

**Joni Mitchell
Dog Eat Dog
Geffen**

Over 13 LPs since 1968 Joni Mitchell has produced a truly remarkable body of work that ranges across folk, pop and rock, jazz and orchestral, and includes both risk-taking experiments and a number of genuine masterpieces. Now, at 42, an age when many artists are content working their chosen seam rather than seeking new lodes, Joni Mitchell is ... doing both!

What's familiar includes her vocal delivery, the controversial verse style, the loose-limbed melodic lines which are all, if not yet mannered, at least comfortably familiar. What's new is found particularly on side one in the aggressive production and almost angry directness of some lyrics. The album's co-producers include Thomas Dolby and it may be he who is responsible for the treated ambient street sounds that pervade the music. 'Smokin', for example, moves to the rhythm of a cigarette dispenser.

As for the lyrics, Mitchell has long abandoned the coruscating density of her most tightly structured poetry. She always retained however the ability to express her feeling with subtlety and felicitous phrasing. It is hard to find much of either here. Mitchell almost harangues the listener on a track like 'Tax Free', a diatribe against religious politico-fundamentalism that is in danger of taking on the coarseness of those she attacks.

It's probable that side one of *Dog Eat Dog* is aimed at a new audience for Mitchell, today's teenagers brought up on video clips and super-tech production values. She may well find her target. But for those of us who've

been with Joni Mitchell for many years, who've measured out parts of our lives with her songs, it's side two we'll be playing. Not that the title track, 'Shiny Toys' or 'Ethiopia' are necessarily among her best work, but they nonetheless make worthy additions to her catalogue and give us confidence to keep attuned to her muse.

Peter Thomson

**Rick James
Glow
Motown**

The street is a dangerous place. Gooks, junkies, bag ladies and stick-up kids. Trouble's everywhere. Easy getting in and hard getting out. Rape, murder, gang war and poverty. You can't blame a guy for wanting to get off the street. You can't blame Rick James for preferring to drive rather than walk. Rick's got expensive jewellery and that leather rig he's wearing didn't come cheap either. When you're a star somebody's got to protect you from your fans who will stick you up for your wallet and then ask for your autograph.

Rick knows the street. Grace Jones is scared stiff. Melle Mel gets on edge, Run/DMC have a hard time and even George Clinton, an urban guerilla himself, only goes out in a mob. George, who keeps mistakenly referring to lck James on his album covers, would do well to take note of this new offering *Glow*.

Like Clinton, Rick uses an invented mythology as a vehicle to develop a lucid modern metaphor. The glow, a power that can only be found in the Kingdom of Light, is a magical force which, in Rick's fable, a young boy seeks, finds and uses to combat the evil force of the Dark Wizard, King Luto. Very nice too. Suffice to say that Rick wore himself out writing that and

then made an album that makes the *Miami Vice* Theme look startlingly innovative.

Rick James used to be a Funk Heavyweight. Up there with the big guys and the guys who are still, more or less, down there on the street. Berry Gordy may have plans for James to be a movie star like Prince. But Prince made people like his music, he didn't tailor his music to fit the Hollywood sound. Rick James has put out an album that sounds like every other West Coast/Miami Vice soundtrack this year. And take it from an old Rick James fan, he's blown it.

Peter Grace

**Lonnie Mack
Strike Like Lightning
Alligator
Roy Buchanan
When A Guitar Plays The Blues
Alligator**

Chicago-based Alligator Records goes from strength to strength. These albums restore to prominence two guitar pickers worthy of the attention.

The music of Lonnie Mack is hard driving rock-blues with a gospel edge in his vocals. He was a big influence on Texan Stevie Ray Vaughan, who produced this high energy album, Mack's best since his seminal 1964 *The Wham Of That Memphis Man* (now reissued by Edsel).

Mack's direct roadhouse style melds perfectly with that of "pupil" Stevie Ray, who also contributes guitar (they do a hot remake of Mack's already incendiary 'Wham', his best-known tune after 'Memphis'). This is an album of high-wattage excitement. But once the amps are switched off, Lonnie, Stevie Ray and Mack's brother Bill turn in what may be the best track,

'Oreo Cookie Blues', a three-way acoustic guitar conversation.

Buchanan's record is simply his best. Undoubted as an expressive guitarist with a penchant for screaming harmonics, Buchanan has remained a cultish but ultimately uninteresting hot player. His records either have featured routine bar bands with inadequate vocalists (Buchanan is even more inadequate) or have made a misguided bid for pop stardom.

At last Buchanan takes control of things, surrounds himself with solid Chicago blues musicians, good singers (Otis Clay and Gloria Hardiman) and seems to find a context (most of the time) for all that technique. Especially nice is the album closer, 'Hawaiian Punch', which explores the Elmore James 'Shake Your Money Maker' theme, with Buchanan playing his Telecaster as if it were a lap steel.

Footnote: The album is dedicated to the late Jimmy Nolen, who was with Johnny Otis (those great guitar licks on 'Willie and the Hand Jive' and others) and with James Brown from 'Papa's Got A Brand New Bag'.

Ken Williams

**Morris Day
Color of Success
Warner Bros**

Morris Day is a schmuck. It's a strong word, and perhaps you'd never have thought of it outside of addressing your little brother, or in a moment bullying the office junior. But schmuck has got a whole lot of star-quality, and you're going to hear an awful lot more from schmucks in the near future.

Morris is going to be a real big star. He's not on the tall side, but he makes up for it by thinking big. On this, his first solo album, Morris starts by telling us how much better he is now he's left his old

group, the Time. And that meant losing his bodyguard, so you know he's serious about this.

In the *Purple Rain* movie, which Morris saved almost singlehandedly from Prince's gross stupidity, he spent a lot of time being dastardly and making indecent suggestions to Apollonia, Prince's squeeze. He had a rather manic giggle, like you'd imagine Vincent Price would after sniffing embalming fluid. I think Morris got sick of being nerdy, but when you've got schmuck that deeply ingrained it's hard to convince people you're a regular guy. So Morris spends a couple of songs on this album driving it home that it's just an image and he doesn't want us to think it's the real him.

Whether it's the real Morris Day or not, he has a keen ear for good, hoof-grinding funk. If you know the last Time album, expect less theatrics and more of that deadly groove. If you don't, think James Brown with the sweat and grime masked by Givenchy aftershave and shiny silk suits.

Morris deserves your undivided attention. Check it out.

Peter Grace

**Olivia Newton-John
Soul Kiss
Interfusion**

Extracted from an interior dialogue.

the Tacky: Wow! get a load of Olivia's new image. The cover photos — they're by that kinky Helmut Newton — are a promise of seduction and discipline. And the songs! In 'Culture Shock' she's proposing a threesome, and there's another one called 'You Were Great, How Was I?' — 'Overnight Observation' is about a different kind of medical examination, and then when you listen it becomes pretty obvi-

ous the title song's really about fellat...

the Taste: ... Oh stop the slaver-ing you jerk. Offensive soft-core like this is nothing more than a shoddy disguise for lack of talent. Beneath that make-up she's just the same old Ollie. She still can't sing with genuine emotion; she still bleats on the high notes. Listen to the coatings they've given her voice fergriffsake!

the Tacky: So there's a lot of gloss, so what? I like gloss. And don't wave that soulful schtick at me either. You're the sort of boring purist who wouldn't dance to an Abba record. Well I reckon there's a stack of songs here that Agnetha and Annafrida would've sold their Swedish smiles for. 'Queen of the Publication' for starters. In fact every track on the album's catchy. Can't deny that can you?

the Taste: OK, but then so is measles. Besides, John Farrar's gone and produced everything to hell and back. I mean the gimmicks thrown in here are ridiculous: typewriters, revving cars, radio noise, Ollie's embarrassing monologue, the obvious Beach Boys approach to her duet with Carl Wilson, the damn synth that sounds programmed by some Wagner on acid.

the Tacky: So we're ridiculing the musicians now are we? People like Larry Carlton, Lee Ritenour, Tom Scott, Abe Laboriel, aren't the tops in their field for nothing — but then I suppose a snob like you would call them "studio hacks". Carlos Vega's drumming alone is a thrill.

the Taste: That walloping! What about finesse?

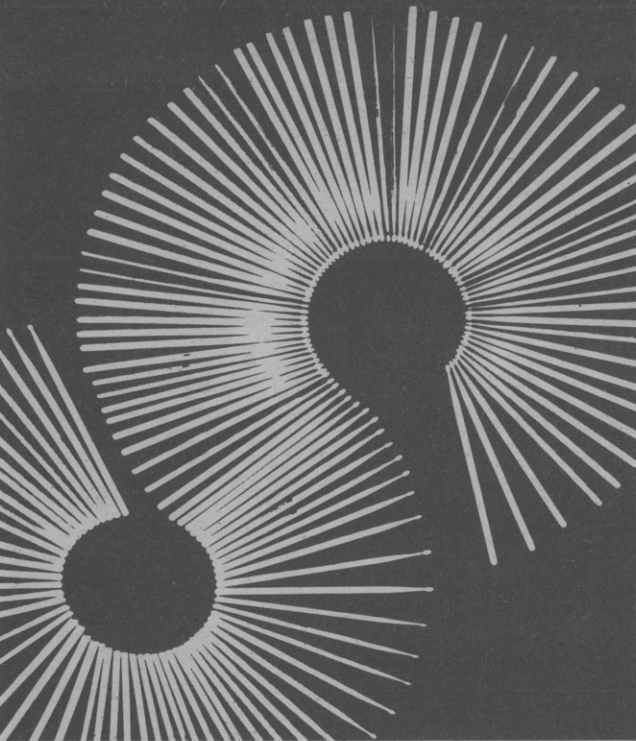
the Tacky: What about finesse?, (The dialogue continues unresolved.)

Peter Thomson

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- 52 Echo and the Bunnymen, Danse Macabre, Penknife, Glides, Mockers, Valentinos, Jimmy & the Boys,
- 54 Dave McCartney & Pink Flamingos, Go-Go's interview, Sunnyboys, INXS,
- 56 Teardrop Explodes, DD Smash, Mick Jones Part 2, Neighbours,
- 57 Clean, Pretenders, South Island bands, Joan Armatrading, Mental As Anything, Chaz Jankel,

- 58 Blams, Teardrops, Hall & Oates, Bill Wyman, Kottke/Redbone interviews,
- 59 Human League, Men At Work, Chills, Tim Finn, Motels, Elvis Costello live,
- 61 Graham Brazier & Harry Lyon, Fall, Jim Carrol, Daggy & the Dickheads, Hip Singles, Dropbears,
- 63 Simple Minds' Jim Kerr interviewed, Split Enz Part 2, Renee Geyer, Nocturnal Projections, Willie Dayson Blues Band, Hunters & Collectors,
- 65 Yazoo (Alison Moyet interview), Joe Cocker, Zoo (ex Pop Mechanix), Guriz, Jo Jo Zep,
- 68 Herbs, Culture Club, Bauhaus, Kiwi Animal, No Tag, Sharon O'Neill, Thompson Twins, ChCh Special (Wastrels, Flying Nun, Bill Dreen, etc.),
- 69 Joni Mitchell, Dance, Exponents, Who, Neighbours, Dire Straits, Talk Talk, Miltown Stowaways, Blond Comedy,
- 73 Wham, Dead Kennedys, Coconut Rough, Angels, Marginal Era, Grammar Boys, Fishschool, John Cale,
- 74 Malcolm McLaren, Heaven 17, Joan Armatrading, Sharon O'Neill, Children's Hour,
- 75 Tim Finn, John Cale, Jonathan Richmond, Hammond Gamble, Dick Driver,
- 80 Police, Paul Young, Motown feature, John Peel Wastrels, Bryan Adams,
- 81 Smiths, Mockers, Def Leppard, Violent Femmes, Miltown Stowaways, Chills, Doublehappys, Marvin Gaye,
- 82 Billy Idol, Pamela Stephenson, Four Tops, Temptations, Verlaines,
- 83 Elvis Costello, Thompson Twins, Netherworld Dancing Toys, Mockers,

- Paul Morley,
- 84 Style Council (Paul Weller interview), Echo & the Bunnymen, Midnight Oil, Kiwi Animal, Sneaky Feelings, Depeche Mode,
- 85 Mockers, Special AKA, Motorhead, Icehouse, Great Unwashed, Coconut Rough, Neil Finn, Fixx,
- 87 DD Smash, U2, Bill Dreen Pt 1, Nick Cave, Stevie Ray Vaughan,
- 88 Herbs, Talking Heads, Aztec Camera, Narcs, Car Crash Set, Axemen, SPK,
- 89 Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Beatles, Deep Purple, ZZ Top, Twisted Sister, Aotea Riot, Eurogliders, Rip, Say Yes To Apes, Look Blue Go Purple,
- 90 Lou Reed, Go-Between, Paul Hewson, Topp Twins,
- 91 Neil Young, Giorgio Moroder, Waterboys, David Puttnam, Freudian Slips, Electric Pandas,
- 92 Hunters and Collectors, Lloyd Cole, Pelicans, Peter Garrett, Left Right & Centre, Economic Wizards,
- 93 Dance Exponents, Huey Lewis, Robert Palmer (Power Station), Peking Man, Circus Block 4, This Kind Of

- Punishment,
- 94 New Order interview, Iron Maiden, Stranglers, Johnnys, Michael Winslow, Plans For A Building,
- 95 Chills, Killing Joke, Dazz Band, Expendables, Jason & the Scorchers, Last Man Down,
- 96 Netherworld Dancing Toys, China Crisis, Robert Plant, Doublehappys, Kiwi Animal, Nils Lofgren,
- 97 Bryan Ferry, Dynamic Hapnotics, Men At Work, Bats, Shriekback,
- 98 Mockers, Mental As Anything, Reggae, John Boorman, Bird Nest Roys,
- 99 Narcs, Bangles, R.E.M., Jerry Harrison, Christchurch in Spring,
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