



Friday, Feb. 11, "The Great Dictator" starring Charlie Chaplain will be at Gamble, 7:30.



photo by Betsy Garcelon

The Amherst-Mount Holyoke Chamber Orchestra directed by Louis Spratlan performed a Concerto Program at 8:30 p.m. last Wednesday in Buckley Recital Hall at Amherst. Solo performances included oboist David Cantieni in Alessandro Marcello's "Concerto in d minor;" guitarist Duncan Anderson in Joaquin Rodrigo's "Fantasia para un Gentilhombre," and bassoonist Christopher Keevil in Mozart's "Concerto in B flat."

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## Film committee introduces series

The Film Committee introduces a new idea with the classic and Movie Great Series ticket for Spring '77. They are on sale in the P.O. and at the door of any movie. Movies on the weekends will still be free with activity stickers. These series tickets were proposed as a convenience and money-saver.

The *Great Dictator*, written, directed and scored by Charles Chaplain will be at Gamble this Friday. Charlie Chaplain stars with Jack Oakie and Paul-ette Goddard.

For *The Great Dictator*, his first dialogue film, Chaplain created two new characters, a meek Jewish barber, who is something of an extension of the tramp, and Adenoid Hynkel, a lampoon of Adolph Hitler. The whole project was considered a daring risk at the time, but audiences loved it and, al-

though banned in several countries (and not just the obvious ones), it quickly became the most popular success Chaplain had yet experienced.

In subsequent years *The Great Dictator* has come in for some criticism from those who feel that the horrors of Nazi Germany were beyond the realm of comedy. At the time it was Chaplain's conviction that Hitler and his regime must be made to look ridiculous; that laughter could be used as a potent weapon. It is doubtful that anyone once having seen it could subsequently view newsreel footage of Der Fuhrer and his goose-stepping minions in any but a much altered context. However, in his autobiography, published in 1964, Chaplain admits that, had he known the true nightmares of the Nazi concentration camps, he could not have brought himself to make *The Great Dictator*.



photo by Mike Feinstein

"Patience" or "Bunthorne's Bride" by Gilbert and Sullivan played to crowded audiences Feb. 4, 5, 6 in Chapin. Archibald Grosvenor (Daniel S. Ojserkis) reads his idyllic poetry to the rapturous maidens.

## Hejira

# Mitchell masters styles

by Betsy Garcelon

Joni Mitchell has once again produced an album of top musical quality. Called "Hejira," her latest album is distinctly different from her previous eight.

The term "hejira" or "hegira" refers specifically to Mohammed's 622 A.D. exodus from Mecca to Medina and more generally to any purposeful journey or flight. The album is a collection of songs pertaining to the emotional and physical experiences of Mitchell's travels.

Mitchell designed the album cover depicting several scenes in which she is in flight. She is photographed against a bleak wintry background with a highway tapering off into herself. Indeed, the highway is apparently a part of herself which she evinces in her frequent personal references to streets, highways and travel.

Mitchell seems to have master-

ed the haphazard rock and jazz styles she was experimenting with on her last album, "The Hissing of Summer Lawns." Without using more than four different instruments on any piece, Mitchell has expertly synthesized plucky bass and rhythm guitars while relying heavily on the deep, rich musical emphasis of her voice. The result is superb.

Mitchell is no longer making full use of the back-up band, "The L. A. Express," although drummer John Guerin and bassist Max Bennett appear in several pieces.

The rich simplicity of her music and her intricate, ballad-like lyrics contribute to the overall musical quality revealing more with repeated listenings.

The song entitled "Coyote" deals with a man Mitchell meets while traveling. She knows they are too different to stay together

for long, yet she recognizes her need for companionship: "I'm up all night in the studios, and you are up early on your ranch... No regrets, Coyote, I just get off up always, you just picked up a hitcher, a prisoner of the white lines on the freeway."

In "Refuge of the Roads," Mitchell refers to the symbolic image of the road as shelter, an escape from life's pressures: "I pulled off into the forest, crickets clicking in the ferns, like a wheel of fortune, I heard my fate turn, turn, turn, and I went running down a white-sand road, I was running like a white-assed deer, running to lose the blues, to the innocence in here."

"Blue Motel Room" is markedly different from the other songs on the album because of its jazz-blues style. Mitchell sings with a slow, liquid richness. The lyrics portray an underlying humor in contrast to the more depressing themes of "Black Cow" and "Furry Sings the Blues."

Throughout her career as a songwriter and singer, Mitchell has changed her style noticeably, not so much in an effort to conform to the tastes of the time as to set trends. Anyone who has favorably followed Mitchell's progress will appreciate the fresh, intricate lyrical and fine musical quality of "Hejira."

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