

Shocked on the road again with her traveling songs

By ROGER CATLIN
Courant Rook Critic

■ POP / ROCK

Audiences had ample opportunity to see Michelle Shocked last year when she backed up Billy Bragg on two tours around the state.

But her show at the Paramount Performing Arts Center in Springfield Saturday will be different because she's headlining.

"I want to take a long, slow train ride," she said over the phone from her publicist's office in New York, using her favorite metaphor.

"If Love Was a Train" is one of the delicious songs from her popular "Short Sharp Shocked" album.

And in addition to being longer, the show will take a different approach than the soap-box used by Bragg, she assured.

"His approach is: 'Let me tell you how it is.'" she said of the political British rocker. "I like the opportunity to teach people to do it for themselves."

Shocked, the Texas-born troubadour and former squatter, is already a star in England. Last year, her native country started to appreciate her work as well, both on her unusual audition work, "The Texas Campfire Tapes" and the eventual studio LP, which spawned the single "Anchorage."

She says it's no big deal; anyone can create a song. "If I can do it," she said, "everyone can do it."

"I want to create opportunities. I'm a big convert to [Marshall] McLuhan, who says the medium itself is the message."

Shocked has gotten critical accolades for her engaging stage manner, which brings to mind the unaffected charm of another offspring of Texas, Buddy Holly, as well as the political populism of Woody Guthrie.

She was even nominated for a Grammy this year for best contemporary folk recording. And had it not been for a lock on the awards by Tracy Chapman, she might have won it, too.



PolyGram Records

Michelle Shocked appears Saturday in Springfield.

Which galls the would-be revolutionary to no end.

"I don't want to put myself on top—I want to take the top and pull it down," she said.

"The thing that kills me is that you get into the system to bring it down and then they nominate you for an award."

The Balancing Act, an acclaimed Los Angeles quartet, is opening the show.

WHAT'S NEW

Thomas Dolby plays the University of Connecticut's Jorgensen Auditorium April 4 for a lecture and solo performance. Title of his presentation: "The Father of New Technology Music."

Johnny Cash plays two shows at the Warner Theater in Torrington April 15.

Tickets are on sale for a show by David Crosby at Springfield's Paramount Performing Arts Center April 7.

All but a few tickets for the June 23 Bon Jovi show at the Hartford Civic Center were sold as soon as they went on sale Friday; so a second show went on sale for June 24. Plenty of tickets remain for that show.

Mellow meister Kenny G. comes to the Paramount in Springfield April 5.

Toy Caldwell of the Marshall Tucker Band, who was originally slated to appear at the West Hartford Arena before it closed again Feb. 24, is now slated to appear at CitiLites in Hartford March 30. Also coming to the Hartford club: New Orleans' Radiators March 31 and Jon Butcher April 18.

In the comedy field, Whoopi Goldberg plays the Paramount in Springfield March 31. Steven Wright plays the Palace Performing Arts Center in New Haven April 7. At the Governor's Comedy Shop in Stamford are Kip Addotta tonight through Saturday; Bob Nelson, March 22; and Gilbert Gottfried March 30 and April 1.

Gonzo journalist Dr. Hunter S. Thompson will address audiences at the Palace in New Haven April 14 and the Paramount in Springfield April 15.

Melissa Etheridge plays Toad's Place March 26. The Ramones return there April 6 and Masters of Reality are a possibility March 30. The April 4 date by Throwing Muses is off.

Edie Brickell & the New Bohemians return to New Haven April 7 when they play a show at Yale University's gym.

Coming to the Night Shift Café this month are Treat Her Right, March 24; the Jimmy Dawkins Blues Band, March 25; Hugo Largo with Roger Miller, March 26 and Sleepy La-Beet March 31. In April, they've booked The Connells, April 1; Too Much Joy, April 4, Christmas, April 7 and the Neighborhoods, April 21.

Birdsongs of the Mesozoic plays the Zone Art Center in Springfield April 23.

That Petrol Emotion and Voice of the Bee-

hive play the University of Massachusetts in Amherst March 31.

The best hip-hop disc jockey in town will be determined in a contest Friday at the new Hartford night club, the Stick, 225 Walnut St.

Lenny Pickett, the saxophonist on "Saturday Night Live," will perform some of his art funk with his band the Borneo Horns at Wesleyan University March 31.

War is slated to play Gemini's Café in Simsbury Saturday. Also upcoming there: Junior Walker & the All Stars, March 24; and Lonnie Brooks, March 31.

New Riders of the Purple Sage play Water Street Station in Torrington April 21.

Two regional favorites have been booked at Lloyd's for the next two weeks. Sunday the Provincetown Jug Band makes its bow; March 25, it's the Fabulous Farquhar.

Locally, hard rockers Sinis Gally will shoot their new video in a free show at the Fallout Shelter Friday. Monday, Motive 8 becomes one of the first bands to play the Comet.

OTHER NOTES

■ Support your local college radio: WHUS of the University of Connecticut in Storrs holds its fund-raising radiothon Friday through March 25.

■ Highlights this week include: The Original Soul Stirrers at Lloyd's tonight... Max Creek at Toad's Place in New Haven tonight... Metallica and Queensryche Friday at the Hartford Civic Center Friday... Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys at Lloyd's Friday... Pajama Slave Dancers and Hynolovevheel at the NightShift Cafe in Naugatuck Saturday

... Dave Van Ronk at the Roaring Brook Nature Center Saturday... Roomfull of Blues at the El n' Gee Club in New London Saturday... The Bangles and the House of Freaks at the Paramount Performing Arts Center in Springfield Sunday... Balancing Act at the Night Shift Sunday... Jeff Lorber at Toad's Place Sunday.

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