

Young's *Old Ways* consistently satisfying

Neil's country comfort

ROUNDAABOUT

Neil Young
Old Ways
Geffen
***½

review by Nate LaRoi

After the imitation Kraftwerk of *Trans* (**), and the imitation rockabilly of *Everybody's Rockin'* (***), the folk and country flavored *Old Ways* is a perfectly transparent attempt to regain credibility, in short supply all of a sudden for Neil Young, the unofficial Don Quixote of the eighties.

Both a consolidation and a confirmation of Neil Young's traditional virtues and vices, *Old Ways* feels like country comfort, like southern hospitality, like coming home after too long away.

If this is his most commercially calculated effort since *Harvest*, it is also his most consistently satisfying since *Rust Never Sleeps* (****).

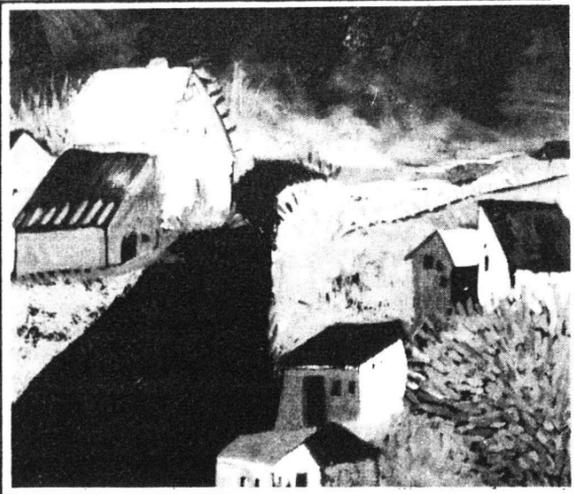
"Once an Angel" and "My Boy" recapture the romantic nostalgia of "Helpless" and "Lotta Love", with Young's whiny, quavering voice bringing out the lonesome, forlorn quality of "The Losing End" from *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere* (****½). "Bound for Glory", with Waylon Jennings, and "The Wayward Wind", with Denise Draper, are

classic Neil Young, investing his own history with mythological significance ("And the wayward wind/Is a restless wind/A restless wind/That yearns to wander/And I was born/The next of kin/The next of kin/To the wayward wind").

On the other hand, since Young advances no coherent or consistent position toward "old ways", I take it retracing his roots is more a matter of convenience than conviction: I'm still not sure if *Old Ways* is yet another pose or a move to relative authenticity.

"Are There Any More Real Cowboys?", featuring Willie Nelson, is piously presumptuous, as if his own country credentials were beyond question, while the carefully contrived "Back to the Country" sounds false, rewriting rock and roll history in the simplest possible terms: "When I was a younger man/Got lucky with a rock and roll band/Struck gold in Hollywood/All the time I knew I would/Get back to the country".

This of course is not the first time that Neil Young has decided to "get back to the country" after a commercially suicidal rock and roll rampage: all of his charting top ten albums (*After the Gold Rush/Harvest* in 1970-1972 and *Comes a Time/Rust Never Sleeps* in 1978-1979) followed upon similar circumstances. All the same, when he does finally walk off into the sunset, I hope he has his bluejeans and straw hat.



Jane Ash Poitras, "Village of the Sky People" 1985

Jane Ash Poitras has chosen Edmonton and the Vik Gallery for the first exhibition of her recent works from New York. After the Edmonton show, a selection of works will be sent to exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada, the 49th Parallel Gallery in New York, and other international public and commercial galleries.

Miss Poitras is a Cree Indian from Fort Chipewyan who grew up in Edmonton. She has exhibited in Japan, Brazil, Spain, South Korea and across the United States. Her works have been purchased by prestigious public collections such as the Brooklyn Museum, the Canada Council, Yale University, Columbia University, the Indian Art Centre in Ottawa, Alberta Culture and the University of Alberta. Miss Poitras has B.Sc. and Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees from the University of Alberta and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Columbia University.

The Vik Gallery proudly presents an exhibition and sale of new works from New York by

JANE ASH POITRAS

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Thursday, October 3, 1985
5 p.m. - 10 p.m.

The main exhibition, open through October 19, will feature paintings, collages and prints. A special second exhibition of "black and white" woodcuts, lithographs and etchings will be featured from Tuesday, October 22 through Saturday, October 26.

Vik Gallery

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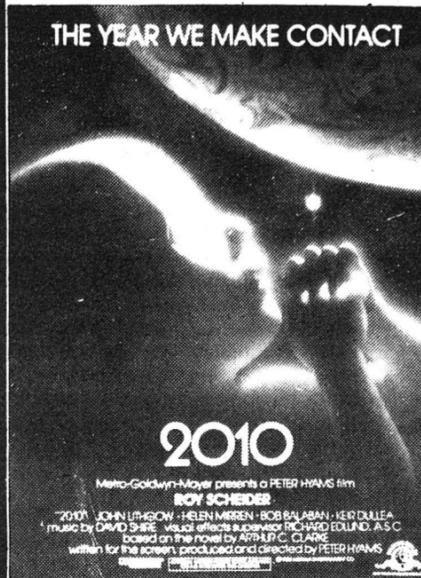
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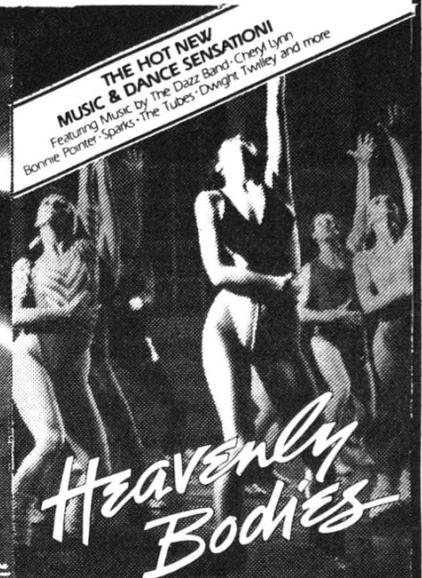
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DAVID MESENBRING

NOON, SUB Theatre, Monday, October 28 Free

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ANNA WYMAN

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