

New LP's Make Fine Listening Part II

Jackson Browne finally released his fourth album in late '76, his first since 1974's "Late for the Sky." Those familiar with Browne will find "The Pretender" (Asylum 7E-1079) to be a very introspective portrait of a sensitive personality. Many of the tunes on this album are written for Browne's young son Ethan ("Your Bright Baby Blues," "The Only Child," "Daddy's Tune.") Others, like "Sleep's Dark and Silent Gate" and "Here Come Those Tears Again" seem to be dirges written for his late wife Phyllis, who committed suicide in March, 1975, with an overdose of sleeping pills. Since I don't like depressing songs, my favorites from this LP are the title cut, "The Fuse," and "Linda Paloma". Sidemen for this LP are old friends The Eagles, John David Souther, David Crosby and Graham Nash, Bonnie Raitt, Lowell George, and prominent session men. Browne's message seems to be that life is tough, but somehow one must hang in there. "Take it easy, take it easy..."

Something would be sadly amiss from the pop music scene without an album from Canada's best female songwriter-performer Joni Mitchell. Therefore, I was happy when her excellent follow-up to last year's "Hissing of Summer Lawns" was released. "Hejira" (Asylum 7E-1087) is another masterpiece from Joni, whom I almost consider Dylan's female counterpart. I find many of her songs disturbing since some of them almost seem like they were written for me. Tunes like "Coyote," about an overly aggressive male, "A Strange Boy," a song about immaturity, and "Song for Sharon," about a childhood friend, certainly hit home. There is even some auto-biographical material in Miss Mitchell's ambiguous lyrics this time, and a song written for Amelia Earhart. Joni seems to be

living out some fantasies this time, as the album cover seems to allude to the song "Black Crow." If you like long songs, you should enjoy "Hejira" - the shortest song runs over four minutes; the longest 8½ minutes. This one grows on you as does every Joni Mitchell album.

One interesting thing I've noticed about Tom Waits is that there are similarities between himself and the aforementioned Miss Mitchell. More inebriated insanity and seriousness may be found on "Small Change" (Asylum 7E-1078) in the eleven numbers included here. Side One of this LP consists of the suicidal "Tom Traubert's Blues," "Step Right Up," a parody on commercials, and "Jitterbug Boy," about Waits' childhood. (He was born in the back seat of a taxi cab in L.A.) Two other songs sound nostalgic, "I Wish I Was in New Orleans" and "The Piano Has Been Drinking (Not Me)." The material on Side Two is the best on the album, however. "Pasties and a G-String," an ode to burlesque and striptease queens, and "The One That Got Away" are brilliantly poetic, and "Invitation to the Blues" and "Bad Liver and a Broken Heart" are heart-broken sad songs. Perhaps the best numbers on the album is the title song, a spine-tingling, chilling account of a small-time hood who is "...rained on with his own .38...". This is sort of an ode to the grim reaper; it's message is that death proves nothing. The album ends with a love song "I Can't Wait to Get Off Work," proving that Waits likes to wrap up his albums on a happy note.

Ry Cooder, whose career seems to be picking up a lot these days, released a very listenable album in '76, "Chicken Skin Music" (Reprise MS 2254) with the help of Mexican accordion legend Flaco Jimenez and two Hawaiian

musicians. The album begins and ends with tunes by Huddie Ledbetter, "The Bourgeois Blues" and "Goodnight Irene." Cooder, who does not really write songs but reworks old ones, comes across with a very unique style on this LP. His versions of "He'll Have to Go" and "Stand By Me" are better than any others I've ever heard. There is one instrumental cut in this set "Chloe" and a type of gospel tune "Always Lift Him Up." Also, "Smack Dab in the Middle" and "I Got Mine" are humorous ditties, and one long but engaging track, "Yellow Roses" help round out one of this year's best albums.

Finally, if you are a fan of gospel and sacred music, then Willie Nelson's new album, "The Troublemaker" (Columbia KC 34112) is definitely for you. But if you hated being made to sing "When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder" or "Sweet By and By" when you were a child in church, then you're better off without it. This album is a collection of eleven hymns which would delight fans of The Harvesters. Nevertheless, Willie is just as entertaining on gospel tunes as on progressive country tunes. He likes to vary his style in that his last album "The Sound In Your Mind" differed from his previous one, "Red-Headed Stranger." This one is vastly different from either of those. If this album is any indication, then you're bound to find Willie in the garden on an uncloudy day when the roll is called up yonder in the sweet by and by. For the record, other numbers here include "Whispering Hope," "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," the title cut, "Where the Soul Never Dies," "Shall We Gather," and "Precious Memories." You've got to admit that's a pretty hard combination to beat...

SPORTS

On February 2 the Wilkes YMCA was host to Wilkes Community College's homecoming game as the Cougars met the Mitchell Mavericks. Mitchell proved victorious as Coach Bob Blalock's Mavericks defeated WCC 66-64 in an exciting fast paced game.

WCC's Cougars jumped out to a quick 8-2 lead, with a quick shuttle offense as Mitchell's man-to-man defense failed to handle the fast movement of the Wilkes players. A defensive change by Mitchell to a zone defense slowed down WCC's speedy offense somewhat allowing Mitchell to keep with their steady, deliberate offense as they whittled away at the Cougar's lead. At the end of the first half, with 48 seconds left, Mitchell went into the lead for the first time, 34-32. Mitchell went into the locker room leading 36-33.

The second half, showed some changes as Coach Joe Linney of WCC tried to alter the defense by going to 1-2-2 zone. This zone appeared to hold Mitchell some, but Mitchell's zone also continued to hold WCC as the Cougars stuck with their offense throughout the contest. The zone's climax

scored in the final minutes as Mitchell, in possession of the ball, began a spread offense, waiting for a last shot by their players, to break the tie. Mitchell held the ball for almost three minutes as Wilkes was attempting to put pressure on their guards in an attempt to force Mitchell to turn the ball over. A foul with but seconds left put the game away for Mitchell as two shots found the goal with six seconds left. Possession with six seconds left, WCC attempted the last shot in an attempt to tie the score, but the attempt failed.

Mitchell's top scorers were McKinley with 20, and Huffman with 12. Mitchell was able to hit four out of four from the free-throw line for 100%.

WCC's leaders on scoring were Bauguess with 18, and top scorer Harris with 20. The Cougars shot 75% for their free-throws.

Mitchell	36	30	66
WCC	33	31	64

Mitchell — McKinley 20, Moore 12, Samuels 14, Huffman 6, Hawkins 12, Gilliland 2.

WCC — McConn, Wilcox 8, Bauguess 18, Harris 20, Weston 2, Sneed 2, Thorpe, Sheets 14.



PEGGY WORKS HARD TO MEET THE DEADLINE.
(Photo by David Swaringen)

The Land

The land
Of the red-neck and
The politician;
The nosy and opinionated-
The religious and proud;
Where fire stations
Have replaced the church
As community centers.
The home of the aristocrat
And the dirt farmer;
A place of pickup trucks
And Continental and Cadillac;
Longevity
And close-knit families;
A place of culture
And down-to-earth philosophy-
Millionaires and paupers;
Richer lands
Replaced by richer retailers;
An old town and a new
Divided by ideology
And a river.

A chicken land
And well-dammed, too;
Race drivers
On the track and highways--
And quiet compassion
In close-mouthed shyness.
Hot-blooded and calculating;
Friendly to newcomers
But slow to companionship--

A land of beauty
Marred by careless
Litter.

The hill-rimmed
Land where the visitor
Is loathe to leave
And oft-times stays
To become a part
Of the

"Great State of Wilkes."
-J. Jay Anderson

Smile,
Love,
Help,
Care,
&
Remember.
These Are
Our
Best Years.



The editor is caught at work and Rosemarie Jarvis solicits donations for the Heart Fund.
(Photo by April Anthony)



Dave Plyler Gets Ready To Interview Cathy Greene.



Barbara Bumgarner presents Mr. Plyler with a WCC Circle K Jersey.

Photos By David Swaringen

THE YADKIN

Jay Anderson, composer of the lines that follow, reports that the unrhymed poem was penned in an effort to jolt poet laureate, James Larkin Pearson, into writing one of his own on the subject. To Mr. Anderson's surprise, Pearson, who purports to deplore unrhymed poetry, extended his compliments and offered no competing rhyme of the Yadkin. Backward stretching
To timeless days and years;
Unhurried centuries beyond number--
Bothered not by rebel yell
Nor Patriot call to stand;
Indian war chants but a murmur--
And from the side of a mountain
Down into a Happy Valley

Playfully dashing and gurgling
And lazily moving;
Hardly seeming to move;
Yet strong and sometimes raging;
Growing always and adding
To its might smaller streams

Becoming larger streams as
From Blowing Rock downward,
Passing by Yellow Hill and
Later Wilkesboros
And Elkin and East Bend, and
onward--

Ever toward the distant sea--
A happy, joyful, bounding river
Until civilization polluted and
Dammed and choked it with filth.

--J. Jay Anderson