

Music



Robert Mittendorf/Sentinel

Michelle Shocked combined passion, politics and good songs in her sell-out show.

Catalyst crowd happily Shell Shocked

By ROBERT MITTENDORF
Sentinel staff writer

DESPITE the all-black clothes, the leather hat pulled over her face, the Doc Martens and her history as a homeless skateboard punk — behind that tough-gal exterior — Michelle Shocked is a playful, energetic imp.

That was evident Sunday at the Catalyst, where Shocked played a passionate 90-minute set to a standing-room only crowd. "You can just quiet down,"

psychological observation. Apparently, the local authorities could not believe that a young (sane) woman would want to wander homeless and jobless around the countryside.

"So I moved to New York, where I'd be less conspicuous," she

quipped. It was in New York that a shrink (known to her fans as Isabelle Ringin' from the song "5 a.m. in Amsterdam") told her: "Shell, you're not crazy — you're just poor."

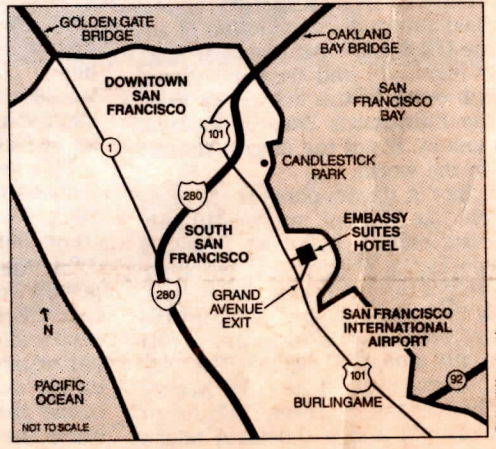
Then she brought out her father and her brother, Future Shocked

— who are playing mandolin and violin on her current tour — and played some more numbers from *Captain Swing*.

Shocked, however, was at her best when she covered the Steve

Goodman song, "The Ballad of Penny Evans," a poignant song about a woman whose husband is killed in Vietnam. You could've heard a pin drop at the Catalyst; there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

HOW TO SEE SAN FRANCISCO (without staying there.)



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- Catch A Cable Car (to Union Square & other shop-stops).
- Walk The Wharf (sample the food & ambience).
- Gape At The Golden Gate (from the park perhaps).
- Amble Around Alcatraz (tour boats from The Wharf).
- Gawk At Ghirardelli (Square, naturally).
- Frolic In

The Resource Center For Nonviolence Presents
AN EARTHQUAKE SUPPORT BENEFIT CONCERT

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That was evident Sunday at the Catalyst, where Shocked played a 90-minute set to a standing-room only crowd.

"You can just quiet down," Shocked teased the audience, "Because I'm not going to play 'Anarchy,' a popular number from my 1989 LP, *Short Sharp Shocked*. She reserved that song for her encore.

Instead, Shocked and her backup band launched into a series of uptempo tunes from her recent release, *Captain Swing*.

She offered no apologies for the departure from her usual repertoire of folk ballads and protest music. But she did address those who have criticized her for "selling out."

It was the socialist Emma Goldman who said, 'If I can't dance, I don't want your revolution.'

Her message, apparently, is: If you want to reach the masses, then your music must be accessible.

Nevertheless, she asked the audience to support her Earth First! friends Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney, who were arrested last week after a bomb destroyed their car.

Later, Shocked dismissed the band and played selections from *Short Sharp Shocked* and her latest LP *The Texas Campfire Songs*, which was recorded on a kaman.

In between songs, Shocked likes to talk to her audience in a manner reminiscent of folksingers such as Seeger and Utah Phillips.

Once, she described how she was arrested in Santa Cruz and held for

psychological observation. Apparently, the local authorities could not believe that a young (sane) woman would want to wander homeless and jobless around the countryside.

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