN&Y grew in status, their fame peaking at the Woodstock festival in August 1969.

In 1972 Dave released his first solo album, *If Only I Could Remember My Name*, one of the all time classic albums, with Joni appearing on backing vocals and dulcimer. He returned the compliment by guesting on Joni's albums *Court And Spark* and *The Hissing Of Summer Lawns*.

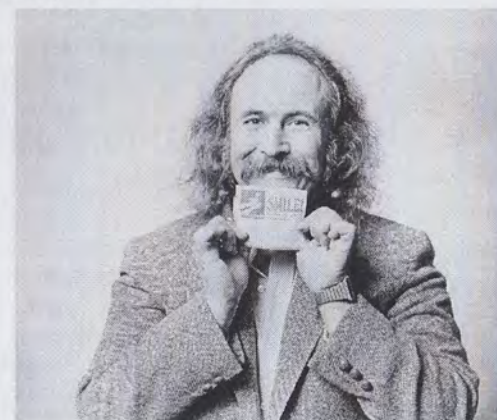
Throughout the seventies, various permutations of CSN&Y appeared, Crosby's voice often melting together with Nash's to superb effect. However, with his new solo album being rejected in 1980, the bubble had burst, and drug dependency followed. Never one to do things by halves, Dave gained unwelcome press attention for drug and firearm

offences, and for making an escape from a drug rehabilitation centre. A jail sentence in 1985 proved to be a turning point, and on release he returned to recording, finally releasing his second solo album *Oh Yes I Can* in 1989, and his autobiography *Long Time Gone*.

In the early nineties Dave returned to live performance, several gigs now being available on CD. Having declined to produce Dave's third solo album, *Thousand Roads*, Joni did collaborate on the song 'Yvette In English' which also appears on *Turbulent Indigo*.

In 1994 friends, including Joni, became very concerned with Crosby's health. In November he went into hospital suffering from liver failure, having to wait 15 days until a suitable replacement could be found. Despite the first liver being cancerous, a replacement was located, and Dave could be heard singing 'Amazing Grace' as he was wheeled down the hospital corridors! He left hospital in December 1995 to recuperate.

Dave must be recognised for being a major influence on Joni in the late sixties, and one of the all-time greats.



FOR SALE/WANTED

Joni Mitchell live music - I would be pleased to trade tape copies of my limited collection for any Joni music that I haven't got. PHONE Don (01977) 703580 and leave a message giving details of your music and an evening telephone number.

Wanted to buy "Joni Mitchell, her life, her loves, her music" by Leonore Fleischer and the "Just Ice" CD.

I'm searching for English JM material (especially 70's and concerning Joni's trips to England in the late 60s), original or copy.

Is anyone interested in German material (interviews, reviews, portraits)? I'll include some notes in English. Dieter Paul Rudolph, Gaenshornstr, 5, 66440 Blieskastel, Germany.

Can anyone transfer Betamax to VHS? If so, please write to: Alan Beadle, address as on page 1.

PHOTO CREDITS

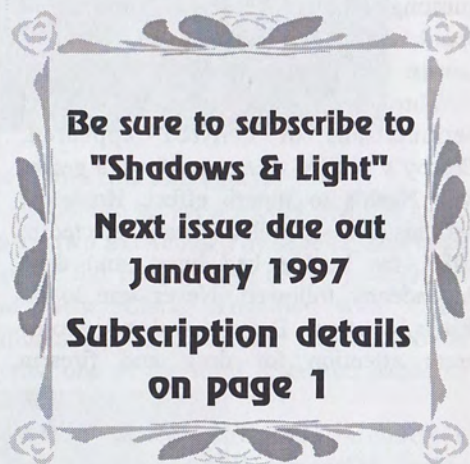
Front Cover	Norman Seeff
Page 1	Henry Diltz
Page 10	Baron Wolman
Page 18	Rex Features
Page 19	Redferns
Back Cover	Joni Mitchell

Every effort has been made to obtain the copyright owner of every photograph used in this issue, but apologies to those who we were unable to trace.

YOUR LETTERS

Thank you for Shadows & Light, it is excellent. Just a couple of points. 'River' as sung by Natalie Merchant is her own composition about River Phoenix. The Joni track she covers is 'All I Want'. an extra track on the 'Wander' single.

'River' as written by Joni is covered though on the recent double Indigo Girls album 1200 Curfews. Another recent cover is the stunning re-creation of 'A Case Of You' by Tori Amos, on the Digipack version of 'Cornflake Girl'. (Graham Davies, Bristol)



AND FINALLY...

I would like to thank the following people for their help with this issue: Wally Breese, Jeff Hankins, Emma Duyts and Ian Dewhurst (Warner Music), Michelle Knight (Sanctuary Press), Peter Lewry, Andrew Youens Alan Rowan, Paul Ricketts, Wilson & Alroy, and Graham Donaldson (who suggested the name "Shadows & Light").