

MUSIC

Joni Mitchell is still writing

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Newsday

Looks like 2007 may be a happy new year for Joni Mitchell.

The 63-year-old singer-songwriter hasn't made an album since 2002, but suddenly she's popping up all over the place.

Her downbeat song *River* (1971) became an unlikely Christmas favorite, covered on seasonal albums by Sarah McLachlan and James Taylor. It even appeared in a holiday episode of *ER*.

This spring, Nonesuch Records, which released Mitchell's last album, *Travelogue*, will put out an 11-track disc of cover songs titled *A Tribute to Joni Mitchell*. Its artists include Bjork (*Boho Dance*), Sufjan Stevens (*Free Man in Paris*) and Elvis Cos-

tello (*Edith and the Kingpin*). Mitchell's classic *A Case of You* gets the Prince treatment, becoming *A Case of U*.

That's pretty good exposure for an artist who, four years ago, quit the music business, calling it "a cesspool." But as it turns out, the Canadian-born Mitchell recently revealed to The Ottawa Citizen that she is indeed working on a new disc at her home studio in Los Angeles. There's no title as of yet, she said, but the album will likely tackle current events: One potential track is called *Holy War*.

How Mitchell will release the album is unclear, though she once suggested she may sell it over the Internet. "I would never take another deal in the record business," she said in 2002.



AP FILE

THINGS CHANGE: Joni Mitchell, who quit the music business four years ago, is back in the studio.