



Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words

Joni Mitchell , Malka Marom

Download now

Read Online →

Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words

Joni Mitchell , Malka Marom

Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words Joni Mitchell , Malka Marom

When singer, musician, and broadcast journalist Malka Marom had the opportunity to interview Joni Mitchell in 1973, she was eager to reconnect with the performer she'd first met late one night in 1966 at a Yorkville coffeehouse. More conversations followed over the next four decades of friendship, and it was only after Joni and Malka completed their last recorded interview, in 2012, that Malka discovered the heart of their discussions: the creative process.

In *Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words*, Joni and Malka follow this thread through seven decades of life and art, discussing the influence of Joni's childhood, love and loss, playing dives and huge festivals, acclaim and criticism, poverty and affluence, glamorous triumphs and tragic mistakes . . .

This riveting narrative, told in interviews, lyrics, paintings, and photographs, is shared in the hope of illuminating a timeless body of work and inspiring others.

Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words Details

Date : Published September 9th 2014 by ECW Press (first published January 1st 2014)

ISBN : 9781770411326

Author : Joni Mitchell , Malka Marom

Format : Hardcover 292 pages

Genre : Music, Biography, Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Art

 [Download Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words Joni Mitchell , Malka Marom

From Reader Review Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words for online ebook

Mark says

Joni Mitchell is certainly a woman of her own, and has spent her life insisting on a public perception of herself as such. There have been a good number of betrayals of her trust by numerous lovers or business associates, but she has held on to her inner dignity with a grace few celebrities manage to accomplish, less even still than "common folk." I admire this iconoclasm on her part. What she says about culture and musicians today rings true for me- everyone wants to be derivative of something, people are afraid to be individuals. Witness all the different "tribute" bands are out there, milking the legacy of their idols while saying absolutely nothing of their own artistically. So there's a point I certainly agree on with her... She is definitely in a league of her own, for all the attempts people in the media or "the industry" wish to pigeonhole her. I may not be a great fan of her later work, but several of her early albums definitely had a great effect on me. I find her approach to the world refreshing and needed. Maybe I admire that in her as well...

Sissy Van Dyke says

There is nothing worse than reading a biography of an idol and coming away with a tarnished admiration. I was so relieved to come to the end of this book of first-hand interviews of Joni Mitchell, who I have adored all of my adult life, with even more appreciation for Mitchell as an artist and as a person. In these interviews, Malka Marom, who is a long-time friend, asks the sort of questions that I would want to ask, if she were my friend. She answers the questions honestly, often graphically, often controversially. I came away with an image of Mitchell as flawed, endlessly interesting, lonely, and fiercely independent artist. I loved this book.

Jim Coughenour says

Sometime in the late 90s I heard John Kelly do Joni Mitchell at Josie's Cabaret & Juice Joint in San Francisco – a performance that hovered comically, magically, on the threshold between parody and homage. The crowd (Joni aficionados all) pitched at the edge of their folding chairs and as the first chords of one of Mitchell's standards sounded, you'd hear delighted chuckling and low murmurs of "I love this song!" My appreciation for Joni falls firmly in this mingled mess of reflexive irony, nectarous nostalgia and amazement.

So when I spotted Malka Marom's book of interviews on a table at Green Arcades I thought, really? Is there anything there? Something pushed me to pick it up. I read it all on a couple flights back and forth across the continent, impressed beyond expectation by Mitchell's life as an artist as much as by her artistry. Malka has known Joni from the beginning of her career; the interviews span the decades. Marom does a fine job editing these interviews. Instead of straight chronology she mixes things up a bit, including snippets from her interviews with musicians and producers who worked with Joni. The conversations transcend gossip or autobiography: the thread running through them is the creative process, what it means to honor one's muse, to keep exploring.

As I write this review Mitchell is silent, recovering from an aneurysm, and Prince has just died. An early recording of Prince performing "A Case of You" has just been posted on YouTube – a tender coda to the

lives of two exceptional, incomparable musicians.

Koeoaddi says

Fascinating! As one of those fans Joni derrides who is all about the first six albums, I would have liked the book better if she talked more about their creation and her life in those days. Can't say I blame her for not wanting to live in the past, though I do think she underates her early work and overrates her 'pioneering' later jazz and political stuff. Loved to hear about her creative process, her life and her frequent cantankerous snark.

ETA: Joni Mitchell is in a coma.

[UPDATE: her website now says she is not in a coma!]

*"show 'em you won't expire
not till you burn up every passion
not even when you die"*

Dave says

This book is lovingly put together--great interviews by Marom interspersed with apropos song lyrics and pictures of and by Joni. The hardest thing about this book is Mitchell herself. Admittedly not an easy person to work or live with, she annoys because she is so convinced that she's a Great Artist, and that most people Just Don't Get It. Would I find her point of view as thorny if she were a man? I definitely would. Do I think she's had a much harder row to hoe being a woman with this point of view? I definitely do.

The song lyrics make me remember that the songs are the point in the first place. Nothing here--not her disavowal of feminism, of any contemporaries, of people who think Morgellons is a made-up illness--makes me want to lose these songs. I want to try to hear more of them. Favorites I've heard: "Amelia," "Lesson in Survival," "Little Green," "Urge for Going," "The Wolf That Lives in Lindsey," "People's Parties," "The Last Time I Saw Richard." Favorites I've never heard: "The Three Great Stimulants," "Tax Free," "The Magdalene Laundries," "Face Lift."

Kelley says

I fell in love (again!) with Joni Mitchell reading this book. The way she made a name for herself in such a male-dominated field, and also transcribed and listened to exactly what was in her heart. It made for such beautiful music.

The way the book is written, in a dialogue style, it almost feels like I am listening to them when I remember my favorite parts. I tried to listen to each song when it was mentioned, which I wish I had done even more of because it added substantially to the experience and allowed me to pause and take in what she was trying to relay.

Joni's view of the world is inspiring, and her in-depth understanding of music is fascinating even if you don't play an instrument. It also helped me discover and appreciate her jazz phase and what it meant for her own evolution. I had only really appreciated her early work before. She is a quintessential artist to her core, with a lot of wisdom about the world.

Carol says

Short version: As others have noted, this is not really a biography; it's an exploration of Joni Mitchell's views of her own musical artistry, as told to & by one of her friends. The interviews largely touch on those incidents in Mitchell's life that have inspired her lyrics and as such are most valuable as a gloss on those lyrics. The interviews also describe aspects of her musical style and how she has sought to change it -- what she wanted to do & the extent to which she felt she succeeded.

The book does what it sets out to do: it presents Mitchell in her own words -- that's why much of the reaction that's ostensibly towards the book is really aimed at Mitchell the person. In these interviews, Mitchell does come across as egotistical, but... she has a lot to be egotistical about. She does seem defensive about some of her struggles in the music business, but when I caught myself rolling my eyes about that, I had to ask myself whether I hadn't encountered similar issues in 30 years as a mere corporate cog in a male industry, & isn't it true that we're all social animals who will be affected by the world in which we live? If business forces attempt to push you one way, & you push back, all that pushing will cause distortions somewhere -- it would be a miracle if Mitchell had whatever a "perfect" personality might be -- just because she's a genius doesn't mean she isn't human, too.

I still enjoy listening to many of the musicians I listened to when I was young & in several cases, I have kept buying their newer music. With Mitchell, I often hear new things in the older music; she doesn't inspire nostalgia so much as a fresh listen, & she continued to evolve. I respect her as a poet, musician, and artist. When someone has a strong, (in my case) 40+ year appreciation of an artist, if I read an interview depicting her as a person other than what my imagination & her songs created, & that view is not of a self-deprecating saint, *so what?* Is my pleasure in her artistry suddenly lost forever? My tastes aren't quite so porcelain. I plan on listening again to some number of her albums, probably with access to the book to look up things as I listen.

To focus on the book as a book (rather than on Mitchell herself), I found the section in which Mitchell spoke about the rules or laws of music & how they related to limitations in recording technology the most interesting because I had never heard that before -- e.g., that the size of record tracks in 33.3 records affected how anyone could use bass, for example. We take the technology for granted -- as if it's passive -- & don't always recognize the role it plays in shaping the end product. Also, I was struck by how wise Mitchell was to have figured out that if she kept her production costs low, she didn't have to produce Top 40 hits because she could still keep the record company profit margins high enough to leave her free to do what she wanted. I don't hear that kind of business savvy from most artists, especially not from one so dedicated to her art for art's sake. At another point, Mitchell talks about how little an established artist can advise an up & comer, but I think that insight about production costs, profit margins, & artistic freedom would be one useful thing young folks would benefit from hearing.

At one point, Mitchell talked about how unhelpful it is to think of the allegory of Adam & Eve as being about sex -- that it's the duality that represents the fall from grace. This idea is repeated again & again in the poetry of William Blake (& Blake was both artist & poet) so asking Mitchell about Blake seemed a very natural line of inquiry. But Marom didn't mention it, which was disappointing. There have been a few times when Mitchell has written songs that used poetry or other written work as starting points: *Shades of Scarlett*

Conquering, Slouching Towards Bethlehem, etc. I wonder why she never used Blake, and I was chagrined Marom didn't ask.

In addition, I would have been interested to learn more about Mitchell's art -- a small amount of it was shown in the book (by the way, I prefer a simple touch Nook for reading, but when I finished, I did look at this ebook on my iPad because I wanted to see the colors in the paintings. The paintings reproduced well enough, but I was disappointed to note that some of the photos were distorted to fit on the page.) The art of Mitchell's with which I am most familiar tends to be self-portraits. Is this because I've mostly seen album covers? Does she favor self-portraiture? In her music, she often used unusual chords -- did she have an unusual palette? Oils or acrylics? This could have been an interesting appendix, at least, or perhaps booksellers could have included a catalog from an exhibit of Mitchell's work in their promos of this book.

Marom clearly cares about art herself (but didn't know Mary Cassatt?), so I was hopeful that she would have had more to ask on the subject. But she didn't. I also wished Mitchell & Marom had discussed Emily Carr more. She's not as well known in the US (or the world) as she deserves to be -- if she were an American instead of a Canadian, I think her reputation would be as big or bigger than Georgia O'Keefe's. Mitchell talked about Carr a little as an artist and some as a writer, but additional material on the subject by Marom (an appendix, perhaps?), for the edification of ignorant Americans would have been delightful. Similarly, a footnote (if not an appendix) on the work of Helen Lucas would have been another delightful introduction -- did Mitchell know Lucas? Did Lucas inspire her art? Did she use any of the techniques Lucas used (e.g., staining the canvas)? Elsewhere in the book, Mitchell took pleasure in being the means of enabling others to become better known or to further their art -- wouldn't this have pleased her?

Another set of questions nagged -- Canada offers some unusual light conditions for painters. Did Mitchell ever seek to do anything with the midnight suns of summer, which was a preoccupation of the Impressionists in Scandinavia? There's a great Mitchell painting of the sun on the prairie snow -- how did she use color to capture that light? The coastal part of British Columbia is a temperate rain forest -- how does she capture light in the gray? In the forest? In the shade? These are the sorts of questions about Mitchell's art that I still had at the end of the book.

4cats says

If you are thinking, great, finally a Joni Mitchell biography, then think again. *Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words* is not a typical chronological biography, it is the transcripts of 3 interviews carried out by Malka Marom over the period of 35 years give or take a year. Marom is herself a singer and performer who has crossed over into the world of broadcaster and documentary maker. She first encountered Joni in a coffee house in 1966 and was entranced by the genius that is Joni Mitchell. In 1973 Malka had the opportunity to interview Joni and this and 2 subsequent interviews are the basis of this book.

What you get is a fascinating insight into the mind and the creative genius of Joni, you can see where her inspiration lies and how she has always pushed the boundaries of music, crossing from genre to genre, building upon her own personal musicianship and blending it with other great musicians from around the world. Joni Mitchell in my opinion is one of the greatest talents to emerge in the second half of the 20th century, this gifted musician, poet and artist/producer, all of which she excels at, has never had the praise that many of her male counterparts have been given and yet her music and art are as unique, fresh, forward thinking as the day they were put down on tape or paper.

This is a great book for anyone fascinated by Joni Mitchell, not only do you see something of the real woman, but to show the creative process her lyrics/poetry and art are used throughout to give us an inkling

into how this great artist works.

And so on a final note, In Her Own Words is a must for fans and for anyone who loves music, poetry and art. But don't expect a page by page biography of her life and loves. This is quite special.

Tom Schulte says

This is a fascinating look at Joni's career over the decades in a series of interviews done by a Canadian musician-journalist who Joni knows and is very comfortable with. Her insights into the music business, the challenges she has encountered, and people she has worked are both entertaining and enlightening. She talks at some length about Tom Scott, Dylan, Leonard Cohen, and others. Much is covered about individual albums, their creation, and lyrics from this painter-cum-poet singer. Note this audiobook has no audio from Joni herself.

One thing that really struck me that Joni is quoted on about changing studio technology is how in the '70s the marketing expectation of 10 or so tracks on a vinyl LP and the fact that bass sounds widened LP grooves meant prominent rhythm sections and even some instrumentation had to be foregone in the studio. Engineering limitations intruding on art - very interesting.

Kathleen says

I enjoyed listening to the audiobook JONI MITCHELL: IN HER OWN WORDS by Malka Marom and narrated by Carrington MacDuffie. Malka is a singer, musician and broadcast journalist. Joni is a Canadian singer-songwriter and artist born in 1943.

Malka's first meeting with Joni Mitchell was late one night in 1966 at a Yorkville coffeehouse. Joni's music style and range of voice made a lasting impression on Malka.

This biography is an edited script of recorded interviews between Joni and Malka from the year 1973 to 2012. These conversations are about Joni Mitchell's art and life and her creative process being influenced by her childhood, love and loss, playing at coffeehouses, nightclubs and huge festivals, criticism and praise, poverty and wealth, dazzling accolades and disastrous mistakes.

JONI MITCHELL: IN HER OWN WORDS would appeal to fans of Kim Mitchell, and anyone who loves music, poetry and art.

3 stars

Macgurrl says

This book is made up of 3 interviews that Malka Marom conducted in 1973, 1979 and 2012. Usually, I am reluctant to read books of interviews, you sometimes feel that you have heard, read and seen it all. In this case there are layers upon layers of Joni to uncover even if you are a fan.

The interviews take you from her early days in Saskatchewan and what it was like growing up with polio to parents who didn't support her. She talks about her teenage pregnancy and what it was like for a woman in music in the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Not only was she a songwriter but, also a band leader which was unheard

of in that era. It was one thing to be the “girl” singer but, to call the shots was difficult and Joni faced a lot of obstacles in a male dominated industry.

You find out that being Joni hasn't been easy. She basically lives a very solitary life and perhaps that is the price she has paid for being herself. She is honest, outspoken and at time even egotistical, she doesn't have much to hide. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and couldn't wait for the next page, chapter or day until I opened it.

Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words

Kåre says

Joni er kunstner med stort k, men hun har enkelte ok refleksioner. Fx overvejer hun, hvad hendes rigdom gør ved relationen til fans/købere.

Fin sladder om kendte.

Direkte interessante ting om hendes fag, faglige valg. Ærgerligt, at hun ikke bare kan fortælle dette, men skal pakke det ind i al den modstand, som hun føler sig udsat for. Hovedhistorien bliver derfor klicheen om, at hun som kunstner skaber og fornyer på trods af alle andres forstokkethed.

Freda Mans-Labianca says

A fantastic book! Whether you are a fan or just know who Joni Mitchell is, by the end of this book, you will be a fan.

Have you ever watched those celebrity biography shows where they interview them and show us tidbits of their lives? That's what this is, and episode of that in book format. It plays out so well in your mind because of all the personal photos that are included. You never lose sight of where you are in her life. Even though I was already a fan, I feel I know so much more about Joni Mitchell now and am a bigger fan now.

The ending felt cut-off, but I suppose the end of an interview tape would be.

This is now one of my favorite celebrity biographies to date.

Ray Campbell says

Back in the 70s, when I first came across Joni, I was told that she didn't give interviews. My cooler more in the know friends told me that Joni was something of a space cadet and she'd been criticized for making comments to reporters that were more or less incoherent. I was disappointed, but loved her music none the less.

As a somewhat more mature adult I understand that Joni isn't a space cadet, she's an artist. The same genius that paints pictures in words and melodies, poetic phrases, stories and literary references might make her hard to follow in conversation and difficult to quote from backstage interviews. Marom, on the other hand, did long form interviews and selects Joni's words as artfully as Joni articulates them.

In "Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words", Malka Marom takes the best of three interviews she did with Joni over the past fifty years and mixes them with the lyrics of Joni's songs to create a career retrospective. In the interviews, Joni quotes her own lyrics, tells stories of her life and loves and rambles off just the way you'd expect.

I treasure Joni Mitchell. Her music has always spoken to me in ways no other music has. The reason is her ability to communicate impressions with sound and words. If you know her music, you know her. This book confirmed that for me. Reading her lyrics, I could hear her songs play. Reading her stories, I could imagine her in the studio, on the road, hanging out with Leonard Cohen... good book!

Sandy says

I was 16 and filled with typical teenage angst when I discovered the album, **Song to a Seagull. My friend and I sat in her room listening to it over and over. The same friend and I continuously listened to every track on Ladies of the Canyon while sipping Red Mountain Pink Chablis and smoking cigarettes in our San Francisco flat.**

Many people remember Joni Mitchell for Both Sides Now, Big Yellow Taxi, Woodstock and Circle Game. There is so much more to Joni Mitchell's work. The Hissing of Summer Lawns, Hejira and Don Juan's Reckless Daughter are brilliant albums. The addition of Jaco Pastorius as bass player, the collaboration with Charles Mingus and her gifted, unusual style of tuning are often overlooked examples. She's been called the "James Joyce of guitar tuning." There is a photo in the book of Eric Clapton watching her play in an informal gathering with David Crosby and Mikey Dolenz. Clapton is staring at her hands with a quizzical expression, mouth agape because he can't figure out what she's doing. Joni is also a gifted painter. "I have a painter's mentality rather than a musician's or poet's", she says.

In Her Own Words with Malka Maron took place in 3 separate interviews. It is really more like listening in on conversations with a friend than an interview. The first occurred in 1973, the second in 1979 and the final in 2012. The beauty of spacing these interviews is that the reader hears Joni's perspective on her work at the time of the interview and reflections about that work in later years. At times I found Joni somewhat arrogant, but as I thought further, it was not arrogance. It was really about her artistic integrity, her confidence in the direction she wished her work to take and her desire to control how her work is produced. She often references Nietzsche and how he influenced her songs, but that went over my head. I laughed when she revealed that her mother complained about the money they wasted on piano lessons. "All that money we spent, and you quit!" This was after 12 albums and a Carnegie Hall Concert.

I thoroughly enjoyed these interviews, mostly because it reminded me how much I loved her work for so many years, through all, well almost all, of her transitions. Her words were often precise expressions of my own thoughts that I was unable to convey. *"Restless sweeps like fire and rain over virgin wilderness. It prowls like hookers and thieves through bolt locked tenements. Behind my bolt locked door, the eagle and the serpent are at war in me. The serpent fighting for blind desire. The eagle for clarity." In my case, the eagle won and I'm content.*
