

20 ITHACA JOURNAL Saturday, February 23, 1974



The stage — just a cluster of tables pushed together — is nearly equipped by 1 p.m. The litter of instruments, electronic gear and lights looks organized only to performers.

Prelude to a Big One in Barton

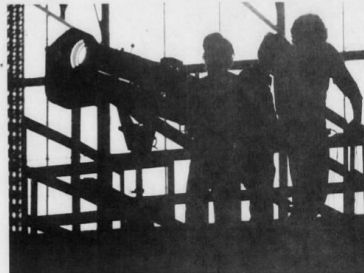
There's more to a successful concert than meets the eye. Preparations for the Joni Mitchell event Feb. 3, pictured here, will be repeated when Yes, a group of British rocksters, appears in Barton Hall on Sunday. But if you're still hoping to buy tickets to Yes, the answer is No. The concert, like Joni's, was an 8,000-ticket sellout.



More tables build a wall around the stage to prevent keep over-curious spectators from becoming part of the performance.



Dick Flight does a last-minute tune-up of the piano, wheeled in from a dorm.



Spotlight rig as a cannon is tested on its perch high above Barton floor.



By 8 p.m. Barton is packed to capacity. Stoppers will sit on the floor. Despite fire regulations, the air is hazy.



In a pitchblack hall, performers glitter under the lights.

Sponsor of the big Barton concerts is the Cornell Concert Commission, a group of about 100 students whose main purpose is to entertain the campus community. They start setting up the stage early in the morning on concert day. The musicians' equipment generally arrives around noon. The performers stage a trial run to test Barton for sound. For her sound check, Joni Mitchell asked that the hall be completely cleared of bystanders, and the commission conducted a thorough dragnet to nab anyone who might be hiding under bleachers, in restrooms or behind curtains. Security during concerts is another responsibility. Some commission members work at keeping fans and

cameras away from the performers, and prevent spectators from taping the concert — to which performers object. Others are assigned to making the stars stay in Ithaca as pleasant as possible. And at the concert's end, an army of broom handlers is needed to rid the hall of debris left by capacity crowds.

The commission is a non-profit organization. That means, a spokesman said, any money made on one event is used to make up a loss on another, or to provide free concerts, or to equip future events. With proceeds, the commission recently bought \$10,000 worth of new lighting equipment.



Aftermath: In an hour, one would never know the concert had taken place.

Photographs by Michael Parkhurst