
**'Don Juan's Reckless
Daughter'
Joni Mitchell
Asylum**

Joni Mitchell's attempt at blending Jazz with folk-rock on her new double album is static and uneven. A new and welcome step in her career is taken here with the improvement of the artistic quality of her background music. The result is richer sound, with more depth and orchestration.

Although Mitchell's new album lacks the obvious commercial accessibility of last year's platinum *Hejira*, several songs are short and sweet. "Off Night Backstreet," a potential single, features background harmony by J.D. Souther and Glenn Frey. The title cut is another cerebral ballad with thought provoking lyrics.

Mitchell economizes on the needless filler songs which blemish many double lp's. The quality of the arrangements



Joni Mitchell

vary with each song, giving the listener a diverse selection of style to choose from among the four album sides. Though two sides are similar to other albums she has done, one side offers a well conceived sixteen minute jazz-rock song, and another side blends a topical love ballad with a latin instrumental.

Joni Mitchell seems to be growing as an artist, and if she hasn't found her exact musical

formula yet, she has added a richer sound to an already proven product.

—Joel Weston

**'Running On Empty'
Jackson Browne
Asylum**

Jackson Browne has been going through some changes. His latest lp, *Running On Empty* is proof.

First off, this is actually a concept album. The road has always been one of Browne's favorite topics, but here he's developed it into a different aspect: concert touring on the road.

All but two of the album's songs rock are about rock and roll touring. "The Road," "Shaky Town" and "Nothing But Time" are about the actual time on the road, "The Load-Out" and "Stay" about the roadies and audiences, and "Rosie" about a groupie. The angel-faced Browne mentions

groupies and drugs more than once. He even revises "Cocaine," an old song with added lyrics by Browne and Glenn Frey of the Eagles.

Browne also uses more outside material and shares the writing more here than on previous lps, and in some unusual ways. "Rosie" was co-written by Browne's production manager, and "Nothing But Time" was written along with his tour manager.

It's not just the subjects or authors of the songs that relate the album to the touring concept, but how and where they were recorded as well. Half were recorded live in concert, the others in a hodgepodge of places: from on Browne's touring bus to a Holiday Inn motel room, all while on his American tour last summer.

A recording of the first live performance of "The Load-Out" is the most interesting and audience-involving song Browne's penned in a long

while. Basically a tribute to roadies, it also reflects the reason behind touring, amidst the craziness of it all. It smoothly dead-segues into "Stay." With lyrics begging the crowd to stay for one more song, it is ironically the album's final track.

"Running On Empty" and "You Love the Thunder" offer us the more familiar side of Browne. Most everything is up to par with past efforts, and there are some interesting surprises here.

—Vicki Arkoff



Jackson Browne