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BURRELLE'S

MUSIC

Paramount crowd is Shocked into a swingin'-good evening

By Gene Stout
P-I Pop Critic

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No matter what you think of the new Michelle Shocked, you can't take her sitting down.

With little more than an invitation Wednesday night to "please move your butts," fans emptied their seats and poured into the Paramount Theatre's orchestra pit to dance to the singer's user-friendly blend of swing, blues, R&B, folk and novelty.

Shocked, whose latest album, "Captain Swing," is a departure from the spare, gritty folk tunes she sang on her "Texas Campfire Tapes" debut, is getting heat these days from longtime fans who prefer she remain a serious folkie and spokeswoman for the oppressed.

But being militant, Shocked joked, had only given her hemorrhoids. And the only cure, she added, was to "move the body in a rhythmic fashion, preferably sexual."

Shocked, who still dresses in basic black, is a lot more colorful these days. And so is her show. Backed by the six-piece, all-male Captain Swing Revue, a swinging band with a raunchy, fun-loving sound, the singer-songwriter got the crowd moving, clapping and singing along right away.

The first half of the show focused on songs from the new album, notably "God Is a Real Estate Developer" and "On the Greener Side."

But there were plenty of older songs, too, including



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Review

Michelle Shocked and John Wesley Harding, blues-swing concert, Wednesday night at the Paramount Theatre.

"(Making the Run to) Gladewater," "Graffiti Limbo" and "Memories of East Texas" — all from her socially aware second album, "Short Sharp Shocked."

Shocked explained that her

latest musical turn had come about after a period of soul searching. In a dream, Marilyn Monroe had cooed to her, "Girl, don't preach to the converted, entertain the troops."

Opening act was British singer-songwriter John Wesley Harding, who sang satirical songs from his new "Here Comes the Groom" album and spoofed rich rock stars.

■ This review appeared in some editions of yesterday's P-I.