



Senior Connection: May events
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Produced by The Modesto Bee Advertising Department Wednesday, May 4, 1988 Modesto North Page 1

A Talk With Joni Mitchell

By Divina Infelise
HOLLYWOOD—A limo drives into a backstage area of yellow the and fluorescent lights. The car pulls up at the back of a red velvet stage curtain and Joni Mitchell, disheveled in a plaid shirt and jeans, is hoisted from the back seat into a wheelchair.
The wheelchair moves up a ramp, bounces through the curtains and settles down an incline. The chair stops eventually, but Mitchell goes flying and lands, clattered, on the stage. The audience, powdered and wigged members of Marco Antonini's court, laugh at her.
The dream was a premonition of a dramatic, real-life experience for Joni Mitchell. Strung in Giffen Records' offices recently, chatting late into the evening, Mitchell veers from talk about her new album, "Chalk Mark in a Raintown," to how her dream and the event's portended sum up her career as a pop musician.
"I did a benefit in Toronto for the Cree Indians. I went on stage and did my set, but it was a restless audience. I never felt well at these group benefit things. I'm never loud enough to overcome the audience's taking. I came off the stage with a slightly deflated feeling, like I hadn't done my best."
"I went into the dressing room and there was a red-in-the-face angry French girl, being restrained by a man, her arms behind her back. Suddenly she burst loose from the man and charged toward me, screaming, 'The English where. The English where.' Seconds later, an Indian boy walked up to me and said, 'On behalf of my people, we thank you for coming. We think you are a saint.'"
"And I thought to myself, isn't this strange, these two extreme reactions at the same moment."
"And then I remembered that we had come down an entrance of yellow the and fluorescent lights. And the limo had pulled up at the back of the red velvet curtain stage, which is very unusual. And it was a French audience."
"The dream seemed to be forewarning me to notice this moment, the culmination of being damned and sainted at the same time. You would think that this would be enough of a life lesson that every complainer and every insult would rise of your back from that day on."
"Was it?"
"No," Mitchell says, breaking into a laugh. "The whole thing was entirely unrelated to me."
"My karma," as Mitchell puts it, "is to really experience something to the fullest. Everything comes to me in a rush."
Between 1968 and 1974, Mitchell experienced her rash of success. With acclaimed albums like "Blue," and her big seller, "Court and Spark," she triumphed as queen of the folk divas and confessional singer-songwriters.
"At that time I noticed people worshipping me. And I thought, 'Whoops, what's happening here?'"



The queen of the folk divas is back with another album.

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'Bottled poetry'

The beauty of a Napa Valley spring

By Evelyn Kieran
Most people think of Northern California's wine country as a fine place to visit in the fall when the vines are bare beneath their sweet burden of fat grapes and the fields are filled with workers laughing and chatting as they race to harvest Napa Valley's bounty.
The air then is rich with the heavy, sensual fragrance of the grapes, and a light blue haze hangs over the whole area. There's lots of music and laughter and the roar of trucks hurrying their precious burdens to the wineries before the midday sun can affect their perfect flavor.
Visitors in that season enjoy the feeling of being a part of the ancient rites and rhythms. It makes them feel in touch with nature at its best.
Few realize that the Napa Valley is almost more beautiful in the spring. And far less crowded.
In springtime, the valley floor is paved with gold—wild mustard, to be sure, but seen

from the shadowed arroyos of the rolling Sterling Vineyards, it looks as though someone has scattered gold coins with a lavish hand the length of the valley.
Here and there, great clouds of blossoms mark the edges of the fields—after all, fruit trees were the main support of the valley during those dark days when wine-making was forbidden, and though most of them gave way to winerydays when Prohibition ended, a few remain to add their glory to the beauty of spring.
The vineyards themselves are a veritable sculpture garden—the vines pruned to their simplest forms, barely beginning to soften at the hardest edges as the life within prepares to renew itself.
Perhaps that is one of the great magnets of Napa—it is a constant reminder of the rich cycles of life itself—budding, blooming, bearing fruit of such richness it becomes, in the skilled hands of the winemakers, what Robert Louis

Stevenson called "bottled poetry."
To contemplate such beauty on a sunny day in spring is poetry, too. There's a magic combination of peace and natural energy in the very air that lifts the spirits and finds one groping for words to express such feelings. It's music.
We had come to enjoy Napa for a few days—to renew both with the rich, natural order and just incidentally, to visit some of the wineries and sample the "bottled poetry."
We had wandered north from San Francisco to Napa, then turned to the Silverado Trail along the eastern edge of the valley. The road was not much more than a home trail in 1880 when Stevenson first named it. Today it's a fairly traffic-free 30 miles that pass some of the best wineries in Napa—Chappellet, Joseph Phelps, Heitz Cellars, Stag's Leap and Clos du Val, to name a few.
It also passes the Silverado County Club, with great green



stretches lining local and visitors for rounds of golf. A little farther north, the pink-and-pretty Auberge du Soleil beckons others for tennis, swimming and riding in the nearby wooded hills.
We had stayed at both places on other visits and roomed them nightly, but this time we were heading for Meadowood, on a wooded hillside just outside St. Helena at the north end of the valley.

Eventually some small rustic cottages were built to house visitors. The place was a success from the start.
Meadowood, today, still a country club with limited membership, is also a very special resort, open to the public and setting a standard for service, elegance and just plain fun that is unmatched.
The new Meadowood, built in the rustic wooden style of a generation ago, features 10 guest rooms in the Croquet Lodge and a series of cottages in which four tubs are clustered around a studio.
Some are in the woods overlooking the pool, others by the tennis courts and the tennis. 43 have wood-burning fireplaces (with fires all set for a match each evening and a big stack of well-seasoned wood at the ready) and all have big old-fashioned porches where you can just sit and listen to the outdoors.
Since the property sprawls over 250 wooded acres (live oak, macchia and great pines dominate) there is a great feeling of privacy. You can enjoy any and all of the facilities, and services. (I never had a better massage!) or you can just sit and enjoy the wonderful fresh air.

ADVERTISING SPECIAL SECTION

G-2 Wednesday, May 4, 1988 • The Modesto Bee • SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION •

Joni: Her new album is a sign her "karma may be changing again"

Continued from page 1
As she talks for nearly two hours, her black outfit melts into the darkened office, leaving only her face, pale like a moon. Photos emphasize her wide, arched mouth and scaring cheekbones. But in person, with the flame of her cigarette lighter regularly illuminating her face, her large, cool blue eyes dominate. Lives appear on her 40-year-old face only when she

laughs — which is often. Mitchell is relaxed partly because "Onion Milk" is her most accessible album in years. Those who haven't heard Mitchell since her folk or jazz days will be surprised at the absence of acoustic guitars or searing sax solos. Instead, she uses synthesizers, loads of them, layered into odd but pleasing harmonic structures and a doornie dance beat.

Many of the rhythm sections were recorded live, finding some solo, such as "Number One," a spontaneous, experimental quality. Thematically, the topics jump from personal relationships to social issues, although sometimes her lyrics and thoughts are ironic, even title "Snakes and Ladders," a song about the demise of the perfect American young couple,

refers to the girl as "a Barbie doll" and puts the guy "in a corporate clinic." While "Number One" is innovative musically, lyrically it simply reworks the standard looking-out-for-No. 1 theme. The album also contains oddball covers of classics, "Cool Water" and a sparse, modern reworking of "Corrina Corrina."

The LP's biggest surprise is the rocky story song "Dancin' Ones," with character parts sung by Billy Idol and Tom Petty, and country guitar parts provided by Idol's guitarist, Steve Stevens. Given the LP's extended list of guest stars, including Don Henley, Peter Gabriel, Willie Nelson, Wendy and Lisa, and Benjamin Orr from The Cars, "Chalk Mark" seems at least conscious of the marketplace.

"I'm not so much concerned about being a mass artist, but I do want to recoup my costs," says Mitchell, who co-produced the album with her husband and bass player Larry Klein. "I've cast characters before on my records. I've used Henley before. I asked Billy to be on the album because we saw him on the Grammy's and thought he would be perfect for the part of Rowdy Yates. Billy plays the best boy with a sense of humor, like Elvis did."

"I know Peter because we have the same manager. My husband produced an album for Ben Orr at Peter Gabriel's studio in England. So that's how they ended up on the record. Willie happened to play in town one night, so he came over in his bus and laid down a few tracks. Wendy and Lisa met through Prince."

Prince, as Mitchell describes him, "has been my biggest PR rep." Prince has publicly praised Mitchell and used her recordings as the pre-concert music on his tours. Why didn't Prince participate on her album?

"We've been talking about it for some time. He wrote a song for me. One of these days I'll do it. We'll work together. It's got to be the right project," she says. Joni lurches with Ben Orr, singing with Billy Idol, hanging out with Prince. Such scenes are hard to imagine.

"Why? Who do you think I should be hanging out with?" she asks only half-jokingly. "If Prince and I lived in the same small town in Canada, we'd know each other. I like to dance. And he's creative, sensitive, dedicated to his work. And he's an odd duck."

Senior Connection

May events you won't want to miss

There are several events coming up within the next few weeks. Below is a description of each:

15th Annual Senior Awareness Day
May 7, 1988
County Fairgrounds, Turlock

The event begins at 9:30 a.m. and lasts until 4:00 p.m.

9:30-10:30 — Registration, coffee and donuts

10:00-1:00 — Displays, Information, Arts & Crafts

10:30-11:30 — Cruise Wear Fashion Show

11:30-1:00 — Chicken Barbecue sponsored by Senator Dan McCorquodale

1:00-2:00 — Senior Awards, prize drawings

2:00-4:00 — Bingo, sponsored by Assemblyman Gary Condit

Lunch tickets must be purchased in advance at any nutrition site or you can call The Area Agency on Aging, 525 7825. Free transportation is also available but you must sign up at an SOSF nutrition site, or call SOSF at 527-8335, Dial-A-Ride

Weekly articles will highlight areas of concern to seniors. If you would like to read more about a specific subject, please phone the Stanislaus County Area Agency on Aging at 571-4700, or The Salvation Army Information Service at 577-4068.

will also have extended hours on this day.

The event is co-sponsored by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, The Area Agency on Aging, Stanislaus County Commission on Aging, Senator Dan McCorquodale, Assemblyman Gary Condit, and The Modesto Bee.

The Human Race
Sponsored by The Volunteer Center
May 7, 1988
12 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Human Race is a county-wide fundraising event for non-profit agencies and community groups. The event is a walkathon and also includes a 5K and 10K run. Participants may choose to walk or run for their agency.

The event begins and ends at the M.C. West Campus, Student Center/Cabinet West. The run course is on country roads and the walk course is through the West Campus.

The run registration is at 7:00 a.m. and turning starts at 8:00 a.m. The walk registration is from 8:30-9:30 a.m.

The event is open to all, including non-profit agencies and organizations, schools and churches. Age, sex or physical condition is not a deterrent.

If this sounds like an event that you would like to participate in, call The Volunteer Center. The number is 526-1307.

Fifth Annual Senior Conference
Saturday, May 14, 1988
8 a.m. to 12 noon
Ceres High School Multi-purpose Room
2320 Central Ave., Ceres

Sponsored by Assemblyman Gary A. Condit, this conference will include the following:

8:00-9:00 — Registration, continental breakfast and entertainment by the Spike Machado Band

9:00-9:45 — Panel discussion, "Protecting Your Interests" (wills, conservatorship, Social Security/SSI, community resources)

10:45-11:00 — Exercises for Fun and Health with Irene Giddens

11:00-12 Noon — Panel discussion "Insuring Your Tomorrow" (Supplemental Medical Insurance, Medi-Cal, Medi-Care, Senior Insurance Legislation)

12 Noon — Adjourn

There is a \$2 registration fee. A continental breakfast and conference materials will be provided. Call 576-6211 for more information.

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California Tradition Continues

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Joni: Her "karma may be changing again"

Continued from page 2

Michelle's style of intuitive songwriting and arranging is one reason her work is often overlooked in the pop marketplace. She says, "I'm not a pop star. The role of pop stars is to present themselves as larger than life, more desirable than anyone. Pop is an illusionary world. They don't present their human bodies. That's the realm of art and theatre. I'm an artist working in a pop arena."

Michelle's pop has its limits. Michelle is looking to additional means of expression, short stories and possibly a symphony. She also continues to paint. Michelle will have a major one-woman show of 15 paintings in Japan this spring. She is an abstract artist, layering paint thickly with a roller. To some degree her art parallels her music.

"The funnier I got into jazz, the more abstract and spontaneous my paintings became. Now I'm beginning to go back to more structure," she says.

"Painting is important to me. I know how much of myself has gone into them, and how much meditation. It's not junk. But I don't know if it communicates."

What about music? Is it, as her album title suggests, just chalk marks in a rainstorm, washed away by forces beyond her control?

Michelle recognizes that the cultural environment in which an album is released is very important. "I know that," she says. "But I think I have a unique musical gift that I've stumbled onto things that were overlooked by accident. In music, I am truly an original."

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