

Emmylou Harris- queen of the country

Record Review: Emmylou Harris - Elite Hotel

The last ten years have seen the proliferation of contemporary country and country-rock music in the United States. The movement started with the Byrds, was continued by the Flying Burrito Brothers, and exploited by the Eagles. From this trend, many well-known artists have emerged, such as Chris Hillman, Pete Klenow, Rick Roberts, and Gram Parsons.

Currently, however, the most popular name from the pop country elite is Emmylou Harris, a lone female in a man's

world. *Elite Hotel* is Ms. Harris' second solo album, and, with all due respect to Gram Parsons, Emmylou's mentor, the album is a classic example of student surpassing the teacher.

When Gram Parsons died, Emmylou's career was somewhat in doubt. Her respect and admiration for Parsons was apparently the only link she had with the recording industry.

Two years later Emmylou was the recording leader of the old group. All factors seem to indicate that *Elite Hotel* is bound to be one of the top country-rock albums of the year. And rightly so.

Once I decided not to contemplate the reasoning, if any, behind the title (notice the initials are the same as the artist's), I discovered Emmylou's true abilities. With her previous album, *Pieces of the Sky*, Emmylou did not really impress me. *Elite Hotel* is considerably better - Brian Ahern's improved production enhances rather than detracts from Emmylou's voice. A good selection of material, ranging from Hank Williams' *Jambalaya*, to Lennon/McCartney's *Here, There, and Everywhere*, enables Ms. Harris to display her versatility.

And versatile she is. Her voice is as powerful and emotional as Linda Ronstadt's, and she handles lyrics as if she felt every word she sings.

Emmylou fans will remember the brilliant duets she once did with Gram Parsons on Gram's two solo albums. Indeed, if one could pick out a single strong point in Emmylou's musicianship, it would be her stunning harmonizing. On the new album she harmonizes with Herb Pedersen and John Starling on several songs, producing tunes that are delicately arranged, fragile as

crystal.

Orchestration, repulsive to purists, is well-arranged on the Beatles' song, and the vocals make this tune my personal favorite. Another standout is the comparatively long *Till I Gain Control* written by Rodney Crowell.

While Linda Ronstadt pursues a mere pop rock career, Emmylou Harris picks up the title of Queen of Country. Strong, versatile, and touching, Emmylou Harris establishes herself firmly as a major talent with *Elite Hotel*.

by Gordon Turtle

Con Hall hosts Quartet

The artistry of the University of Alberta String Quartet will be displayed during the February segment of the concert season sponsored by the university's department of music.

The quartet, which was formed in 1969 and has since attracted critical and public acclaim in Canada and the British Isles, will be in concert Wednesday, February 11 at

8:30 p.m.

There is no admission charge and the public is invited to attend the performance in Convocation Hall in the Arts Building on campus.

The quartet consists of Thomas Rolston and Lawrence Fisher, violins; Michael Bowie, viola; and Claude Kenneson, violincello.

Five other free concerts will

be presented in Convocation Hall during February. These will be as follows:

- Piano students of Helmut Brauss, professor of music, presenting a two-piano recital on Friday, February 6 at 8 p.m.

- The St. Cecilia Orchestra, conducted by Michael Bowie, associate professor of music, performing Sunday, February 8 at 8 p.m.

- Fordyce Pier, assistant professor of music, conducting the Symphonic Wind Ensemble in a concert Sunday, February 15 at 3 p.m.

- The University of Alberta Madrigal Singers, conducted by Larry Cook, assistant professor of music, on stage Saturday, February 21 at 8 p.m.

- Helmut Brauss, pianist, concludes the February segment of the season with a staff recital Sunday, February 22 at 8 p.m.

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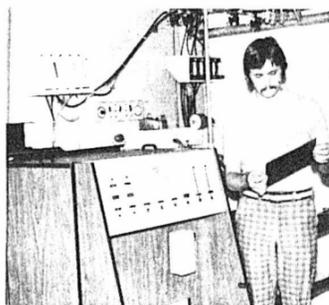
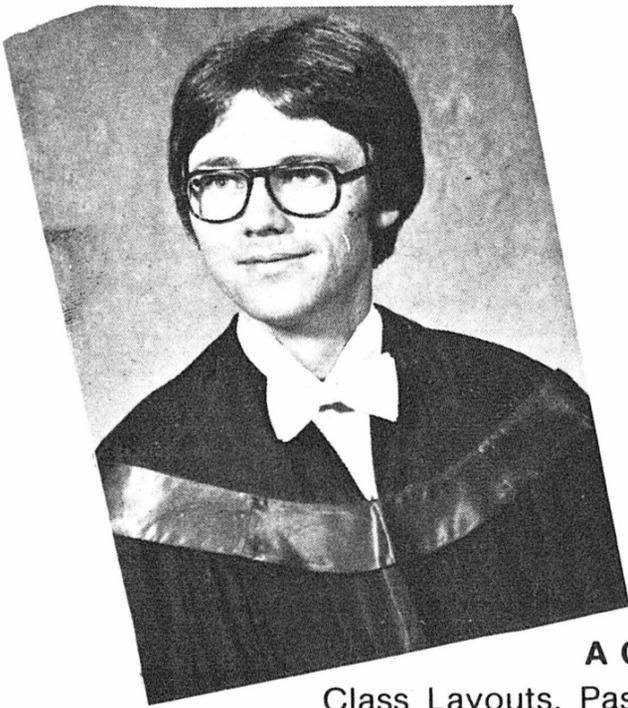
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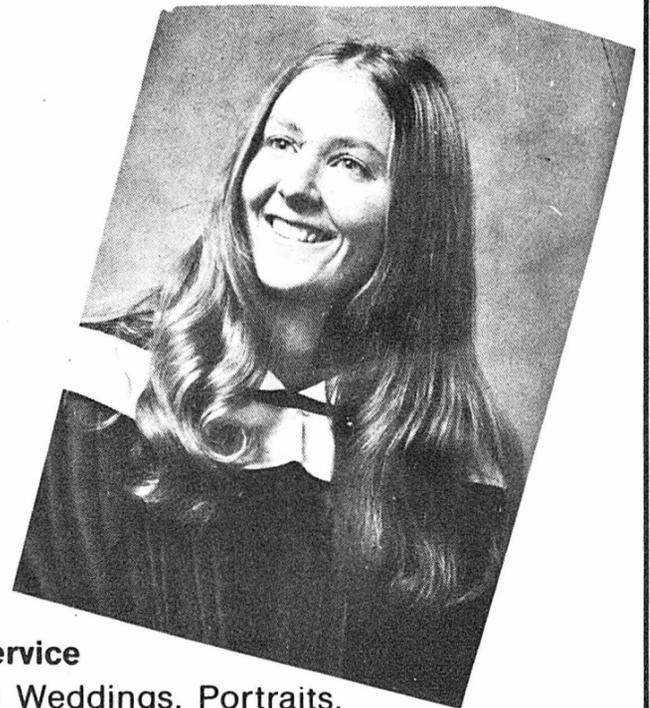
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