



Joni Mitchell in concert

Joni Mitchell gives memorable concert

By DAVID FORL
Advocate arts critic

A connoisseur's evening?

Perhaps that is the most telling way of describing Joni Mitchell's concert Wednesday in the LSU Assembly Center. It was a sublime performance, but the level of sophistication was significantly higher than the norm. There was very little overlap between Wednesday's audience and the crowd for, say, the last Molly Hatchet concert.

Ms. Mitchell is a phenomenon of popular music, and one of its finest and most consistently inspired artists. She is surely one of the few really great songwriters of her own time. Even at those moments in her rich career that have tried one's patience — the Charlie Mingus phase, for instance — there has been a sense of adventure, craft and style in her writing and performing. Oh, yes, and mystique, too.

Standing on the Assembly Center stage Wednesday, beneath a triangular arrangement of artfully colored banners, she was undisputedly and disarmingly a star. Hers is an audience that, in a world that caters to the obedient lambs who

follow Van Halen, doesn't have the opportunity to get excited much these days. And Wednesday's crowd was accordingly affectionate.

"We love you, Joni!" one fan yelled during the first half of the concert, to which she replied with a cool, open-armed, "What can I say?" gesture of thanks.

Ms. Mitchell's performance Wednesday was never less than immaculate, except for the rather hilarious moment in the concert's second half when she went blank on a verse of "Help Me," one of her most popular songs. Both halves of the concert mixed her provocative, introspective ballads — rich in images, freewheeling in structure and melody — with more conventional, but stylish and expertly crafted rock songs. She moved from guitar to piano to dulcimer, and back to guitar again, in a tireless and generous performance.

Wednesday's was one of the best produced rock concerts I've ever seen or, more to the point, heard. Ms. Mitchell's band is extraordinary in its ability and its smooth support for her. The sound was beautifully reproduced and, for all the right reasons, this concert lingers in the memory.



Joni Mitchell

Vance: Power is a precious commodity

By MARIAN CHRISTY
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Cyrus Vance, Jimmy Carter's secretary of state, has often been in the eye of the storm. But, he says, he has always followed his conscience and instincts and, therefore, sleeps well.

A liberal Democrat who still favors detente with the Soviet Union, Vance is a man who reportedly never loses his cool. But, in this conversation, audited by his wife, the former Grace Sloane, he lets it be known that he was "very upset" that Carter made the decision to attempt military rescue of the American hostages in Iran without consulting him. The decision caused him to resign in 1980, return to the practice of law in New York and to write a book, "Hard Choices," to be published this month.

His most formidable rival in Washington was Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's national security adviser. Vance told Carter he could not function as secretary of state with Brzezinski making public policy statements. Vance also clashed with Andrew Young, then ambassador to the United Nations, and Robert S. Strauss, Mideast negotiator.

Vance, 66, went to the Kent School in Connecticut, graduated from Yale in 1939 and Yale Law School in 1942. He was general counsel in the Pentagon in 1961 and became secretary of the army in 1962 during John F. Kennedy's administration. He was President Lyndon Johnson's deputy secretary of defense. During his climb, Vance was always referred to as "Spider" because he is tall and gangly, seemingly all arms and legs. He is still awkward, except when he talks.

"Power is a precious commodity. It can be abused so readily. It has to be handled carefully. A lot of people don't believe I shrink from the use of power. But I know this about power: You don't stick your finger in somebody's eye just to prove you're powerful. You don't go around picking fights.

"You use power well when you understand your vital interests. Power is knowing how to strike a fair bargain. You never achieve everything you set out to achieve. You only get a fair amount. Knowing that, compromise becomes acceptable. That's what gives you peace of mind.

"The root of my influence was my mother. She was strong, a woman with a great sense of values. My father died when I was small. In bringing me up, she made it clear it was incumbent for me to understand honesty and an obligation to hard work.

"When I was 6, maybe 7, she told me not to do something. I edged across the line of demarcation. When she asked me about this, I gave her an unequivocal answer. She said she understood I had not lied, exactly, but she made it clear that being an equivocator was not tolerable.

"In negotiating you go to the maximum extent in terms of straightforwardness. There are some things you can't tell, some positions you can't reveal. But if the other parties know you're not out to entrap them, you end up with better negotiations. That's how a feeling of trust is built. All negotiating is built on trust.

"I like a decent night's sleep. Everyday when I get up, I like to think what lies ahead. At night, before I go to bed, I evaluate the day. I like to think I did the best I can. But if I've made a mistake, I learn from it. Actually, I've made many, many mistakes. I've cut corners. Or I haven't been adequately prepared. These things make me unhappy. I've learned always to do my homework. And I don't make the same mistake twice.

"I was very troubled that the decision (to attempt a rescue mission for the American hostages in Iran) was made when I was not in Washington. I had taken a much-needed weekend's rest. I was told the meeting had been called hurriedly. That hurt me. I telephoned the president immediately and went to the White House the next morning, before 7. I was deeply upset. I explained to the president exactly why I thought his decision was wrong. I told him I thought it should be reversed.

"He listened to me very carefully, for 45 minutes. Then he said: 'You make a



Cyrus Vance

I could criticize him publicly. I told him that that would be wrong if I was working for him. And I left.

"Sometimes you have to take a hard, lonely position. You'll be criticized. Sometimes you will be vilified. But if you think you're right, you just go ahead and do it.

"If the criticism is nasty, you get angry. I blow up for a while. Then I go on to something else. People who dwell on their anger find that anger clouds their thinking. Anger saps your energy. Anger keeps you awake.

"It's very important for me to stand on principle. It was the only way I could live with myself. I thought we'd gotten off the tracks.

"I'm still friends with President Carter. He asked me to come to Washington; I would not have been his secretary of state if he didn't ask me. I was hurt by the things he said when he left office. He was critical of me. He said he thought Edmund Muskie (who followed Vance) was more 'evocative' as secretary of state. That hurt. But even those feelings have faded. It was the reaction of an individual who was mad I had left him. So I forgave him.

"As for Brzezinski, I have differing views on handling foreign policy. I do not think the differences should be personalized. Personalized differences get you nowhere. I do not intend to get into a personal mud-slinging contest with Brzezinski.

"The position itself, secretary of state, never meant much to me. What had interested me was the possibility of making sound policies. I had been chauffeured, always surrounded by security guards. But the trappings were not the lure. It was the chance to turn failures into successes, to turn things around.

"People tend to give up too early. In Moscow, during the initial negotiations on SALT, we were turned down flatly. That looked like a failure. But we went back and

restructured our policy. At the next meeting, in Geneva, we came up with what was the basis of the SALT agreement. When you want to achieve something, you build on what you think is possible.

"Moshe Dayan was often turned down flatly, harshly, by Begin. I was there. I watched him lick his wounds. And then he'd start figuring ways to get around the problem. I missed him when he resigned from the government. He was an imaginative man.

"There are always ways to get things turned around. One process negotiators use is called constructive ambiguity. You use a phrase, or word, that means different things to different people.

"Once we were negotiating with Turkey and Greece. We got hung up on one word. We could not find the proper word in English, Greek or Turkish. Someone said there is one Persian word that conveys what each country wants to say. So we used the Persian word. That bridged the gap."

compelling case. This was a hard decision. But I've made it. He told me if I wished to state my case before the National Security Council, I was free to do so. I said: 'Yes.'

"At that meeting, I repeated my case. I said it was a grave mistake. Then the president came in and said it appeared no one wished to change their minds and the decision would stand.

"I was upset. I pondered my circumstance. I knew I had to resign, to leave. I saw no alternative. I was very opposed to this action. I sat down and wrote my resignation by hand and I gave it to the president myself, in the Map Room. I told him that I would have to publicly criticize him, the president of the United States, on a major decision. He did not understand why I felt the way I did. He said

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