

Poetic Dimensions

By **Azzie Wagner**



Stretching The Boundaries Of Pop Music

Joan Armatrading has received great praise for her musical talents, but when a magazine like *Newsweek* describes her as "stretching the boundaries of pop music," they're talking about a process that is mainly the result of Joan's own hard work. Born on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts and raised in Birmingham, England, the A&M recording artist's musical craft was largely self-taught, and against rather difficult odds.

"I didn't have anyone to teach me guitar," confesses Joan, who *Gentleman's Quarterly* observed, "plays a mean acoustic guitar."

"I had to teach myself," Joan relates. "I suppose that's why I sound different, because I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't learn from a book. I searched out notes, and if it sounded good I kept it."

When Joan arrived from St. Kitts in Birmingham to join her parents at age seven, there already was music in her family. Her father -- a fireman and carpenter -- played part-time in a band. But despite the fact that her father played guitar, Joan had to face a considerable obstacle.

"My father would be playing guitar around the house," explains Joan, "but when I came around, he'd stop." Obviously anxious for his daughter to pursue something other than music, Joan's father would "hide the guitar on a shelf high above my head and slam the door of the room so I couldn't get it."

But Joan's determination won out. "The fact that my father had the guitar made me really determined to play," she confesses. Finally, swapping two baby carriages for a guitar in a second-hand shop, Joan began to apply herself earnestly to music.

Despite the fact that she was mainly occupied with cooking and caring for her brothers -- two older and two younger -- and younger sister, Joan spent her spare time learning music, starting to write songs soon after she taught herself to play.

"My mother bought herself a piano as a piece of furniture," she says. Assigned to the task of polishing the instrument, "I also started to make things up on that." Joan's homegrown talent was so impressive that when at age 18 she went with a friend who was auditioning for *Hair*, it was Joan's off-the-cuff audition that won her a part.

Today, what the *Boston*

Phoenix calls Joan's "brilliant unorthodoxy" as a musician has earned her 19 gold and three platinum discs in eleven different countries, with sales totaling close to six million albums.

"This is extraordinary music from a most extraordinary woman," said New York's *Daily News* of Joan's talent. Extraordinary too, because Joan's sound stems from her strong desire to make music, and a determination to succeed that proves the power of perseverance.

A Man Of Skill And Talent

"You can dig a hole with a teaspoon or a shovel--it just takes longer to do it with a teaspoon," says Roger E. Mosley, a man whose determination, skill, and talent have enabled him to succeed not only as an actor, but as a leader in community affairs. His ability to get a job done stems from his willpower to stay with projects he believes in. Once committed to a worthwhile cause--whether it be acting, teaching drama classes, coaching the Watts Swim Club, or working with the little league football team--Mosley never stops working before he reaches his goal.

Physically imposing, Mosley stands 6'2" tall and has a muscular and powerful build that reflects his athletic prowess. His rugged good looks complement his usually serious demeanor, and his smile, which appears spontaneously and unexpectedly, communicate great warmth.

Roger E. Mosley's film credits are very impressive. He has received rave reviews for his acting in the title role of the David Frost/Marc Merson film "Leadbelly," directed by Gordon Parks for Paramount. Noted critic, Arthur Knight, wrote "I offer the highest praise for 'Leadbelly'...No small part of this is due to the extraordinary charisma of Roger E. Mosley, playing the title role...Mosley...in his most important outing yet...proves himself more than equal to the challenge. The force of his personality is what binds the script together."

Mosley's opportunity not only to be seen and heard, but to be admired and successful, came when he attended classes taught by Raymond St. Jacques at Mafundi Institute. Mosley



Songwriter/producer/percussionist Ralph MacDonald and Grover Washington, Jr. celebrate their platinum LP *Winelight* on NBC's *Tomorrow Show*. Host Tom Snyder presented the platinum awards to MacDonald and Washington on a recent segment, after *Winelight* set a record as the longest-running number one album in the history of *Billboard's* jazz charts. MacDonald and Washington co-produced the album, and MacDonald also wrote *Winelight's* top two pop single "Just The Two Of Us" along with his songwriting partner at Antisia Music, Bill Salter.

Readers and writers! I tell you, you're absolutely beautiful! I must say that it is people like you who make this hot weather bearable because you put your pens to work and get with it! Now, a young poet talks of you as a...

Black Goddess

(Edited) By Raye Israel c. 1978

Nervously we both tried to act as adults
You definitely knew what I wanted.
I between here and there
Agreeing with your every word,
I loving you over and over in my
subconscious mind.

You pretending not to want my love,
Forcing the act to go to my conscious
mind.

Forcing myself on you tenderly,
Clumsy but carefully with the
professional touch.

I beware not damage your innocent trust
in me,

I, loving your beautiful black body.
You, innocent of the old and touched,
You unfamiliar of me young and untouched.

You beautiful young Black goddess, resisting all
temptation,
The best you knew how -
I finally seduced you my way!
Where did you come from, where are you going?
Will you ever return?

Your lips thick, abnormal to the normal -
Your eyes round, very large which
Sat in your skull like
black gold!

The more you blinked the shinier
they seemed -
To glow from the fire that burned
and burned in my heart!
Your legs seemed to be carved out of ivory.

So smooth your copper skin -
So pure without any blemishes!
My God how I would like to possess
her very soul
This saintly loveliness!

My body aches with pain -
We do not speak, yet all words of love
are spoken -
"Give me all of you, soul and body or
Free me from this torment you Black Goddess!"

Where are you going?
Where did you come from?
Will you ever return?
My beautiful Black Goddess!!

Now, this Miss Jones asks...

Where Have All The Children Gone?

By Diane C. Jones

Where have all the children gone?
They're dead, my dear - what a fright!
The children have disappeared,
Both in the daytime and at night.

Where have all the children gone?
Why, it was just yesterday -
The air was filled with -
The happy sounds of children at play!

Where have all the children gone?
Their relatives and friends are sick with grief,
The whole world is shocked -
Filled with disbelief!

Where have all the children gone?
They've left us one by one.
Another desk at school is empty -
Another assignment will not get done.

Where have all the children gone?
About the, Jesus said as a sample;
"Forbid them not to come unto me, for of such
is the Kingdom of Heaven."
With the children all gone - from where can we
take this example?

Where have all the children gone?
To take heed, we should bother -
For aren't we all children of the world
with God as Our Father?

Where have all the children gone?
My dear, I'm afraid to say
The number is ever increasing -
I just heard on the radio
that another dead child was found today.

Prolifically yours now readers...

A Song Of Hope

By James L. Lassiter, Esq.

Sure it's tough this Atlanta living
But I keep hope because God keeps giving.
With God's own children, both Black and White
I know God's power will make bad things right.
The people helped God by forming a community search
That blunted the edge of Klansmen and people like
See Page 21

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