

Joni's Self-Pity Is Lovely

HEJIRA, Joni Mitchell, Asylum Records 7E-1087.

By JAN LOSE
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Someone has broken Joni's heart again. This album just oozes sentimental introspection and heroic self-pity.

When her ego is wounded, Joni struts her sorrows as if they were peacock feathers.

To enjoy this record, or any Joni Mitchell album for that matter, you've got to let down your guard a bit and forgive her for being such a romantic fool. Joni fancies herself some lonely fallen angel — just too sensitive and fragile to find peace in this crazy life. Such glorified self-worship would be downright embarrassing if it weren't for the fact that it's all so lovely.

Her haunting vocal style and the sophistication of her accompaniment enable Joni's music to stay on the right side of the fine line separating romantic idealism from pure corn.



In contrast to her last two albums which were hollow and mechanical, this new release is reminiscent of her "Blue" and "Ladies of the Canyon" albums — emotional and sincere.

Joni's music is like an expensive perfume, though, and should be used in moderation. Too big a dose can make you queasy. But this is not a fatal flaw — the same is true of Jackson Browne, whose artistry few can deny.

Now if Joni and Jackson cut an album together...that would be stepping over the line.