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Many Talented Joni Mitchell Sparks Memphis Concert

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Joni Mitchell's talent has so many facets that it's like a diamond, sparkling from any viewpoint.

She sparkled brilliantly in her first Memphis concert at the Auditorium last night, bedazzling a crowd estimated at 4,000.

"They're absolutely reverent," said a backstage admirer as he looked out at tiers of rapt faces which reflected her glow.

Her supreme talent, of

course, is her singing voice, fluid and crystal clear but able to swell to a torrent when the emotion wells up in her. She has a range which few others can match, and the power to project just as fully in the peaks as in the mid-ranges. She showed last night — in case anyone had forgotten — how she has managed to remain one of the top female folk singers in a crowded and competitive field.

But she is also an accomplished musician, able to

move with ease from guitar to piano to dobro and even to a tricky mountain dulcimer, all the while providing just the right mounting for her gem-like voice.

The twangy resonance of the dulcimer was perfect background for a love hymn to her native Canada, and her soft touch on the grand piano blended beautifully with the tenderness of "The Last Time I Saw Richard," from her "Blue" album.

Occasionally, she paused in her singing and just talked to the folks, rambling through some random thoughts about love, life and man's relation to his world. She missed the pronunciation of anamism, and could not quite enunciate the idea. "I don't know exactly what I'm trying to say," she mused, "except, maybe, that everything's everything."

The principle, though, that there is an indwelling spirit in all things was illustrated

beautifully by the way she breathed life and spirit into everything she touched.

A portion of the credit for the success of the concert — one of the best in Memphis for some time — must go to Tom Scott and the LA Express, a jazz-oriented group which backed Miss Mitchell. All five members were good, but it was Scott, with his sax, flute and particularly his soprano sax, who formed the perfect complement to Joni's faultlessly pure voice.