

SUB SPOTLIGHT



Jesse Winchester
New Victoria
Theatre

AMERICAN SONGWRITER
Jesse Winchester perfectly embodies the theory that rock 'n' roll has taken over the general medium of expression for the angry young men of the post-war era. In any other age he would have been a man of letters and controversy, while, in this, however much one may despise the concept of rock as an art form to be reported upon and debated in the *Guardian* or the *Listener* and bandied about at Eaton Square cocktail parties, there can be no denying that Jesse Winchester is one of the Great Masters.

He walked on stage at London's New Victoria Theatre like a young Liberal pastor at a summer seminar, dressed simply, casually yet very tidily in brown cord Levis, sandals and an open-necked shirt. His hair was short, his beard thin and his eyes flashed with what, in another context, might have been close to burning Evangelism. Needless to say he mesmerized the audience in much the same way as he did on the OGWT last month, although compared to this London performance that last one was damp cold and unfriendly.

Backed by three young Canadians who played with enthusiasm and verve where, perhaps, a little more experience might have been called for, Winchester was on stage for almost two hours. Hardly a visual performer, his set was unfortunately misplaced. Running through a wide selection of material from his three Bearsville albums as well as previewing much of his forthcoming release 'Let The Rough Side Drag', there were moments of undisguised boredom. Too many good songs can be just as tedious as too many bad, should the presentation be slow.

But, visibly moved by the applause that greeted 'Brand New Tennessee Waltz' and 'Yankee Lady', Winchester was friendly, dry, joking as he changed guitars or sat down at the piano. His singing voice was immaculate too. He can bark and whisper with the sort of delicacy that would be pure saccharine in the mouth of a lesser artist. 'Blow On Chilly Wind, For I've Got A Real High Collar' narrowly and excitingly avoided morbid self-approach while the pastoral 'Mississippi You're On My Mind' was never as tritely nostalgic as Stoney Edwards US hit version last year....

JESSE WINCHESTER

Rebecca Cohn

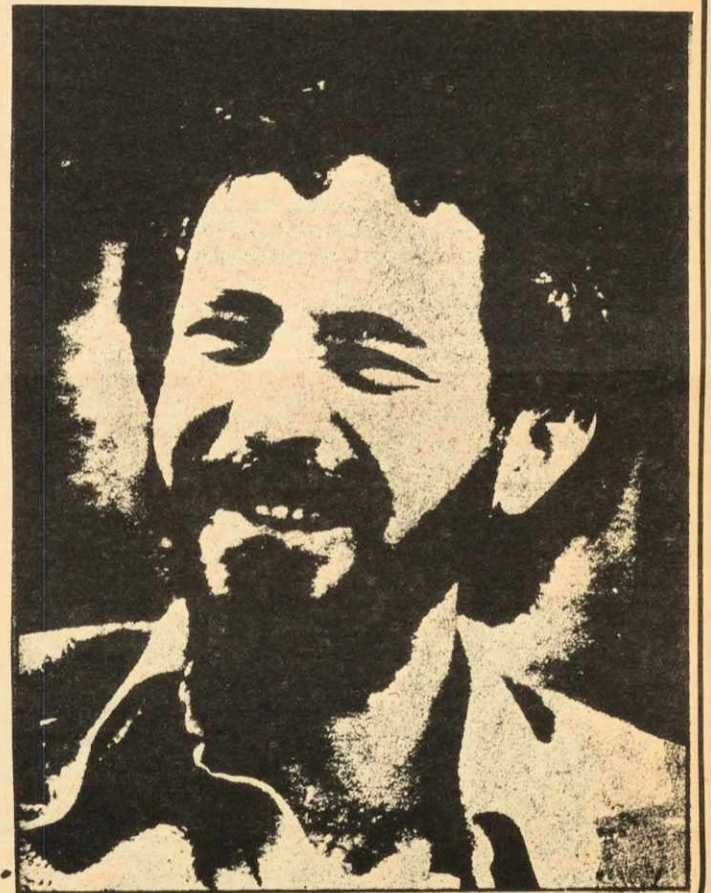
Feb. 10 8:30pm

Adm.

\$3.50/\$4.50 students

\$4.50/\$5.50 others

**Tickets available at
Cohn Box office**



ROCK:

James

Johnson

ONE rarely encounters the kind of comfortable air of relaxation that was generated by Jesse Winchester and his group at the New Victoria theatre last night.

No grievous hangups were on display, no special messages put across. Winchester's open manner and easy rolling style proved the ideal musical recipe for a hot summer's night.

An American, who says he is a fifth cousin of Robert E. Lee, the bearded Winchester is now a Canadian citizen after a spot of draft bother during the Vietnam war.

If one dominant theme came through in his lyrics it appeared to centre on the dream of a home near open countryside, a compatible lady friend and a quiet life.

In the hands of most other artists these sentiments could have become overbearing folksy except for the most homely of tastes.

Winchester with a cool smile and a clear natural voice hit just the right mood.

This concert, only his second in Britain, was arranged quickly after he broke the house record at Dingwalls Club in Camden a couple of months ago. It is unlikely he will ever become a truly major artist but it is to be hoped that this mature, well-rounded musician will now become a frequent visitor to London.

DOWNCHILD BLUES BAND

FEB. 12 McINNES RM.

CHINESE NEW YEAR

FEB. 19 McINNES RM.