

18 Gender, race, and the ma(s)king of 'Joni Mitchell'

KEVIN FELLEZS

I thought I was black for about three years. I felt like there was a black poet trapped inside me, and ['The Jungle Line'] was about Harlem – the primitive juxtaposed against the Frankenstein of modern industrialization; the wheels turning and the gears grinding and the beboppers with the junky spit running down their trumpets. All of that together with that Burundi tribal thing was perfect. But people just thought it was weird. (JONI MITCHELL)¹

Art is short for artificial. So, the art of art is to be as real as you can within this artificial situation. That's what it's all about. That's what art is! In a way, it's a lie to get you to see the truth. (JONI MITCHELL)²

Joni Mitchell has always been weird, even by her own account. Personifying as well as versifying the tensions, contradictions, and affinities between the footloose and the fenced-in that is a main theme running through her work, she has remained one of pop music's enduring enigmas despite over five decades in the music business.³ By turns, she has described herself or been characterised by others as an idiosyncratic singer-songwriter, the 'consummate hippy chick', 'Annie Hall meets urban cowgirl', the 'babe in bopperland, the novice at the slot machines, the tourist, the hitcher', a poet, a painter, a reluctant yet ambitious superstar.⁴ Who, in fact, are we confronting in a 'self-confessional singer-songwriter' who withholds her 'real' name?

Born Roberta Joan Anderson to parents preparing for a son named Robert John on November 7, 1943, the artist better known as Joni Mitchell concocted her name through a combination of youthful pretensions and her first, brief marriage. Eschewing Roberta, Joan became Joni at the age of thirteen because she 'admired the way [her art teacher, Henry Bonli's] last name looked in his painting signatures'.⁵ Her marriage in June 1965 to older folk singer, Chuck Mitchell, when she was a twenty-one-year-old unwed mother, lasted less than two years yet she has continued to use Mitchell publicly for more than five decades (further, published accounts indicate she is called 'Joan' by intimates in her everyday life).⁶ Her acts of performative alterity reflect a lifelong interest in exploring the possibilities as well as testing the limits of identity claims, performed years before she harboured any concrete thoughts regarding a professional music career.

Her identity play does not stop with name games. In 1976, on her way to a Halloween party thrown by Peter and Betsy Asher, Mitchell was inspired by 'this black guy with a beautiful spirit walking with a bop', who, while

[201]

walking past her, declared, 'Lookin' good, sister, lookin' good!' Mitchell continues, 'I just felt so good after he said that. *It was as if this spirit went into me.* So I started walking like him.'⁷ Stopping at a thrift store on the way to the party, she transformed herself into a figure her party companions assumed was a black pimp. Not simply a 'black man at the party', Claude-Art Nouveau was a 'pimp', a detail that Miles Grier considers in a thoughtful essay on Mitchell's use of black masculinity to earn 'her legitimacy and authority in a rock music ideology in which her previous incarnation, white female folk singer, had rendered her either a naïve traditionalist or an unscrupulous panderer'.⁸ Importantly, Grier notes that Mitchell achieves this without having to pay full freight on the price of living in black skin or, I might add, the ease with which she can revert back to whiteness and its privileges, unlike avowed black-skinned models such as Miles Davis.

Entering the party unrecognised, Mitchell was delighted by her ruse and the masked anonymity it offered her, connecting her to the ways the burnt-cork mask of blackface minstrelsy, including its cross-gendered performance practices, allowed the predominantly working-class Irish male performers of the nineteenth century to perform in public in ways otherwise prohibited by bourgeois norms (see Figure 18.1).⁹ Despite (mis)representing 'themselves', blackface was a way for black performers to appear on public stages in the nineteenth century. As with those black minstrels, Art Nouveau was a way to be in public without having to expose herself – a veil, to spin Du Bois' metaphor, which allowed Mitchell to hide in plain sight.

This blackface drag persona is said to be so important to Mitchell that her four-volume autobiography (as yet unpublished) purportedly begins with



Figure 18.1. Joni Mitchell as 'Claude' at the Ashers' Halloween party, 1976.

the words, 'I was the only black man at the party'.¹⁰ As a female rock musician, Mitchell's responses to music industry inducements and demands were meant to defend her status as an artist without attracting pre-emptive gendered (dis)qualification. Her creative work, which not only fused musical genres but also synthesised music, painting, and verse, is complicated further by being caught within the contradictions of her (trans)gendered and (cross)racialist adoptions, co-optations, and appropriations.

Additionally, Mitchell invites interpreting her creative work as antagonistic to the notion of an art and popular culture opposition by challenging the music industry's view of her creative output as pop commodity (while unapologetically accepting its material rewards) and simultaneously using jazz, visual art, and poetics as high cultural practices and discourses through which she argues she is more properly understood. Mitchell admitted to Mary Dickie, 'I'm a fine artist working in the pop arena. I don't pander; I don't consider an audience when I work; I consider the music and the words themselves, more like a painter'.¹¹ It is another question, of course, of whether the literati view her work in the same way they understand the work of, for example, Bob Dylan (an artist whose public name and persona reveal little of the 'real' Robert Zimmerman yet has not faced the same criticisms that Mitchell has encountered regarding inauthenticity; indeed, he is often praised for his chimerical persona), Jean-Michel Basquiat, Laurie Anderson, or Kara Walker, artists who have straddled a similar popular/art divide. Mitchell navigated the troubled waters between autonomous art tendencies and more mundane commercial considerations, plying the waves between high art aesthetics and a popular music career. Importantly, Mitchell accomplished this partially on the backs of black bodies, including her own in blackface drag – a figure of shadows and light.

On one hand, Mitchell often speaks somewhat obliviously to the hierarchical nature typically implied between the museum and the nightclub – as if 'good pop' such as hers easily transcends such demarcations. On the other hand, Mitchell's categorisation of her music as a 'popular art music' questions the masculinist orientation of aesthetic values, which valorises certain values (intellectual rigor, discipline, technical virtuosity) while concurrently 'feminising' and devaluing others (emotional capaciousness, delicate or sensitive sensibilities, intuitive spontaneity).

As noted in the second epigraph to this chapter, Mitchell has used 'art as artifice' as a means to convey and express emotional and intellectual truth(s). But she also recognises its double-edged utility. In a 1979 *Rolling Stone* interview, Mitchell proclaimed,

People get nervous about that word. Art. They think it's a pretentious word from the giddyap. To me, words are only symbols, and the word "art" has never lost its vitality. It still has meaning for me. Love lost its meaning to me. God lost its meaning to me. But art never lost its meaning. I always knew what I meant by art.¹²

Mitchell's self-conscious merging of Romantic ideals of the artist as autonomous creator coupled to Modernist conceptions of art's role in disrupting social norms begs questions about the relationship between authenticity and artifice in her work. Placing her internal black junkie poet musician in a space of art as artifice, as 'the lie that gets us to see the truth', is part of a larger programme that complicates easy accusations of minstrelsy, but it does not designate her blackface performances 'innocent' either.

Lady of the Canyon

Mitchell's gender positioning is illustrated by the distance between her public persona as produced through promotional campaigns and her efforts to define herself as an artist. Mitchell had the good fortune to have published songs under her own name for a publishing company in which she was an owner prior to signing with Reprise, a record label originally created as a vanity label for Frank Sinatra. Notably, in addition to retaining her publishing rights, she was granted total artistic control, including choice of album artwork and repertoire, from her debut recording.

She evinced little control over her promotional campaigns, however. Mitchell's image became deeply imbricated within the somewhat clumsy yet effective overlapping of the discursive regimes of the counterculture and marketing departments at record labels; in no small part due to music industry employees often identifying record labels as countercultural in some fashion. An advertisement in *Rolling Stone* for her third release, *Ladies of the Canyon* (Reprise 1970), can serve as an example of the intersecting ways in which the music industry and the counterculture framed Mitchell as an *authentic* 'hippie chick folkie singer-songwriter'. The ad describes Amy, a twenty-three year old 'quietly beautiful' woman, as despondent because her recently departed boyfriend is moving quickly to marry a fellow employee at Jeans West, a well-known denim clothing store at the time. She begins to feel better when a grocery delivery boy, Barry, compliments her collage of Van Morrison images. Offering him a drink of 'Constant Comment [tea] with orange honey mixed in', Barry offers Amy, in return, to smoke a joint (marijuana cigarette) with her and, noticing her 'far out' stereo system, the opportunity to listen to a recent purchase, which just happens to be Joni Mitchell's latest recording, *Ladies of the Canyon*. As they both became 'quite mellow indeed', Amy begins to feel better because she hears in Mitchell a sense that 'there was someone else, even another canyon lady, who really knew' her situation, easing her sense of painful isolation.¹³

This advertisement articulated the merging of consumerist culture signifiers (Jeans West, Constant Comment, stereo components) with

countercultural ones (Van Morrison, marijuana, Joni Mitchell) indicating how, by obscuring the fact that this narrative is actually an advertisement for their new commercial release, Reprise's publicity department hoped to market *Ladies of the Canyon* as a recording for young listeners who were similarly inclined to create their own artwork, listen to other countercultural artists (besides Van Morrison, Neil Young plays an important role in the advertisement; not surprisingly, all were Warner Brothers artists at the time), and lead lives wherein 'alternative consumer culture' was not an oxymoron or contradiction.

Reprise ran another advertising campaign in the early 1970s, revealing the role gender and sexuality performed in marketing Mitchell at the time by declaring 'Joni Mitchell Takes Forever', 'Joni Mitchell is 90 Per Cent Virgin', and 'Joni Mitchell Finally Comes Across'. Recalling her career trajectory, Mitchell revealed that

[b]y the time I learned guitar, the woman with the acoustic guitar was out of vogue; the folk boom was kind of at an end, and folk-rock had become fashionable, *and that was a different look*. We're talking about a business [in which the] *image is, generally speaking, more important than the sound, whether the business would admit it or not.*¹⁴

While Mitchell recognised the roles gender and image played in the popular music market, she rejected feminism: 'I was never a feminist. I was in argument with them. They were so down on the domestic female, the family, and it was breaking down. And even though my problems were somewhat female, they were of no help to mine'.¹⁵ Reading feminism as anti-men more than pro-women, Mitchell explicitly positioned her musicking as androgynous: 'For a while it was assumed that I was writing women's songs. Then men began to notice that they saw themselves in the songs, too. *A good piece of art should be androgynous*. I'm not a feminist. That's too divisional for me'.¹⁶ Women artists, she asserts, do not necessarily share aesthetic or musical affinities and therefore music should be evaluated without regard to the gender of its producer(s). Yet, her play for 'androgynous art' echoes the liminal space her music occupies – neither female nor male, Mitchell grounds her music in the space spanning genders. In a recent interview, Mitchell responded to a question about her image as 'hippie folk goddess' sardonically:

Well, we need goddesses but I don't want to be one. Hippie? I liked the fashion show and I liked the rainbow coalition but most of the hippie values were silly to me. Free love? Come on. No, it's a ruse for guys. There's no such thing. Look at the rap I got that was a list of people whose path I crossed. In the Summer of Love, they made me into this 'love bandit'. In the *Summer of Love!* So much for 'free love'! Nobody knows more than me what a ruse that was. That was a thing for guys.¹⁷

A ‘Hollywood’s Hot 100’ spread in the 3 February 1972 issue of *Rolling Stone* displayed her name surrounded by lips with arrows connecting her to various male musicians, represented with simple boxes framing their names – no lips, alas, for male musicians. The previous year, the magazine listed her as ‘Old Lady of the Year for her friendships with David Crosby, Steve Stills, Graham Nash, Neil Young, James Taylor, et al.’. In the ‘Hot 100’ graphic (see Figure 18.2), David Crosby, James Taylor, and Graham Nash share images of a halved heart in separate connections to Mitchell’s lips. Mitchell is one of four females listed on the page though the only one with a special graphic image and given an equivalent ‘star billing’ position to the male musicians.¹⁸ Reflecting on it over twenty years later, Mitchell admitted, ‘[*Rolling Stone*’s chart] was a low blow [and] made me aware that the whore/Madonna thing had not been abolished by that experiment’.¹⁹

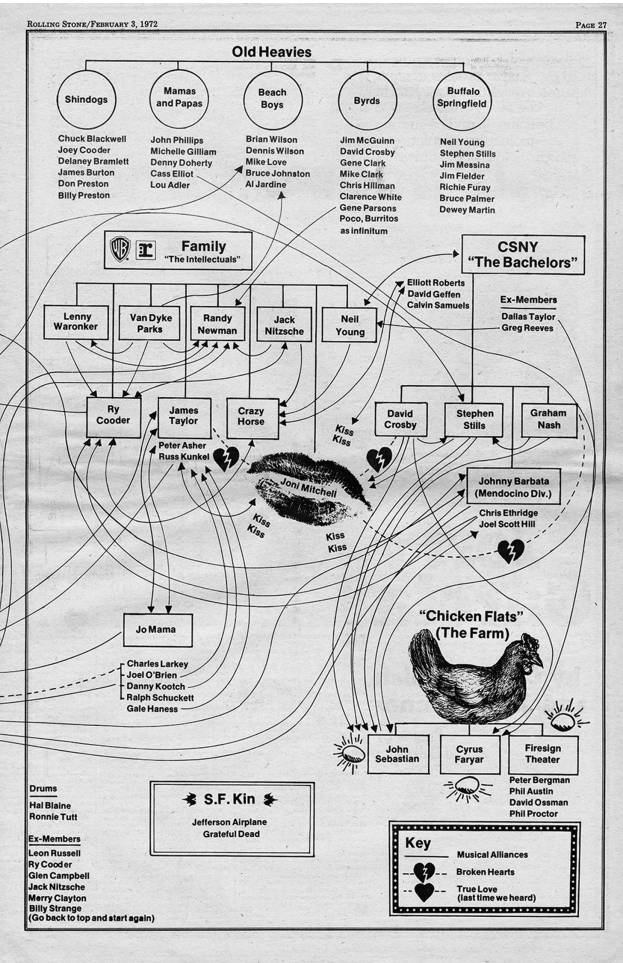


Figure 18.2. ‘Hollywood’s Hot 100’ *Rolling Stone* 3 February, 1972.

Yet, as Mitchell related to Cameron Crowe:

If I experience any frustration, it's the frustration of being misunderstood. But that's what stardom is – a glamorous misunderstanding ... I like the idea that annually there is a place where I can distribute the art that I have collected for the year. That's the only thing that I feel I want to protect, really. *And that means having a certain amount of commercial success.*²⁰

Acknowledging the contradictory pressures and privileges of commercial success, codified within her conflicted triangulation of artistic experimentation, mass popularity, and financial success, Mitchell's artistic and commercial 'independence' is not based on a feminist agenda but on the claims to an art space 'beyond' the considerations of gender. Disavowing 'the lie' of the feminist movement, she argues that even well-meaning assessments that privilege women musicians' expressive qualities miss too much, replying with a question of her own:

Do you think [the listening public] accepts [emotional expression] from a woman [as opposed to a man]? I don't know. The feedback that I get in my personal life is almost like, 'You wanted it, libertine!' I feel like I'm in the same bind. That's not going to stop me, I'm still going to do it but *I don't feel like I have the luxury [to openly express myself] because of my gender ... I wouldn't go putting it into a gender bag, at all.*²¹

Mitchell's claims for artistic authority rest on a 'gender-blind' – or, to use the term she prefers, androgynous – aesthetic. It is no compliment to be called a 'female songwriter' as it 'implies limitations [which have] always been true of women in the arts', who are seen as 'incapable of really tackling the important issues that men could tackle'.²² Her programme is not to deny her position but 'in order to create ... a rich character full of human experience [for her songs] ... you have to work with the fodder that you have'.²³ Indeed, songwriting liberated her:

I never really liked lines, class lines, you know, like social structure lines since childhood, and there were a lot of them that they tried to teach me as a child. 'Don't go there.' 'Why not?' 'Well, because they're not like us.' They try to teach you those lines ... And I ignored them always and proceeded without thinking that I was a male or a female or anything, just that *I knew these people that wrote songs and I was one of them.*²⁴

In 1975's *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* (Elektra-Asylum, 1975), Mitchell's supine swimming body appears alongside the albums lyrics and liner notes (see Figure 18.3). By contrast, the liner notes were cryptic: 'This record is a total work conceived graphically, musically, lyrically and accidentally as a whole. The performances were guided by the given compositional structures and the audibly inspired beauty of every player. The whole unfolded like a mystery. It is not my intention to unravel that mystery

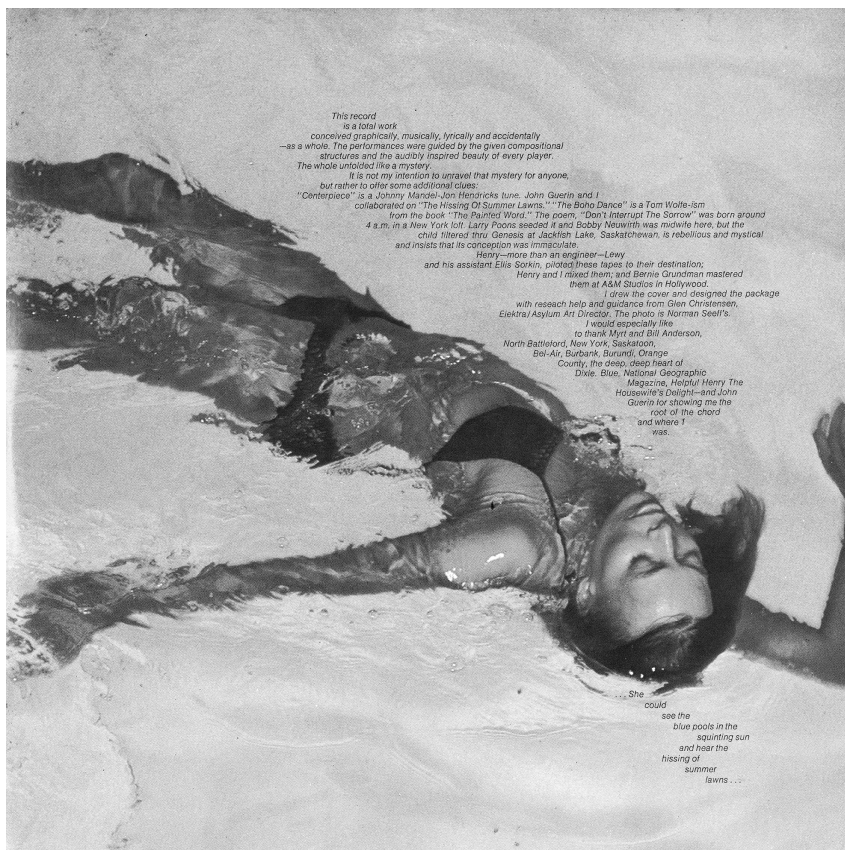


Figure 18.3. *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* (Elektra-Asylum, 1975).

for anyone, but rather to offer some additional clues'. Her ambiguity ultimately fails to displace the fundamental ideological role patriarchy plays in ascertaining musical value because it leaves male privilege untouched and, arguably, placing this text above her bikinied body plays into gendered differential power relations. Male privilege is simply obscured but not eliminated in 'gender-blind' aesthetic discourse or when masculinity is described as merely another 'choice' among gender positionings. Simply judging artistic works against a standard that is embedded within and implicated by patriarchal Western standards immediately compromises those artists who fall outside of those norms – as Mitchell does, despite her intention to produce androgynous art.²⁵

Art Nouveau

In (re)naming her 'inner black' character Art Nouveau, Mitchell referenced an early twentieth century art movement that strove to beautify

ordinary, everyday objects. The original Art Nouveau movement sought to aestheticise, in the sense of 'making beautiful', the everyday objects of ordinary life as a way to beautify an increasingly industrialised world.²⁶ Driven by a similar impulse, Mitchell meant to transform subalternity through an engagement with art. Thus, Mitchell can be seen 'making beautiful' the street hustler, the con, the pimp. Certainly, we can also view it as racist condescension – who is she, to 'make beautiful' those whose racialised bodies encounter material conditions she has never had to even consider, let alone face? As Mitchell claims in the first epigraph to this chapter, she thought she 'was black for about three years ... like there was a black poet trapped inside me'.²⁷ Similar to Norman Mailer's white Negroes,²⁸ and as Grier has also noted, Mitchell capitalises on her white privilege in accessing black masculinity in order to transcend, in her case, femaleness, generic limitations, and conventional popular music categorisations.

In this context, one of Mitchell's paintings blatantly signalled her use of black sexuality and, in particular, the black phallus, that play into tropes of black male hypersexuality, pointedly in its symbolic power over white masculinity, which is feminised in its presence, the fount of the white fear of, and desire for, blackness.²⁹ Mitchell met percussionist Don Alias when he was hired for the *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* (Elektra-Asylum 1977) sessions, beginning a nearly four-year relationship. Mitchell had painted a number of her partners and she painted one of Alias in his bathrobe. Alias describes it: 'It was me, with my bathrobe open with – bang! like this – a hard-on sticking out'.³⁰ While she eventually succumbed to his pleas about the painting, countering that it was a 'testament to his sexuality', transforming the penis into a flaccid appendage, she displayed it 'smack-dab in the middle of the living room of the loft' they shared in New York. Perhaps Mitchell was so insistent about this painting because it served as a self-portrait of sorts, recording her self-transformation from blonde waif to black stud, from hippie chick to bebop poet.

Mitchell's black phallic fixation speaks to all the criticisms her recklessness with racialised, sexualised, and gendered performances might deserve but her eagerness to display the picture 'smack-dab in the middle of the living room' reveals a typically confrontational stance. Her imperviousness to any criticism of her appropriation of subordinate identities and cultures was brought into literal sharp relief by her artwork for the cover of *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* (see Figure 18.4). Against a bare red and blue backdrop suggesting a desolate red landscape and an equally barren blue sky, Mitchell mounted a number of blue-toned black-and-white photographs, cut-and-pasted from a number of different photography sessions. Art Nouveau, leaning



Figure 18.4. *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* (Elektra-Asylum, 1977).

back, sunglasses obscuring his eyes, is physically mimicking what one imagines was the bodily stance of Mitchell's Halloween admirer, slyly speaking the title, 'Don Juan's Reckless Daughter', to us, unambiguously naming her audacity and hinting at his possible role in her adventures. As Gayle Wald asks in an insightful discussion of another 'white Negro', jazz musician Milton 'Mezz' Mezzrow, 'To what degree do individuals exercise volition over racial identity, or how is volition over the terms of identity itself a function of, and a basis for, racial identity and identity-formation ... and to what degree is such imagined racial or cultural mobility itself predicated upon a correspondingly rigid and immobile conception of "blackness"?'³¹

Grier answers Wald's question, noting critically, 'Mitchell has shown that her transcendence of racial boundaries, at least, depends upon *others*' upholding their essential functions ... Wisdom is of the North and the white race; heart comes from the soulful blacks of the south. Clarity is the gift of the East's intelligent yellow race and introspection from the spiritual red men of the West,'³² locating Mitchell's racial crossing as

another instance of white privilege. Yet while dependent on non-white essentialisms, Mitchell has often complicated this relationship. At an infamous 1970 Isle of Wight Festival performance, she was interrupted by an acquaintance of hers named Yogi Joe, who was subsequently taken off the stage by stage hands – an action which prompted boos and yells of disapproval from the audience. In her emotional response to the crowd, Mitchell explicitly disconnected ethnic or racial background from cultural authenticity in her appeal that the audience calm down and let her perform: 'Last Sunday I went to a Hopi ceremonial dance in the desert and there were a lot of people there and there were tourists ... and there were tourists who were getting into it like Indians and there were Indians getting into it like tourists, and I think that you're acting like tourists, man. Give us some respect'.³³ Her delineation between 'tourists' and 'Indians' as 'inauthentic' and 'authentic' experiences drain those categories of conventional, even normative, essentialisms and transposes them in a similar way that her blackface persona, Art Nouveau, highlights the constructedness of blackness and masculinity.

But it also reveals the fragility of artifice in the service of art. The self-awareness of the artifice involved in Mitchell's appeal to her audiences is never adequate to the task of 'saving' her. Mitchell, describing her aesthetic at the time of *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*, positioned herself outside of musical norms:

Even though popularly I'm accused more and more of having less and less melody, in fact the opposite is true – there's more melody and so they can't comprehend it anymore. So I'm an oddball, I'm not part of any group anymore but I'm attached in certain ways to all of them, all of the ones that I've come through. I'm not a jazz musician and I'm not a classical musician, but I touch them all!³⁴

Mitchell's sense of 'non-belonging' from conventional musical categories can be seen in Ariel Swartley's review of *Mingus* for *Rolling Stone* magazine: 'It's been a long time since her songs had much to do with whatever's current in popular music. (She would prefer we call them art-songs.) But then, she doesn't so much come on as an outsider, but as a habitual non-expert. She's the babe in bopperland, the novice at the slot machines, the tourist, the hitcher'.³⁵

Mitchell, however, argues that rather than 'habitual non-expert', she is a 'consistent non-belonger', declaring:

If you want to put me in a group – I tell you, nobody ever puts me in the right group ... I'm not a folk musician ... You know, melodically, folk musicians were playing three-chord changes. [*I had*] the desire to write [*lyrics*] with more content with a desire for more complex melody – [*that*] was my creative objective. That is not folk music.³⁶

Conclusion

In an interview at the time of the release of the *Mingus* recording, Mitchell cited Mingus' 'If Charlie Parker Was a Gunslinger, There'd Be a Whole Lot of Dead Copycats' as an example of her position on this issue:

Sometimes I find myself sharing this point of view. He figured you don't settle for anything else but uniqueness. The name of the game to him – and to me – is to become a full individual. I remember a time when I was very flattered if somebody told me that I was as good as Peter, Paul and Mary. Or that I sounded like Judy Collins. Then one day I discovered I didn't want to be a second-rate anything.³⁷

As a quick perusal through interviews and reviews reveals, she has also been called self-indulgent, opinionated, over-reaching, and pretentious – often by individuals who find her music appealing (at least some of it, most of the time). As Janet Maslin tersely summed up in her review of *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*, 'These days, Mitchell appears bent on repudiating her own flair for popular songwriting, and on staking her claim to

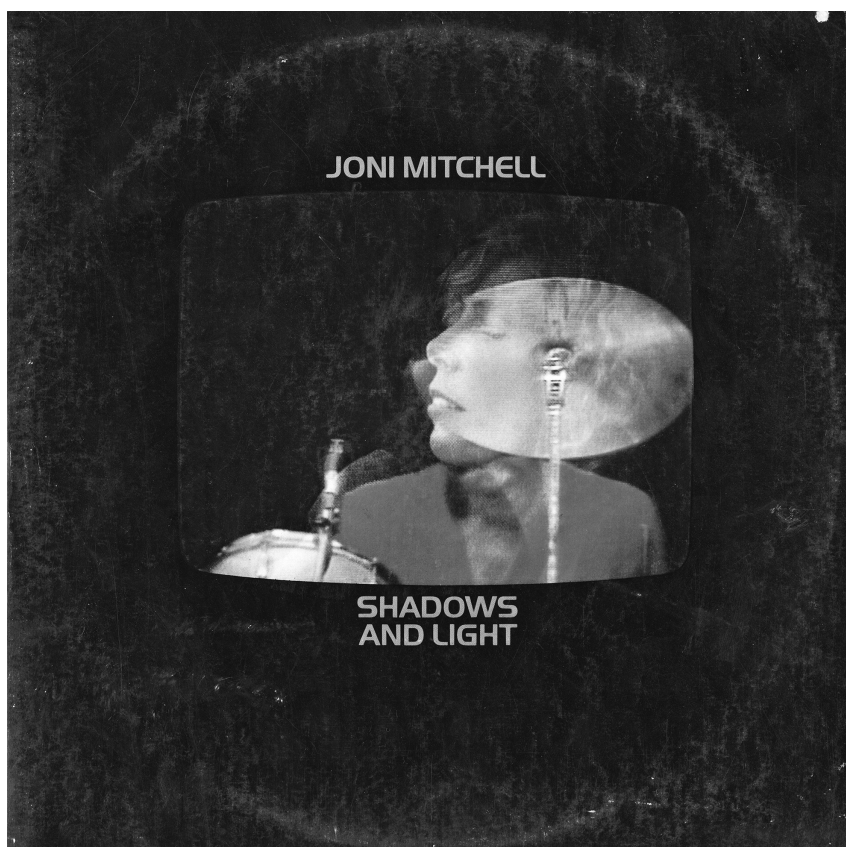


Figure 18.5. *Shadows and Light* (Elektra-Asylum, 1980).

the kind of artistry that, when it's real, doesn't need to announce itself so stridently'.³⁸

The cover of the live concert recording, *Shadows and Light* (Elektra-Asylum 1980), provides us with a final arresting visual image (see Figure 18.5). Centred on a black background, a double-exposed photographic image places Mitchell and Alias together within the small frame. Mitchell's face is slightly obscured as it merges with Alias' cymbals, his face hidden behind hers. His body is somewhat visible and the result is a jarring image of Mitchell's profile sitting atop a black male body. Is this yet another case of Mitchell's racial and gender masking or passing, another fanciful self-portrait? Undermining Maslin's accusatory dismissal, the image is both revealing and cryptic, unfolding 'like a mystery [though Mitchell has no] intention to unravel that mystery for anyone', a figure of shadows and light.³⁹

Notes

1 Vic Garbarini, 'Joni Mitchell Is A Nervy Broad', *Musician* (1983), p. 52.

2 Jian Ghomeshi, 'Joni Mitchell on Q'. *Q with Jian Ghomeshi* Canadian Broadcast Company (2013). Available at: www.cbc.ca/player/AudioMobile/Q/ID/2390721282/ (accessed 1 January 2014).

3 Mitchell is the subject of the chapter, 'Don Juan's Reckless Daughter', in Kevin Fellezs, *Birds of Fire: Jazz, Rock, Funk and the Creation of Fusion* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

4 The first quote is from Laura Campbell, 'Joni Chic', *Sunday Telegraph* (08 February 1998). Available at: jonimitchell.com/library/view.cfm?id=367&from=search (accessed 20 September 2003); the second quote is from Ariel Swartley, 'The Babe in Bopperland and the Great Jazz Composer', *Rolling Stone* (6 September 1979), pp. 53–5.

5 Karen O'Brien, *Joni Mitchell, Shadows and Light: The Definitive Biography* (London: Virgin Books, Ltd., 2002), p. 30.

6 Mitchell gave the baby up for adoption while married. The father of her daughter, Kilauren Gibb, is Brad MacMath.

7 Quoted in Katherine Monk, *Joni: The Creative Odyssey of Joni Mitchell* (Vancouver, Toronto, and Berkeley: Greystone Books, 2012), p. 4, added emphasis.

8 Miles Park Grier, 'The Only Black Man at the Party: Joni Mitchell Enters the Rock Canon', *Genders* 56 (2012), p. 1.

9 For a brilliant analysis of blackface minstrelsy and the continuing resonance of its legacy, see Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford University Press, 1993).

10 Mitchell, as quoted in Monk, *Joni*, p. 1.

Sheila Weller, however, has Mitchell saying, 'I was the only black man in the room', in Sheila Weller, *Girls Like Us: Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon and the Journey of a Generation* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2008), p. 425.

11 Mary Dickie, 'No Borders Here', *Impact* (1994). Available at: jonimitchell.com/library/view.cfm?id=628, accessed on 22 September 2015 (originally sourced at www.jmdl.cml/articles/print.cfm?id=628, accessed on 22 December 2003).

12 Cameron Crowe, 'Joni Mitchell', in Peter Herbst (ed.), *The Rolling Stone Interviews, 1967–1980: Talking with the Legends of Rock & Roll*. (New York: St. Martin's, 1981), p. 381.

13 All quotes from advertisement in *Rolling Stone*, 14 May 1970, no. 58, p. 17.

14 Dickie, 'No Borders Here', added emphasis.

15 Malka Marom, *Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words, Conversations with Malka Marom* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2014), p. 62.

16 Gerri Hirshey, 'Women Who Rocked the World', *Rolling Stone*, 13 November 1997, p. 64, added emphasis.

17 Ghomeshi, 'Joni Mitchell on Q', n.p.

18 The only other females are Michelle Gilliam (Phillips), Cass Elliot, and Merry Clayton, one of the few non-whites on the page, which speaks to the assumed reader and editorial perspective of the rock-oriented *Rolling Stone* magazine.

19 Barney Hoskyns, 'Our Lady of the Sorrows', *Mojo*, December 1994. Available at: jonimitchell.com/library/view.cfm?id=193 (originally sourced at www.jmdl.com/articles/view.cfm?id=193, accessed 20 September 2003).

- 20 Crowe, 'Joni Mitchell', 386–7, added emphasis.
- 21 Bill Flanagan, 'Joni Mitchell Loses Her Cool', *Musician*, December 1985, pp. 70, 72, added emphasis.
- 22 Lindsay Moon (transcriber), 'Words and Music: Joni Mitchell and Morrissey', quotations from an interview conducted by (Steven) Morrissey of The Smiths, originally published in *Rolling Stone*, 6 March 1997; a fuller version of the interview was subsequently released on a promotional CD by Reprise Records to radio stations to promote her twin releases at the time, *Hits* and *Misses*. The quotations I take are from the promotional CD, transcribed by Lindsay Moon, whose transcription can be accessed at: jonimitchell.com/library/view.cfm?id=678 (originally sourced at www.jmdl.com/articles/view.cfm?id=678, accessed 18 September 2003).
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 This is the reason I attend to the gendered dynamics circulating within the discursive arena in which Mitchell operated, quite unlike Lloyd Whitesell's decision that 'while I would like to draw attention to the hierarchy of prestige within popular music, according to which women's intellectual production has been historically undervalued, I agree wholeheartedly with the view that Mitchell's accomplishment should stand or fall on its own merits, without respect to gender'; Lloyd Whitesell, *The Music of Joni Mitchell* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 5. As noted in the text, this does little to challenge the differential gendered power dynamics that frame aesthetic evaluations which, I argue, Mitchell's work directly opposes and which deserves our critical attention.
- 26 For a comprehensive analysis of the Art Nouveau movement, see Maly Gerhardus, *Symbolism and Art Nouveau: Sense of Impending Crisis, Refinement of Sensibility, and Life Reborn in Beauty* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1979), English translation by Alan Bailey.
- 27 Garbarini, 'Joni Mitchell Is A Nervy Broad', p. 52.
- 28 See Norman Mailer, 'The White Negro: Superficial Reflections on the Hipster', originally published in the summer 1957 issue of the journal, *Dissent*.
- 29 See David Roediger, *How Race Survived US History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon* (New York: Verso, 2008) for a cogent historical analysis of race and racism in the US, particularly in the ways white supremacy maintains its hegemonic status.
- 30 All quotes this paragraph from Weller, *Girls Like Us*, p. 430, original emphasis.
- 31 Gayle Wald, 'Mezz Mezzrow and the Voluntary Negro Blues', in Harilaos Stecopoulos and Michael Uebel (eds.), *Race and the Subject of Masculinities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997): 116–37, at p. 117.
- 32 Grier, 'The Only Black Man at the Party', p. 10.
- 33 Quoted in the film, *Message To Love: The Isle of Wight Festival 1970* (directed and produced by Murray Lerner, Castle Music Pictures, 1997), as well as on the sound recording of the same name (Columbia/Legacy C2K 65058).
- 34 Anthony Fawcett, *California Rock, California Sound* (Los Angeles, CA: Reed, 1978), pp. 57–8.
- 35 Swartley, 'The Babe in Bopperland', p. 55.
- 36 Lindsay Moon (transcriber), 'Joni Mitchell Interview for Canadian Broadcast Company "Magazine"', added emphasis. Moon's transcription is available at: jonimitchell.com/library/view.cfm?id=904 (originally sourced at www.jmdl.com/articles/view.cfm?id=904, accessed 18 September 2003).
- 37 Crowe, 'Joni Mitchell', p. 388.
- 38 Janet Maslin, 'Joni Mitchell's Reckless and Shapeless "Daughter"', *Rolling Stone* 9 March 1978, p. 54.
- 39 Mitchell, liner notes to *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* (Elektra-Asylum 1975).