



Winters in Utica can be bad, but these OT majors and their friend find the weather a bone-chilling experience. The cold north wind can literally go through a person. To think that anything can survive Utica's frigid winter bone-naked, while most of us need four or five layers of clothes to keep warm, is ludicrous! There are only 38 more days until spring, but we have it on "reasonable" authority that it may be postponed due to inclement weather. (Photo by BILL AUSTIN)

Joni Mitchell's "Hejira" - A Hypnotic Sound

By DAVID SHANTON
Copy Editor

"Hejira," by Joni Mitchell, is about the highway. It is about love lost and forgotten in the depths of time. It is about Joni Mitchell. Most of all, "Hejira" is beautiful.

Joni Mitchell's music has matured through several distinct phases. She came through the protest years with songs like "Woodstock," "Big Yellow Taxi," and "Cold Blue Steel and Sweet Fires." She then transformed her music to a quieter, more provocative and imaginative style which culminated in her best previous album, "Court and Spark."

But Mitchell was restless, and she next released a self-indulgent album, "The Hissing of Summer Lawns." It was a poetic masterpiece, but was totally devoid of melody.

Then came "Hejira." In this

album, Mitchell has reached an equilibrium point. Her poetic prowess is still at its height, but she has compromised with her music. She has abandoned the conventional tune which you can hum from memory. Instead, she has opted for rich guitar patterns while still somewhat esoteric, are a new and beautiful sound. They combine with Mitchell's superb mastery of the guitar to accentuate these new styled melodies.

The theme of this album is also stronger than any of Mitchell's previous works. While she has always had somewhat of an obsession with the theme of unsuccessful love, her theme has shifted in this album. She speaks of the woes of the road and of relationships which pass in the night. She speaks of flight (Hejira meaning the flight of Mohammed.) She weaves her theme with possibly her best lyrics yet.

There is more unconventional about "Hejira." There is a noticeable lack of refrain in both

lyric and melody. The songs go on for as long as eight minutes with little repetition at any level.

The lyrics also accentuate Mitchell's voice, at times making her sound like a siren. She is allowed to softly and breathlessly give life to her songs. Her singing style in "Hejira," has matured to a mellow sexiness. The sound is that of a woman, not a confused girl.

In "Hejira," Joni Mitchell has formulated a lovely masterpiece. "Hejira" has an alluring, seductive sound. In songs like "Coyote," "Amelia," "Hejira," and "Refuge of the Road," she combines her talents with the best results.

"Hejira" is clearly Joni Mitchell's best album to date. It substantiates her claim to being the outstanding contemporary poetess. It substantiates her claim to being the outstanding contemporary songstress. Bravo!

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THE ENTERTAINER

Is There Life After Death?

By MARY JAMES
Staff Writer

Death has become an increasingly common topic of conversation and books. Dr. Gene Stanford is offering a course on death at UC this semester. Along with this, the possibility of life after death is being written about.

In his book, "Life After Life," Dr. Raymond A. Moody, Jr., relates the experiences of over 100 persons who came very close to death or were actually declared dead.

Moody became interested in the subject as a philosophy professor, when he casually raised the issue in class. Afterwards, at least one student from each class, came to tell him of a near-death experience they had.

He also discovered that these experiences were remarkably similar. He decided to investigate further and his research is detailed in this book.

The first common thread is a feeling of floating out of the body. Some people felt as if they were on top of the ceiling and were looking down at themselves. One man, who had been severely injured in a car accident, said he felt invisible to others because he could hear and see people, but not communicate with them. Other people related with astonishing accuracy, the methods used to revive them. (It was verified by their doctors.)

Some people reported hearing initial sounds such as music or an annoying buzzing sound. They then felt as if they were going

through a passageway—described by some as a valley or tunnel.

At the end of this "tunnel," they encountered a light, which got brighter and brighter until it reached an unearthly brilliance. However, this light was not an ordinary one. It communicated with them as a transfer of thoughts. As to how people identify the light—that is a matter of religious affiliation. Christians invariably identified the light as Christ, a Jewish couple said it was an angel, and a man with no religious affiliation, described it simply as a being of light.

This "Being of Light" then asked them questions such as, "What do you think have been your major accomplishments?" or "How well have you treated others?" Then, they would see their entire life flash before them as the Being of Light commented on highlights of it.

The people interviewed said they felt completely at ease in the presence of this Being and that he never talked to them in a threatening or condemnatory tone. However, one man who attempted suicide had a horrible experience and said that he was sure he was being punished.

Most people were unable to explain how they got back but felt that the prayers of relatives may have brought them back.

Towards the end of his book Moody gives some striking parallels between the experiences of 20th century Americans, the ancient Greeks, and accounts related in the Tibetan Book of the Dead.

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