

Record Review

Rock, etc.,

JONI MITCHELL 'WILD THINGS RUN FAST'

Asylum

Here come more true confessions from Ms. Mitchell about fractured love and midnight decadence, but this time her social observations and romantic misadventures are more accessible to the general public.

Wild Things Run Fast is a sleek and sassy album redolent of her *For the Roses* and *Court and Spark* days, before she turned to a jazzier muse.

On the opening cut, "Chinese Cafe/Unchained Melody," she seems to be bidding a bittersweet farewell to her younger days (she's just turning 40) in lines like "We were wild in the old days / Birth of rock 'n' roll days / Now your kids are coming up straight / And my child's a stranger / I bore her

but I could not raise her."

Then with typical suddenness she rails against present-day blight: "Uranium money is booming through the old home town now / Putting up sleek concrete / Tearing the old landmarks down ... Short sighted businessmen / Ah, nothing lasts for long."

Then, just as abruptly, she turns nostalgic again, injecting a few sweet-flowing lines of the old Righteous Brothers hit, "Unchained Melody" before returning to the haunting, rhythmic drive of the main ballad.

This is my favorite on the LP, for its sensitivity and engaging melodic structure more than anything, but it's full of other gems which show a re-awakening of Joni's pop craftsmanship like the upbeat, harmonic "Solid Love" and her cover of an obscure Leiber-Stoller rocker "(You're So Square) Baby I Don't Care."

The jazz influence is still occasionally evident, but tempered with instrumental hooks and pop structuring, as on "Moon at the Window," with its resilient bass lines, deft and strident

guitar chording, playful soprano sax and brush percussion, and "Be Cool," one of her typically sexy slow-dancers, travels in much the same vein.

And there are other fine moments, especially on "Love," a multi-planed rocker/ballad which incorporates into its lyrics the beautiful imagery of lines from



Joni Mitchell

the "love chapter" in II Corinthians.

I liked a lot of the stuff from her oh-so-hip, jetset jazz period, but too many of those works were merely admirable-but-failed experiments. She's always been more adept in an inventive pop format, which this album proves. It's her best in years and it's nice to see her back. ■

— Gene Triplett

The Classics

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 9. Eugen Jochum, conducting the Staatskapelle Dresden. Angel S-47700.

One of the foremost Bruckner interpreters has brought to life a version of Bruckner's Ninth in a thoughtful, powerful evocation.

As Jochum and the Staatskapelle Dresden draw up from a well of silence the noble grandeur of the opening passages, the listener is drawn into the music at once. The recording is excellent, with a full range of sound through gradations of the softest pianissimos to the four great climaxes in this 33-minute opening movement.

One quality is striking. As a great crescendo fades away, we get this sense of a long-decaying reverberation time, and then at some point realize this as soft, barely audible sustained tone in the double basses. Then one thinks of Bruckner the organ virtuoso, and tends to envision him

seated in lonely splendor at the console of an organ in some great gothic cathedral. There is much of organ feel in his work.

There was for a time much tinkering with the great body of work until it was at last realized that any "improvement" was only defacement. The splendid scherzo is an example.

This movement is developed in great scale and richness by Jochum and the orchestra as they show it for the jewel that it is. The rapid, lively quality at first is entirely deceptive. Here is no transparent lightness, but a steely tension that is to grow into an immensely powerful, rhythmically implacable and overpowering theme.

Then the dark beauty, the soft, minor-ninth anguish and slow-rising themes of the third movement, the adagio, are subtly and expressively handled. ■

—W.U. McCoy

Opera gets grants

LOUISVILLE (AP) — The Kentucky Opera has received two grants totaling \$85,000 from Brown-Forman Distillers Corp.

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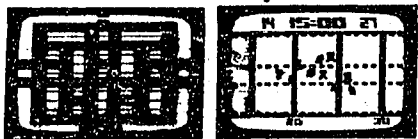


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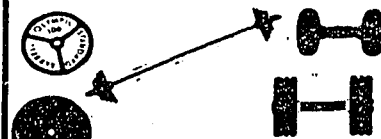
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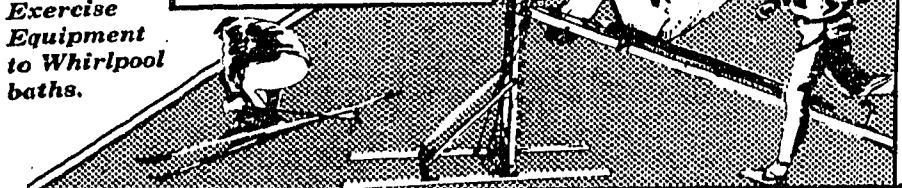


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