



Little River Band: Glenn Shorrock returns and the old line-up is back together for the music as well as the money.

Joni Mitchell 'sick' of suffering for her art

ROCK
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CHALK MARK IN A RAIN-
STORM, Joni Mitchell. Geffen
Records, through WEA

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JONI Mitchell stopped the
meter in the Big Yellow
Taxi a long time ago and is
tired of suffering.

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ably cares to remember she spoke

For more years than she probably cares to remember she spoke from the heart, a disillusioned and at times broken heart, to the listening ears of the world.

That was all very well, and it earned her world-wide praise and more than a few dollars, but

more than a few dollars, but enough is enough.

After singing to an appreciative television audience the other day, Mitchell said she was basically a happy person and sick of people expecting her to suffer for her art.

And although *Chalk Mark in a Rain Storm* is hardly celebratory, it does have its lighter moments.

Number One is a facetious little tune about the trappings of fame.

Run, run, run, run, let's see you run.

We'll be betting by the starting gun.

Shall we shower you with flowers or shall we shun ya when your race is run?

And *My Secret Place*, a lovely number completed with the help of Peter Gabriel is hardly razor-blade material:

I'm going to take you to my special place.

It's a place no amount of hurt and anger can deface.

I put things back together there, it all falls right in place.

In my special place, my special place.

There are, of course, songs with a message but they are all easy listening and accessible.

Lakota tells of the plight of the American Indians and the loss of their land to uranium miners and large corporations, *The Tea Leaf Prophecy (Lay Down Your Guns)* is self-explanatory, *Cool Water* deals with the disposal of nuclear waste and *The Beat of Black Wings* looks back on the Vietnam War and its effect on those who survived it.

The album has been criticised as being inconsistent and more intent on experimenting with textures of sound than making great words come to life, but this reviewer could find nothing to substantiate either criticism.

It is a fine album, and one which could introduce Mitchell to yet another generation of lifelong fans, and perhaps, perhaps, just be the one to finally lay the Big Yellow Taxi to rest.

MONSOON, The Little River

MONSOON, The Little River Band. MCA Records, through WEA.

THEY quite freely admit they got back together for two main reasons — the fact that they

still make good music together, and the money — and the second coming of the Little River Band was hailed with as much trumpeting and fanfare as one would expect for that other Second Coming, but I fear the album may not live up to expectations.

Oh, they've done everything right and made a great splash, and I'm sure the dollars will roll in a little quicker for the next few months, but I'm afraid I was one of the silly ones who expected something more, something new.

If the band had not split up, if Glenn Shorrock hadn't left and John Farnham hadn't come and gone, things might have been different.

If this was just another Little River Band album, it would have been just another Little River Band album and everyone would have been happy.

Pleasant it is, technically precise and solid-gold Top 40 stuff, but nothing's changed.

The band is no better, and no worse, than it was all those years ago and, at least for this reviewer, it even lacks some of that old bright spark.

Is this tall-poppy syndrome?

Highlights are the first single *Love is a Bridge*, *A Cruel Madness*, *Son of a Famous Man* and *Soul Searching*, reminiscent of *Cool Change* the song which signalled the end of the old band and the beginning of new careers from most of its members.

If you liked them back then, you'll like them now, but is that enough?