

Joni Mitchell - Blue (1971)

Written by bluelover

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- A1 All I Want 3:33
- A2 My Old Man 3:35
- A3 Little Green 3:28
- A4 Carey 3:03 [play](#)
- A5 Blue 3:04 [play](#)
- B1 California 3:51
- B2 This Flight Tonight 2:52
- B3 River 4:05
- B4 A Case of You 4:23
- B5 The Last Time I Saw Richard 4:16

James Taylor Jr.- Guitar

Sneaky Pete Kleinow- Guitar, Pedal Steel, Guitar (Steel)

Russ Kunkel- Drums

Joni Mitchell- Guitar, Piano, Composer, Keyboards, Vocals

Stephen Stills- Bass, Guitar, Guitar (Bass)

James Taylor- Guitar, Vocals

Sad, spare, and beautiful, Blue is the quintessential confessional singer/songwriter album. Fortright and poetic, Joni Mitchell's songs are raw nerves, tales of love and loss (two words with relative meaning here) etched with stunning complexity; even tracks like "All I Want," "My Old Man," and "Carey" -- the brightest, most hopeful moments on the record -- are darkened by bittersweet moments of sorrow and loneliness. At the same time that songs like "Little Green" (about a child given up for adoption) and the title cut (a hymn to salvation supposedly penned for James Taylor) raise the stakes of confessional folk-pop to new levels of honesty and openness, Mitchell's music moves beyond the constraints of acoustic folk into more intricate and diverse territory, setting the stage for the experimentation of her later work. Unrivaled in its intensity and insight, Blue remains a watershed. --Jason Ankeny, *All Music Guide*.

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Joni Mitchell would go on from this '71 recording to make more popular, more ambitious, and more challenging albums, but she's never made a better one. Working with minimal accompaniment (Stephen Stills and James Taylor are two of the four sidemen), the Canadian thrush summoned an involving song cycle of romance found and lost. Though Blue is an uncommonly intimate representation, it's also astonishingly open and gracious. Songs such as "All I Want," "Carey," "California," and "A Case of You" work equally well as poetry and pop music. --*Steve Stolder*.

`Blue' is Joni Mitchell's fourth album, first released in June, 1971, after the seminal and deservedly famous previous album, `Ladies of the Canyon'. Listening to `Blue' now, after 35 years, I am surprised that there is not a single memorable song on the whole album, compared to the five or more major anthems of the generation on the previous recording. And yet, everything which is so strong and so good about Joni Mitchell's songwriting is on this album, in spades. Contrary to the title's inclination, most of the album seems to be more about times and places than it is about colors or moods. The single strongest aspect of Mitchell's songwriting is her ability to evoke a mood by a great use of little details. Listening to the song `Carey' makes you look forward to spending some time at a place called the Mermaid café on some beach on the Riviera with the warm winds blowing in from Africa, as I contemplate going to Amsterdam or Rome. Blue should not be the first Joni Mitchell album you should buy, but it should be near the top of your list. The album also gives you the sense that you may want to bypass all the `Best of' collections and stick to simply collecting all the original releases, as you really don't want to miss any of Ms. Mitchell's great little three minute dramas. --*B. Marold*.

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