

# theatre

by Mark Seibel

## "Lysistrata"

"The Wizard of Oz" was on television the other night and rather than sit through another evening of the Scarecrow and Judy Garland, I gladly attended the current Dallas Theatre Center production, "Lysistrata." The choice was a wise one.

"Lysistrata," a comedy by the classic Greek playwright Aristophanes, is the story of an ancient Greek women's movement in Athens. The Athenian women, organized by Lysistrata (the Gloria Steinem of ancient Greece), plot to withhold their sexual favors from the men until they make peace with Sparta. The action or lack of it proves to be unbearable for the men and they sue for peace in order to get one. The attempts of the men to halt the boycott coupled with the women's problems maintaining it make the play entertaining if not ribald.

The DTC production utilizes the Patric Dickinson translation of the play which keeps the humor of the original and still allows modern audiences to comprehend the puns made in the original.

Molly McGreevy as Lysistrata was able to take command of the role. She came across as a strong-willed woman able to force others to her way of thinking. Having seen Ms. McGreevy in several roles before, I had difficulty placing her in my conception of Lysistrata but it was not long before she had me convinced of her ability to play the role.

The play was not without its weak spots. Director Takis Muzenidis of the National Theatre of Greece handled the staging well for the most part. The female chorus was disappointing, however. Their giggling, tittering and exaggerated movements reminded me of a poorly done high school production of a Gilbert and Sullivan. Similarly, the men's costumes bore more resemblance to Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs than to ancient Greece.

These points did not greatly handicap the production and if one could overlook the occasional difficulty of hearing and the men's chorus going flat the play was most enjoyable.

Muzenidis took every opportunity to make good use of the play's sexual nature. Phallic symbols were everywhere. Notable examples were Lysistrata stroking the shaft of a spear and the Athenian peace envoys' clutching of their sore right arms.

For all its humor the most original and fun part of the play came at the end when the actors left the stage and communed with the audience. One Greek lovely knelt in the aisle, singing and departed after planting a kiss on my cheek. A Greek man seized the woman next to me and danced a wild jig with her. This greatly warmed the audience to the production.

The set was two level, the upper level representing the Acropolis. There was nothing spectacular about it until the end when two soaring doves were projected onto the blue background. The finale with the doves soaring and the cast applauding the audience reminded me of the pictures of Nixon at the Chinese ballet. I don't know whether the implication was planned but it certainly seemed to be influenced by the recent Presidential voyage.

The audience was in somewhat of a quandary about when to leave. The actors continued to clap and the audience, being polite didn't stop. As the applause died so did the cast response. Then someone would pick up the applause again and the cast would respond by applauding the person who had re-started the applause. This continued for several minutes and lent an informal atmosphere to the production. In any case the production was generally well done and is worth the cost to see.

# concert

by Glenn Mitchell

## Joni Mitchell

When you get right down to it, I don't believe in reviewing concerts. There is something defeating about relating impressions of an event that only happens once in any given location, and that readers can only experience vicariously. With a film or a play it's obviously a different matter. Anyone either enticed or disgusted by a critique may act accordingly at their leisure. A concert happens once, and from that time on you're out of luck till the next tour. There are times however, when the need for a review is so emphatic that if it causes anyone to act at a future date, the column space hasn't been wasted. Last Saturday I spent about ten hours on some bad roads to see a concert like that, and that's what I want to tell you about—Joni Mitchell in New Orleans.

WE MIGHT AS well take care of one thing right now, something that should be pretty obvious already. There are only two people that I would drive more than across town to see, let alone to the next state. One is Eric Clapton, the other is Joni Mitchell. I've seen Clapton and was properly awed, but Joni is a different matter. Her tours are brief and infrequent. It is common knowledge that she is self-conscious about performing, and sometimes shows it. Some like to call that a lack of professionalism, but more on that later. New Orleans is as close as she's ever gotten, and that was close enough. I had heard too many stories about electric performances, played and over-played records too many times, become as caught up in the writing, style and plan of any performer I have ever encountered to pass up the chance. It was a foregone conclusion that the trip was in order.

It is an easy matter to become entranced by Joni Mitchell. Her four albums are a varied collection of remembrances, bitter-sweet and hopeful, a reflection on experience, longing and critical. It is difficult for anyone to do Joni Mitchell songs well, and no dearth of talent has tried. The songs are too personal, and this is the attraction. One listens to Joni Mitchell to believe, and as we enter pop music's Great Age of Hype, of Cotton Bowl concerts by bullshit groups, of Grand Funk after shave lotion, and of the surrender of rock capitalism to the robber baron ethic, then it's easy to see without looking too far that not much is really sacred. That's why I went.

AND IT'S WHY I would urge anyone to go. Believers will become evangelical. Cynics will be charmed. If you go, sit up front or take binoculars, and watch closely. Watch as she comes out to enthusiastic applause, not really smiling, head down, walking straight for the mike. Watch how she goes directly into the first number, and doesn't seem to loosen up until half-way through it. Then watch as the applause sweeps across the hall and she listens and then breaks into a real smile and knows she got that one right. Tonight she has a cold. Second song. Two bars into it: "Excuse me" . . . back to the piano for a drink of water and a Kleenex. Scattered applause and friendly laughter. The walls are going down and her strength is building. The second song starts with more confidence (a new

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# The way you play the game

by Bill Stevenson

Everything is moving so fast. Slow down for a moment and think. Because thinking and slowing down be the only answer to the future.

Ah, the future! But what future? A future in what? Wherein lies the future of athletics at SMU? Where exactly is the present for SMU athletics? What are we, what are we to do, where are we to go?

Presently SMU athletics has a reputation of past glories with which it uses to promote itself. Those days of yesteryear do indeed merit the honor they receive, for SMU was truly a championship school on the national level. But today, people seem to have the opinion that all Mustang sports have a championship jinx, or just plain bad luck.

**THOSE OF US** who are students have never been a part of those nationally famous teams of the past. We have existed with teams that were not rated exceptionally high on the national level. We have had good teams that have competed well but just have not won the championships. Many is the event where Pony fans have cheered, cried and supported their teams. All of us have experienced the obnoxiousness of being a referee jeerer. Yet, there apparently is much more that is desired by Mustang fans and alumni. SMU is not satisfied with being number two. SMU wants winners.

Despite the fact that SMU has winning teams in swimming, tennis, soccer, golf and occasionally track, people aren't content. Despite the honor of being the SWC's holder of the All-Sports Title for having the highest number of winning teams, people aren't satisfied. SMU wants to have the championship days of the past return to the present.

Does SMU really want the championships of the past to re-

turn to the present? Does SMU place athletics over scholastics? Is it really so important to remember your alma mater by an athletic championship? Do students realize the full effects of simply wanting to win?

We win in all but the main sports, football and basketball. Oh, we do well and we do come close but we still aren't the number one or a champion. But students seem to forget about the so called "minor sports". They are champions, why does no one honor them? They win and do it like beggars. They struggle for scholarships and fan support. Minor sports at SMU give no excuse for losing, they are true champions. Champions not only because they win but because of the way they win when all works against them.

**NO ONE** pays attention to the minor sports. They disregard these championships. They want to win only in football and basketball. They say they want to win, but do fans realize what they will bring about?

If SMU is to be champion in basketball and football does the student body realize the changes that will take place in athletics? Right now with the present budget the minor sports are struggling for existence, even though they are the champions. If SMU is to produce the champions it so desperately wants what will happen to the minor sports when their budgets are either cut or not allowed to increase?

Will SMU be supporting the sports it thinks it wants or will it be contributing to a business of creating winners? To create winners is a business, it makes sports not a game or an event but a product to be marketed. To entice the calibre of athletes needed to win, SMU will have to enlist the aid of sugar daddies, or special contributors. Our athletes will be paid under the table salaries, given spending money,

cars, and fancy off campus apartments. And of course, the athletic department and university will deny this but the facts remain inevitable. The games that were once played in the vacant lots are no longer games but businesses that must be handled as such. Does SMU want this? Is winning that important? For if it is decided that this is the future of SMU athletics, then this is the road that will be followed.

**PEOPLE MUST** ask themselves where they want athletics to go and what price they are willing to pay. Also, even though it is sports sacrilege, people must ask if Vince Lombardi's famous phrase "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing" is worth anything.

The future is tomorrow, the future is today. And SMU has been given a taste of the future of winning. With our recent near victory in basketball and with the excellent recruiting in football SMU smells championships in the air. The question remains though, will SMU pump millions of dollars into these sports? Will our players be shot full of pain killers when they are injured? Will the not so intelligent athlete be given special consideration at grade time? Will the games that little boys play be turned into inhumane businesses of big boys? Is it really winning that counts or is it how you play the game?



Sorry coach, but we feel the "team" would be better off with a more efficient man in your spot—we need a hard economist more than we need a "builder of men."

## Joni Mitchell

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song from the upcoming album). Her raps are an adventure, a treat. Her voice is fast, and is punctuated by a high, almost nervous giggle as she rambles on about the background to a song like "Carey" or "The Circus Game." There is an eagerness, almost a little girl quality about the way she talks, and it is as engaging as it is misleading; because then you listen to the words, from the piano, out of a single violet spotlight, and the childlike quality is replaced by a mature, if wistful worldliness.

*"Blue, songs are like tatoos  
You know I've been to sea before,  
Crown and anchor me  
Or let me sail away.  
Blue, here is a song for you  
Ink of a pin  
Underneath the skin  
An empty place to fill in.  
Well there's so many sinking  
now  
You've got to keep thinking  
You can make it through these  
waves*

*Acid, booze and ass,  
Needles, guns and grass,  
Lots of laughs, Lots of  
laughs."*

The first set featured numbers on guitar, piano and dulcimer. The latter took an unusually long time to tune, and while she did that, she told the story behind "Carey" (which of course she didn't sing for a few more songs). At one point she interrupted herself with "I have a cold." Pause, more tuning. "My dulcimer has a cold." Then, as if it just occurred to her she sang "All God's Children," etc., and then the little laugh, and everybody loved it.

**I SUPPOSE WHAT** I liked most about it was the feeling she really meant everything she said and did. When she sang, she wasn't just repeating words, not merely going through motions. How many concerts have gone to pieces because the performers acted like they just didn't care anymore? When she played piano, it was with the concentration of someone who is vulnerable and knows it. There's a story about a special

she did on the West coast where she started "For Free" three times because she couldn't get the piano just right, and finally sang it a cappella. She did "For Free" Saturday night flawlessly, and when it was over and the audience let loose, she acknowledged the applause not with a practiced casualness, but with genuine appreciation. The first set broke after about 45 minutes, and as she came back for the second half someone yelled, "How do you feel?" Cold-ridden Joni answered "All stuffed up," and then spontaneously, almost anguished, "and I wanted to play so good for you!" There are a lot of ways that could have sounded very false and very condescending, and it didn't, not for a minute. She did "Woodstock," and "Both Sides Now," and half a dozen more and came back to a standing ovation. As she did, she had the houselights turned up, and the evening came to an end with 1,800 now-true-believers singing "The Circle Game," and leaving dazzled. A beautiful lady, and a stunning night.

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