Joni 'jazzes' folk style in recent album

By BRUCE CONNORS
Review Writer

Joni Mitchell's latest release, **The Hissing of Summer Lawns,** represents the new direction her music has taken On this recent album she replaces her previous folk guitar accompaniment with a full ensemble Her style has developed into a sort of folk/jazz fusion with emphasis on the "folk "

On The Hissing of Summer Lawns, the backing ensemble is comprised of combinations of seven jazz musicians. Max Bennett, bass, Robben Ford, guitar, Victor Feldman, keyboards and vibes, and John Guerin, drums, are also members of Tom Scott's L.A Express Larry Carlton, guitar, Wilton Felder, bass; and Joe Sample, keyboards, are courtesy of the Jazz Crusaders

The album opens with a light-hearted tune entitled "In France They Kiss on Main Street," the album's required "top 40" cut destined for abundant A M air play Graham Nash, David Crosby and James Taylor are heard of singing backup on this

At the end of band one, hurry to your turntable and quickly advance the needle to band three Lifting the tone arm is optional in this case — the second composition can best be described as four minutes and twenty seconds of musical banality This selection features the war drums of Burundi and is appropriately titled "Jungle Line."

"Edith and The Kingpin," the third track, is a different story altogether Mitchell seems to be thumbing her nose at many aspects of superstardom and the media's role in elevating entertainers with a minimum amount of talent to the levels of immortal musical giants The song begins·

The big man arrives
Disco dancers greet him
Plainclothes cops greet him
Big man, small town, fresh lipstick glistening
Sophomore jive
From the victims of typewriters
The band sounds like typewriters

The message is one of complaint regarding the existence of ultra-commercialism spreading through the music field like a highly communicable virus Many talented musicians have sacrificed artistic values for purposes of attaining fame and riches

"Don't Interupt the Sorrow," the fourth band, features some of Carlton's tasteful guitar work which compliments Mitchell's well-written lyrics. This cut comments on Christianity Similar ideas subtly work their way into many of the other compositions on the album

Side one concludes with "Shades of Scarlet Conquering." The songstress/poet is embraced by a string section as she tells of a young lady, by the name of Scarlet, who is quite arrogant in her ways Scarlet's life is primarily influenced by the escapist world of the cinema We are introduced to her.

Out of the flames like Catholic saints
Comes Scarlet and her deep complaint
Mimicking tenderness she sees
In sentimental movies.
A celluloid rider comes to town
Cinematic lovers sway
Plantations and sweeping ballroom gowns
Take her breath away.

Side two begins with the title cut of the album. Suburban, upper middle class living is the target of the lyrics that slyly sneer at "valley bar-b-cues" and "blue pools in the squinting sun " The theme is much like that of novelist Joseph Heller's "Something Happened "

Despite the innumerable sour aspects and frequent psychological trauma of "the good life," the persons involved seem to be permanently bound to their lifestyle whether they like it or not

"The Boho Dance," which adopted its name from Tom Wolfe's book "The Painted Word," is next The song comments on those musicians who refuse to compromise even the slightest bit in order to gain a wider audience These musicians hold artistic values as supreme The Boho zone is

where artists in noble poverty
Go like virgins to their grave

The point is that an artist can become obsessed with artistic values and abandon the audience This is the opposite extreme of the attitude expressed in "Edith and the Kingpin" on side one By considering the two views, we are faced with the age old problem of commercialism vs artistic quality The music "industry" vs the "art" of music The extremes are artistic prostitution vs artistic masturbation The median that Joni Mitchell seeks lies somewhere in between

"Harry's House - Centerpiece" is the standout cut on the album It's a combination of Mitchell's "Harry House" and "Centerpiece," which was co-penned by famous jazzmen Jon Hendricks and Harry "Sweets" Edison Mitchell again aims her guns at the upperclass executive lifestyle The great American dream of cocktail parties and cosmopolitan living ends up as the corporate ratlands In the third verse she sings

Yellow checkers for the kitchen
Climbing ivy for the bath
She's lost in House and Garden
He's caught up in Chiefs of Staff
He drifts off into the memory
Of the way she looked in school
With her body oiled and shining
At the public swimming pool

The sensuous sound of the blues accompanies us as we drift back in time With Sample doing some fine comping on acoustic piano. Mitchell sings

The more I'm with you baby
The more I feel my love increase
I'm building all my dreams around you
Our happiness will never cease
'Cause nothing's any good without you
Baby you're my centerpiece

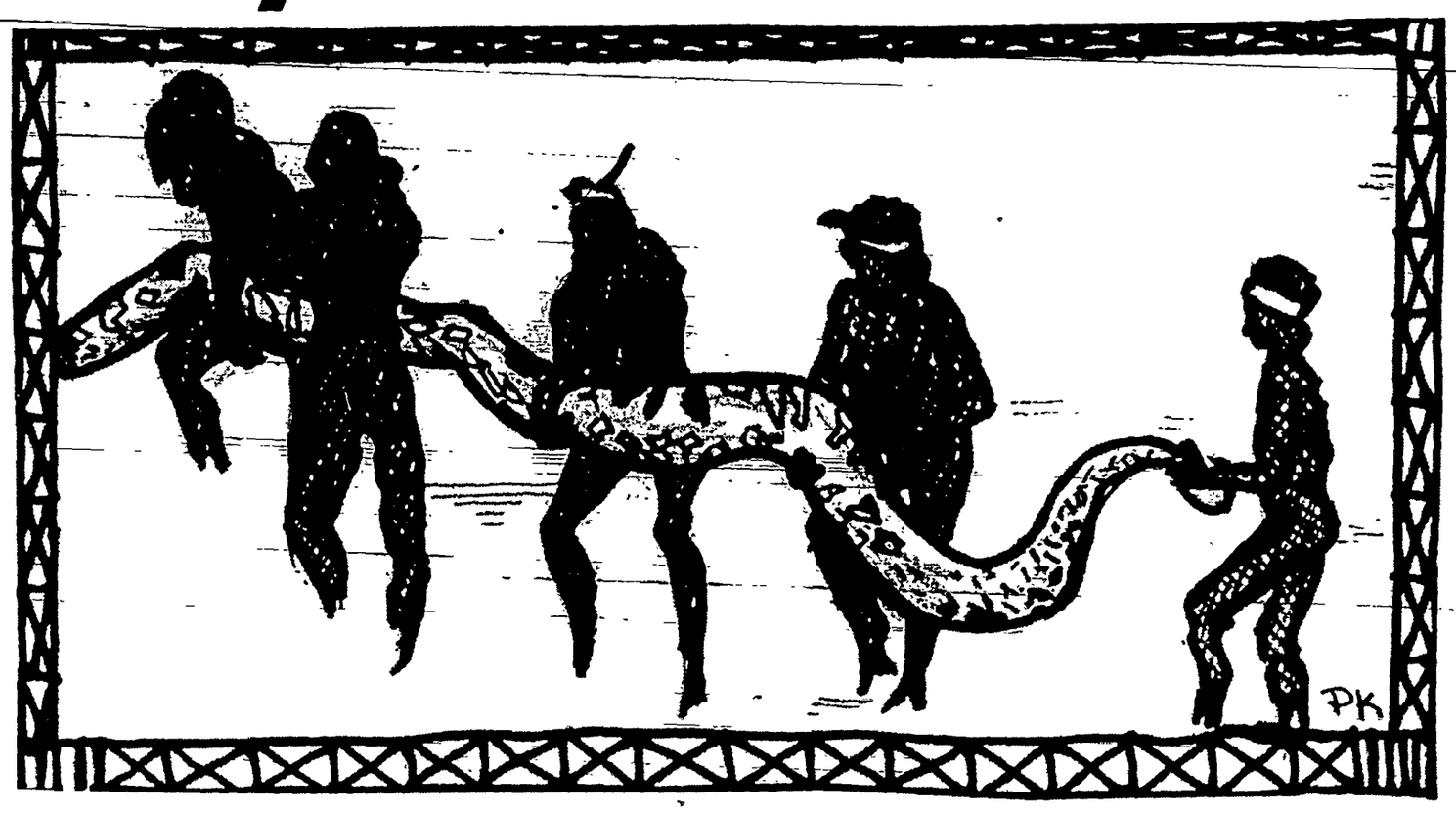
Add twelve bars of a piano solo by Sample and another verse of "Centerpiece " We are then thrust back into the harshness of the present

Shining hair and shining skin
Shining as she reeled him in
To tell him like she did today
Just what he could do with Harry's house
And Harry's take home pay

Getting away from the executive class, we are then given "Sweet Bird," which is a reflection on time and perpetual change The tragic conflict between the never-ending phenomenon of time and the limited lifespan of a person Time – the frequent destroyer of dreams

The album is brought to a close by Shadows and Light" which, unfortunately, does not measure up to the rest of the album (with the exception of "Jungle Line") "Shadows and Light" is like a Gregorian chant and features Miss Mitchell accompanying her singing on synthesizer and organ She attempts to be much too profound and comes off a bit pretentious

All things considered The Hissing of Summer Lawns is a very good album Joni Mitchell maintains an effective balance between artistic creativity and audience appeal This album merits many serious listenings



Lear series spoofs soaps

By BOB BOYLE
Review Writer

"Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" is Norman ("All In The Family.") Lear's latest and most artistically accomplished television program to date "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" is an offbeat soap opera shown locally on WNEW Channel 5, at 11 p.m

The show is wildly satirical, owing much of its success to Louise Lasser who stars in the role of Mary Hartman Lasser plays Hartman with understatement and bewilderment

Mary Hartman lives in Fernwood, Ohio with her husband Tom who works in the town's auto plant The problems that she faces would crush Job In the few short weeks the show has aired, her grandfather has been arrested twice for indecent exposure thus earning him the nickname of "The Fernwood Flasher " Mary's husband suffers from impotence and she is unable to masturbate Of late, however, her husband has been having an affair with a female co-worker Mary's younger sister has begun to date a deaf-mute, much to the chagrin of her parents

The biggest tragedy Fernwood has faced so far, has been the mass murder of a neighborhood family of five along with their goats and chickens Mary's comment "What kind of maniac would kill goats and chickens?" Her daughter Hester, the only witness to the murders, was kidnapped by the murderer At this writing, Mary has exchanged herself for her daughter and is being held by the murderer He turns out to be a timid neighborhood boy who killed because he hated goats and chickens Mary comforts him by suggesting that he see a doctor as she feels he's suffering from low blood sugar

The show works partly as parody of soap operas but more so because of its own innate spontaneity The use of set jokes with an opening, a setup and a punch line are used sparingly The comedy is of a more natural, human type Mary's life is one of boredom and tedium, big problems like the mass murder and little ones like "waxy yellow buildup" on her floor are of equal importance to her

In contrast to Mary is her best friend Lorretta, an aspiring country and western singer Lorretta has a tacky-little-sleaze-girl look about her She's married to a bald middle-aged man who venerates her as a nun does the Virgin Mary While Mary knows that her life is boring, Loretta lives in a dream world Her present life has no importance, the only thing she thinks about is the future when she is a superstar " bigger than Janis Joplin, when she was alive of course "

No Villians

The laughs don't come at the expense of the characters but rather with them What is comical is the failed aspirations of the characters once hopeful and now coping in a fog In regular soap operas there are heroes and villians but in "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," no one, not even the mass murderer, is evil It's just the degree of alienation and boredom that separates the characters

Comic Feeling

At this stage, the show has more humanity and true comic feeling than any other show on television Unlike situation comedies that are on only one night a week, "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" airs five nights a week permitting the characters and plots to develop naturally and with ease

'Front Runner' paints young man's psyche

By RIC DEPAULO
Review Writer

The Front Runner is a must for anyone who has ever cared about someone else

Patricia Nell Warren's novel, a coast-to-coast bestseller, hit the stands in the spring of 1975 I picked it up with skepticism What followed was an experience in reading that painted a love story so real, so singular, that one is left empty and revelled

Miss Warren offers captivating insight into the pain and storm of a young male searching for identity and love, for answers Her insight into the male psyche is incredible She penetrates the state of mind of a college student in love

Billy Sive is the greatest thing that has happened to American sports in years, an Olympic certainty for '76 in Montreal

And there is the coach, the older one, the one force that keeps Billy running and surviving

The boldness of their relationship grows and the reader experiences each joyous, painful and trimphant moment in their sporting careers and their loves We travel with Billy through the depressed gully-existence of New York City to a stormy deserted East Coast beach Through the author's genius, we live, breathe and finally die with Billy Sive

Billy makes it to Montreal and wins the long-distance run But as he hits the finish-line tape, a carefully aimed bullet hits his skull He dies before meeting the red tartan surface of the track

Billy's killer, a Canadian, is obsessed with murdering the fantastic runner He both fears, loves and hates the image of Billy Sive the front runner, the bold courageous one who found the strength to be proud

"People hate you because you're the older They see you as having corrupted me " Billy says to his coach

He smiled a little "We're both out there in front And they always try to kill the front runner "

'Far Tortuga' weaves lyrical, seafaring saga

By PAT KOSTER-KERICK
Review Writer

On a late April morning the turtling vessel, the "Lillias Eden," sets sail She is heading toward a coral reef south of Cuba to begin her turtle gathering expedition The adventures and conflicts that ensue form a colorful, lyrical saga With "Far Tortuga," naturalist and explorer Peter Matthieson has once again proved his deep understanding of the sea, its moods, and the men who sail her

Matthieson begins with a graphic account of the hunted creature

The turtle is inset in the green sea and the broad bay-colored shell, awash glints in the sinking sun. The ancient head blinks once, then withdraws beneath the surface

The captain of the "Lillias Eden" is Raib Avers, a hard but not humorless man He chose his crew of seven motley men only a few days before the journey On the limited deck space of the boat, each man's experiences are mingled with the others to portray the life of the turtler, his superstitions and folk tales Although each man comes from an island not too distant from his mate, his diversities show him to be oceans apart

The crew's mixed dialect alternates with descriptions of the sea, the sky and the wildlife surrounding them. Matthieson portrays extremely beautiful scenes of the South Carribean

The boat drifts in the green sea, in 20 feet of water. In the lee of the reef the water clears, dark coral heads gather they loom and sink away

Beyond the stories of the men and the poetic verse lies the impact of the "modern times " The crew members realize that they are the last of the old turtling boats Only a year ago, a motor replaced the sails on the boat They see many signs of modern times from the pollution of the ocean to the tremendous influx of tourists from the United States One complains

"Dem Yankees' gone to change de ways of de whole island! Sweet Christ an honest mon can't hardly find a fish no more along de island, dey so many of dem tourist boats foulin de sea!"

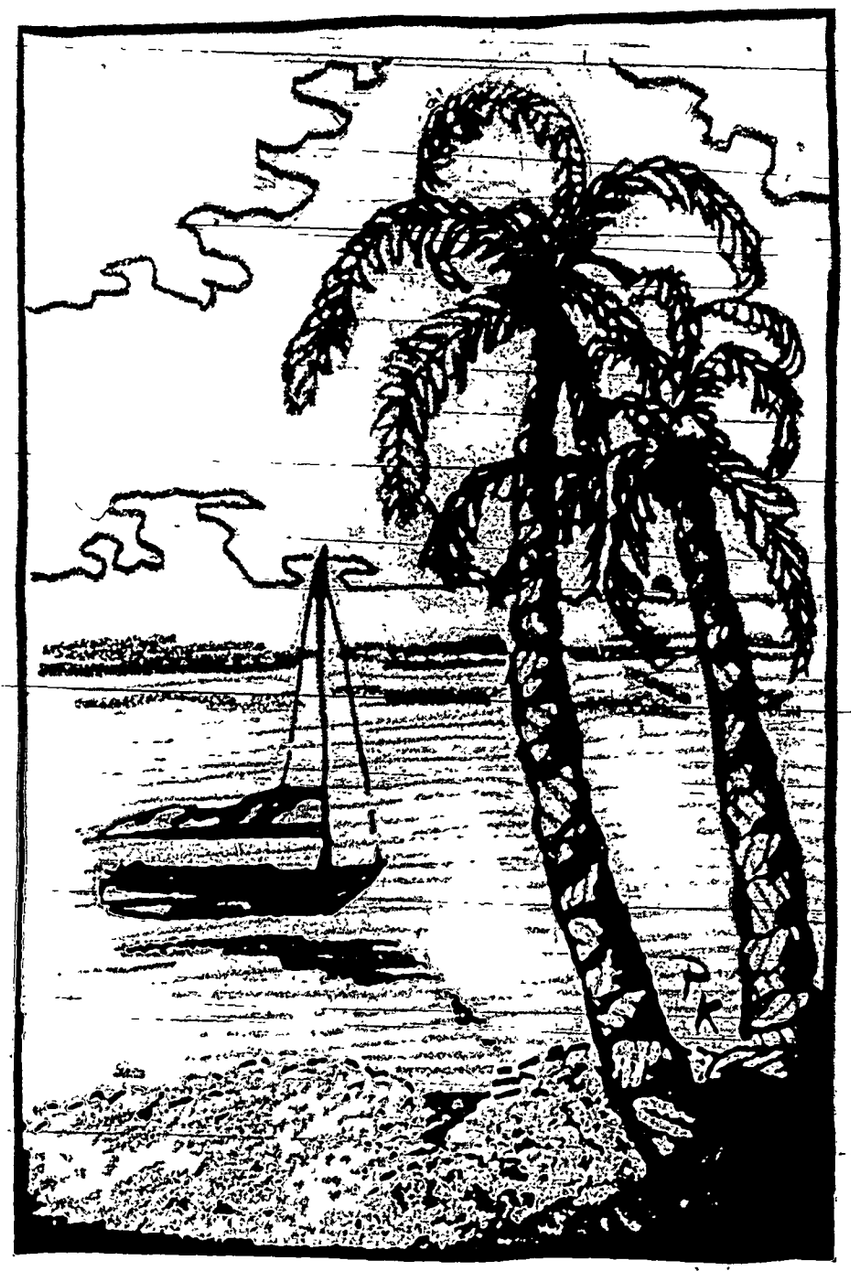
As the novel proceeds, so do the plagues of modern times The captain blames the crew; a crew worked for their captain before the union told them not to The crew, in turn, blames their captain for poor nets, too much work and too little food

The "Lillias Eden" encounters other ills associated with modernization bands of men who have been stranded by captains who promised to bring them to America, few turtles, and queer weather conditions

One night as the crew is getting ready for bed, a handful of Jamicans come aboard and raid the ship This is the last straw for Avers He decides to go back home. But they have forgotten something more powerful than men or modern times . more powerful and more unintelligible . . the ocean

A wave catches the rudder, twisting the wheel from Vemon's grasp. The ship yaws around into a trench, falling broadside to the sea, she is smacked hard — whump — before she rights herself, and the men bawl as a wall of spray crashes across them.

Matthieson has written other books about the ocean environment, including one which was made into the film "Blue Water, White Death." He recently helped in the formation of "Mind in the Waters," a book celebrating the minds of whales and dolphins.



Laurel hurls lampoon at mundane Bona life

By BRUCE CONNORS
Review Writer

If anyone who reads the Laurel Humor Magazine is not offended by at least one part of the publication, that reader 1) has no interests, values, or opinions, 2) is not sufficiently aware, or 3) is living under an impenetrable delusion of grandeur. No one is safe from the wrath of this lampoon

Aside from the obvious influence of Mad magazine on the cover, the magazine is written much in the style of the National Lampoon The major themes of this issue are religious, sexual and academic in nature Other favorite targets include The Bona Venture, Student Activities Council (SAC) and Security Services.

"The Bomb Avenger," "Student Entertainment Council Bulletin," and "Letters to the Editor" stand out as fine examples of cutting satire. Other highlights include, "Are Bell Towers Moral?" "Little known people, places and events," and a spoof on epistemology and metaphysics, entitled "Knowledge? Absolutely " Life at Bonaventure is given a thorough thrashing.

Many readers will protest that much of the lampooning is done in extremely poor taste

Maybe so, but to many a satirist, life itself is in poor taste. The sad part of the Laurel is that, after stripping away the derogatory references, there lie many valid criticisms that strike a painful chord deep within the reader As the saying goes, the truth often hurts

The advantage of satire is that points can be made through humor. This enables the writer to avoid the "speaking from the ivory tower" approach that alienates the audience. As Marshall McLuhan, media commentator, said, "a perceptive or incisive joke can be more meaningful than platitudes lying between two covers "

The multiplicity of the roles that man plays is a frequently ignored concept The Laurel's publication reminds us that we often become obsessed with these roles, and, in turn, restrict our outlook and limit our perspective

The Humor Magazine is not a profound literary work, but it is a very effective social commentary Our campus is in dire need of student involvement on all levels The Laurel roughs-up the reader s senses and provokes the reader to bring about change I feel that the true value of the work lies in doing so

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