

Joni's Change for Better

By JANIS KINZIE
Duke Features Editor

In her first concert tour in over two years, Joni Mitchell has added quite a few changes to her once solemn, casual type of performances.

Now, quality back-up band, high-heeled shoes and sequined dress, she is a polished but not slick Joni Mitchell. Gone with the blue jeans is the tension and stage fright that plagued some of her performances.

Her style has reached a higher plateau, enhancing her singing and writing capabilities.

This new direction at first stunned a college-age and older Syria Mosque crowd, but her concert proved to be outstanding and memorable.

The piano and guitar still remain a very integral part of her performance, but now the accompaniments of Tom Scott's L.A. Express compliment her singing.

Tom Scott and the L.A. Express, which include John Geurin, bass (ex-Mother of Invention); Max Bennett, drums (ex-Byrd); Robin Ford, guitar; and Roger Kelloway, electric piano began the concert with very unique instrumentals, Scott accompanied Mitchell later in the evening with harmonies, recorder, mouth organ and flute.

Mitchell, dressed in a pale pink backless gown, opened up with "This Flight Tonight," followed by "You Turn Me on I'm a Radio." Cuts from her latest album, *Court and Spark* were predominant in the first half of the show.

With Tom Scott on sax and a few sharp riffs of Robin Moore's guitar, Mitchell closed the first segment with "Woodstock" which symbolically reflected her own change.

After intermission, Mitchell, in a smoky blue-violet long dress) opened up the second half alone with an audience favorite, "Big Yellow Taxi."

After several other songs, she told stories and built up quite a rapport with the audience, something she had never really done before. Speaking of a party she had been to that had taken on a bad atmosphere, she pondered out loud, was it Watergate that had caused this feeling?...When someone from the audience yelled, "Nixon," Mitchell commented, "I like the way he sits."

She never really sat playing the guitar or piano for a long period of time, it was basically a change of style from up to somber that gave balance to the show.

With the assistance of two of the roadies, Mitchell played the zither and sang two cuts from her *Blue* album. She described "A Case of You" as "part a love song and part a drinking challenge."

But the outstanding aspect of the concert was the title cut from the *Blue* album, with an extraordinary exhibition of her voice range, she expressed her dismay about a lover and the attitudes and habits that friends have taken on:

"Everybody's saying that hell's the quickest way of going/I don't think so but I'm gonna take a look around it though/Blue, I love you."

The band returned with a Scott accompaniment on flute, "For Free."

After a few more numbers, Mitchell said, "Well folks, it's boogie time," and with the band did a really "knock-em-out number" which is unheard of in her albums. She came back with an encore, attempting "Blonde In the Bleachers," but didn't complete it since she laughingly claimed the "roadies had put a jinx on it" and proceeded into Annie Ross', "Twisted." This caused the audience to sit up and listen even more closely with a startled delight.

The music was performed with taste and the distinctive style remains. It was a concert that pleased every Joni Mitchell follower.

Brooks Saves L.A.W.—Less Night

By ROBERT F. KARLOVITS
Duke Executive Editor

Since comedy's inception, comedians have relied on exaggeration and the absurdly farcical to ply their trade. The only thing that makes Albert Brooks different from any other comedian is that he does this better and more originally than most.

Stand-up comics from Henny Youngman to Phyllis Diller have exaggerated their situation to get laughs. Everyone knows Phyllis Diller's ex-husband Fang couldn't be as bad as she made him out to be. But it got laughs. Just how many "Mother-In-Law Jokes" have we heard?

Where Albert Brooks breaks from traditional comedy is in his finely tuned sense of the ridiculous premise. He starts with a rather

mundane idea and then stretches it to its comedic limit.

At his concert last Wednesday in the Union Ballroom before about 950 impatient people, Brooks displayed this sense of premise and rescued an evening that was close to total disaster.

He actually started in the debit side. The warm-up rock group L.A.W. was delayed in getting to Duquesne. By 8 p.m., when they were slated to go on, they were somewhere between Columbus, Ohio and the Bluff. Ticket-holders had been kept standing outside the Union for nearly forty minutes while sound equipment was set up. Once inside, there was another wait of nearly an hour. Not exactly the best atmosphere for a comedian, huh?

So Brooks played for the audience's support by telling a long story about the time he played in Tacoma, Washington as Sly and the Family Stone's warm-up—and Sly didn't show.

"The audience was booing," he said. "Now in Pittsburgh that isn't bad. People boo—that's okay. But in the West, people get up, eat, boo and kill."

That was enough to loosen the audience and from there Albert was able to do his stuff.

One of his big routines concern auditions for the new national anthem. Here, Brooks's sense of premise pays off. By beginning with the idea that the national anthem needs changing, Brooks did a bit at the piano where various people came in and sang their new

anthems. One contestant, Leroy Williams "from any ghetto you choose," sang a song that began with bitter piano chords and the lyrics "You jail all your blacks." Then, Brooks, switching roles to the supervisor of the contestants shouted, "That's enough, That's enough."

Again in a strange premise Brooks imitated Walter Cronkite reading a report about one of the Republic of China's pandas exploding and destroying half of Washington. Brooks said he "didn't know Sony made a panda."

But the cleverest thing Brooks did was a satire on the Chuck Braverman films. Braverman did several films composed of thousands of still pictures depicting the history of art or United States history. Brooks said he had made a film depicting the history of the animal kingdom but that it hadn't showed up. So, he played a tape of Mason William's "Classical Gas" and flashed still pictures of animals—along with a stuffed rabbit and a canned sardine.

Brooks seems a little insane. But it just might be that the originality of his ideas and absurdity of his premises make him appear that way. For over an hour, he was able to sustain a steady flow of humor without once resorting to the cliché or the overused.

Despite the long wait and the hassle of standing outside, it's just as well that L.A.W. didn't come. (Actually they did—at 10:50 p.m.) They would have only kept Brooks from performing sooner.

UFW Story

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struggle. It is a fact of everyday life.

"I remember being in a crowd of demonstrators when the police attacked with billy clubs," Ortiz says. Everybody ran and many were struck down from behind.

"I never thought it was a good idea to run."

And so the conflict continues. Chavez has assured the UFW members that they will ultimately win; until then, they continue to work in a union which barely approaches the 1930s US labor standards.

"The biggest thing is to let people know about the problem," Macri says. "Pittsburgh has good people in it. We need their support. And we will carry on."

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Roaring 20's Exhibit Planned

The English Club is planning an exhibit of the Roaring 20's on March 20 in the Duquesne Room, third floor union. Memorabilia such as home furnishings, clothing, radios, newspapers, magazines, works of art, etc., are still needed for the display.

The exhibit has been scheduled to

coincide with the showing of the film, "The Great Gatsby," starring Robert Redford.

Anyone having items from the period can contact Constance Ramirez in the English Department (434-6435) or the department secretary, Susan Corliss (434-6420).

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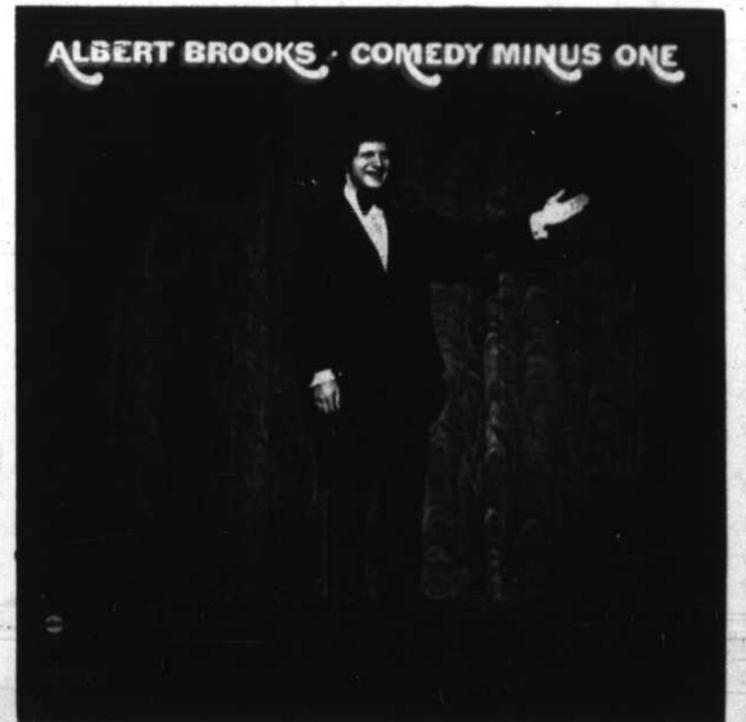
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