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TRACK

By DAVE CHRISTOPHER

THE TEXAS CAMPFIRE TAPES, Michelle Shocked (Mercury)—Recorded at night, long after the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas had ended by a lone campfire on a Sony Walkman, this release sees Michelle Shocked reeling through a dozen songs of naked beauty. Combining a little Rickie Lee Jones with touches of other recent female folk singers, Shocked has a more international lyrical approach than many of her contemporaries, and does some songs that recall the ironic twists of Dylan's early folk period. Her next album (which will actually be recorded in a studio) is sure to be a big deal. Calling her a folk singer would be too limiting, though. This lady has the sneer of punk, the jazz of Cab Calloway and the drawl of a true Texan. Along with Tracy Chapman, Michelle Shocked is unquestionably one of the brightest new stars in music this year.

—S.M.