

NIGHTCLUBS PERFORMERS

CLUBS

NOTES



CONCERTS

Upcoming shows

Saffire - The Uppity Blues Women, April 19, 8 p.m., Berger Center (881-3947).

Bob Marley Festival, April 20, 11 a.m., DeMeester Outdoor Performance Center in Reid Park (623-1000). Free.

Nazareth, April 22, 9 p.m., A Little Bit of Texas (744-7744). \$10.

Tabu Ley Rochereau, April 24, 8 p.m., The Rock (629-9211). \$7.

Emilio, April 26, 9 p.m., A Little Bit of Texas (744-7744). \$10 general, \$15 gold seating.

Testament with Coal Charmer, Parasite and Grudgeholder, April 27, Club Paragon (622-5560). \$13.50.

Queen Ida and the Bon Temps Zydeco Band, April 27, 8 p.m., St. Philip's Plaza (623-1000). \$20.

Salif Keita & His Large Band, April 30, 8 p.m., Rialto Theatre. 795-5685.

Primus with Weapon of Choice, May 1, Tucson Convention Center Exhibition Hall

Out of court and ready to rock

By **MARK WYCKOFF**
Citizen Calendar Editor

It was just a simple business meeting. Michelle Shocked had been through it all before. She'd go in, hand over a budget for her next album, and the folks at Mercury Records would green-light the project.

Then she'd head for the studio, record the album and go out on tour, taking her eclectic musical vision to the masses. Maybe her records weren't blockbusters, but there were always scads of loyal fans out there ready to feast on her intensely personal tunes. No music lover could listen to songs like "Anchorage," "When I Grow Up (I Want To Be An Old Woman)" and "The Hard Way" and not marvel at her ability to fuse everything from folk, funk and honky-tonk to blues, rock and bluegrass into one inviting musical brew.

But this meeting - held in December 1992 - was different.

"I walked away with a feeling that all was not well," said the singer, calling from her New Orleans home last week to promote her April 19 show at The Rock.

Her instincts were correct. Not long after the meeting, Mercury's vice president for business affairs pulled her aside and hit her with a chilling bombshell.

"He told me point blank, 'We're not going to promote your records because you cut too good a deal for yourself.'"

And so Shocked's career spiral began. Mercury wouldn't promote her old records. It wouldn't let her make new ones. It just kept her in legal limbo.

"They didn't want what I had to offer," she said. "That they didn't

Preview

- **What:** A concert by Michelle Shocked.
- **When:** April 19, 9 p.m.
- **Where:** The Rock, 136 N. Park Ave.
- **How much:** Tickets are \$13 advance, \$15 day of show. Call 629-9211.

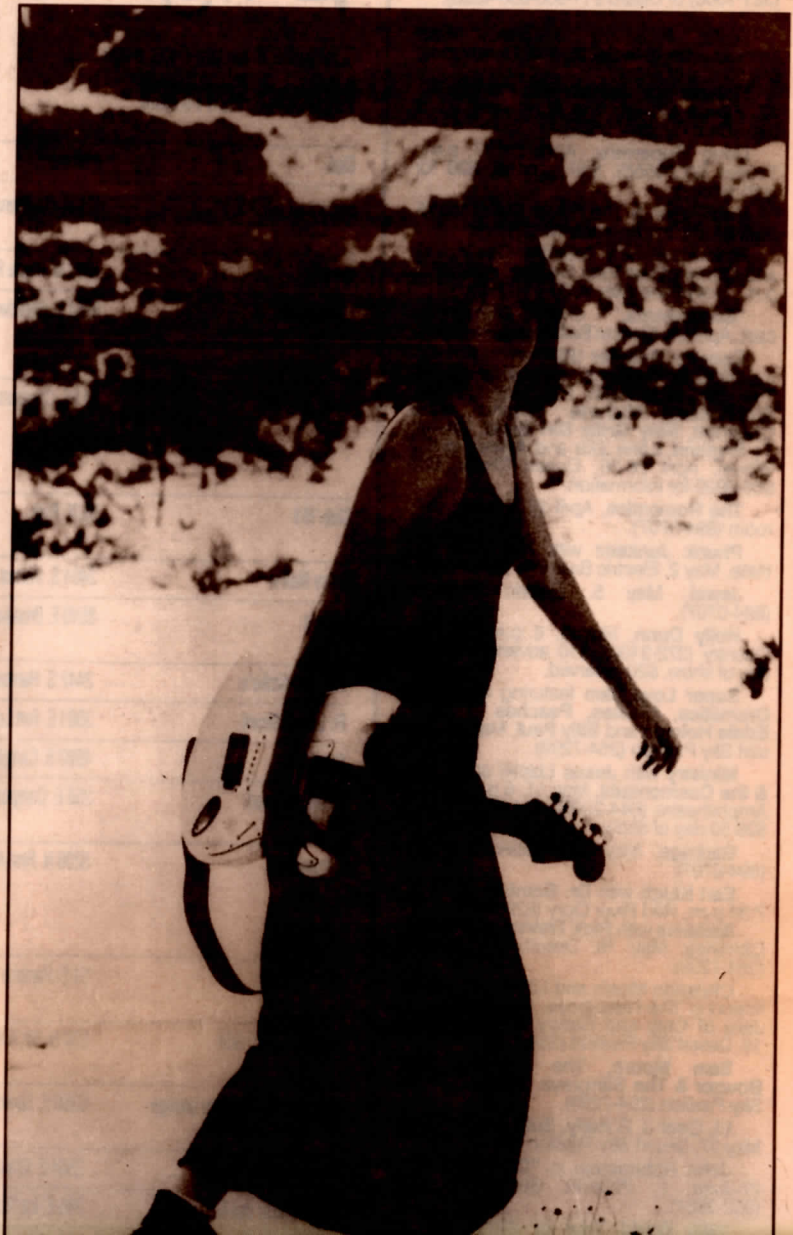
minutes," she said. "It was just a huge release for me and my husband. But, you know, I don't really know if it's all sunken in yet."

What has sunk in is this: She's better off now than she was in 1992.

"Not only has this whole mess been beneficial, but it's been a blessing," she said. "My vision is quite clear now. Before this, my ambitions were never so great that I would have taken on a multinational corporation and come out feeling so confident and strong."

With freedom finally her own, Shocked is embarking on a club tour across America. It will be much like the scaled-down junkets she did while the lawsuit raged on. She'll play new songs, old songs and sell copies of her limited-edition "Kind-Hearted Woman" CD, which features songs Mercury refused to put out.

"When they wouldn't put out the album, I just went out and cut it on my own and started selling it myself at the shows," she said. "You just wouldn't believe how



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Primus with Weapon of Choice, May 1, Tucson Convention Center Exhibition Hall (791-4266).

Rally in the Sun music festival featuring **The Refreshments, Phunk Junkeez, Dead Hot Workshop, One, The Sand Rubies, Frank Lloyd Vinyl** and **The Drakes**, May 4, 2 to 10:30 p.m., Rillito Park. Tickets available at Blockbuster, Discount Records and TicketMaster.

Skankin' Pickle, Less Than Jake, The Skeletones and Dave's Big Deluxe, May 4, 8 p.m., The Rialto (740-1986). \$8.

The Band with John Wesley Harding, May 10, 9 p.m., Rialto Theatre (795-1420). \$18.50 advance, \$19 day of show.

Dwight Yoakam, May 16, 8 p.m., TCC Arena (791-4266). \$23.50, \$24.50 day of show.

Ana Gabriel, June 30, 7 p.m., Tucson Convention Center Arena (791-4266).

1996 World Tour of World Figure Skating Champions featuring **Brian Boitano, Rudy Galindo, Todd Eldredge, Oksana Baiul, Nancy Kerrigan, Viktor Petrenko, Michelle Kwan, Nicole Bobek, Elvis Stojko** and **Surya Bonaly**, July 2, 7:30 p.m., Tucson Convention Center, (379-7800).

Juan Gabriel, Aug. 25, 7 p.m., Tucson Convention Center. 678-2222 or 791-4266.

• For a list of Phoenix shows, see next page.

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Her instincts were correct. Not long after the meeting, Mercury's vice president for business affairs pulled her aside and hit her with a chilling bombshell.

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And so Shocked's career spiral began. Mercury wouldn't promote her old records. It wouldn't let her make new ones. It just kept her in legal limbo.

"They didn't want what I had to offer," she said, "but they didn't want anybody else to have it either. I'd love to believe that it was all about money, about the bottom line. That would be rational. But it wasn't. It was much more personal than anyone would ever acknowledge."

So Shocked sued, and in the course of the trial even cited the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution - the amendment that abolished slavery. And you know what? It worked. Just a month ago she learned Mercury had given in. She was free from her contract, and - even better - walked away with full control of her back catalog.

"When I first got the news, I jumped around for a couple of

quartour how? Shocked said, "My ambitions were never so great that I would have taken on a multinational corporation and come out feeling so confident and strong."

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"When they wouldn't put out the album, I just went out and cut it on my own and started selling it myself at the shows," she said. "You just wouldn't believe how lucrative it's been. I've even been able to put a down payment on a new house."

She even had enough money left over to go into the studio earlier this year and do a full-scale, proper recording of "Kind-Hearted Woman." When she signs a new record deal, that will be the first album to come out.

She's also cooking up two more album projects: One will have a New Orleans kick to it, and the other is a "very funky, top-secret project I'm doing with a real character from Los Angeles."

But what's she's really looking forward to these days is starting a family. Remember her line in the tune "Anchorage," the one about being "anchored in Anchorage"?



When Mercury Records left her out in the cold, Michelle Shocked took the label to court - and won.

Well, these days, Shocked is content to be nesting in New Orleans.

"My husband jokes all the time about how high my 'nestosterone' level is," she said. "I'm really

obsessed with the personal details of creating a nest. We really want to start a family. If I don't come around next year on tour with a lap guitar because I'm so fat and pregnant, I'll be surprised."

Nightclubs

Mixed format

Berk's

5769 E. Speedway

296-1981 \$3 F, Sat

Th: Bloo Lyte, 9 p.m. F-Sat: Blue Lizards, 9 p.m. Sun: Karaoke, 9 p.m. M: Toe Jam, 9 p.m. Tue: Stone Avenue plays from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. W: Larry Travis Trio, 9 p.m.

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