

INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

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POP MUSIC

Michelle Shocked shakes free from unproductive label contract

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Michelle Shocked and the Casualties of Wah

Opening act: Pony Stars.

Where: The Vogue, 6259 N. College
Ave.

When: 8 p.m. Monday.

Tickets: \$15; (317) 259-7029.

By Roberta Penn
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

Singer/songwriter Michelle Shocked has been in a prison without walls for more than three years, trapped in a recording contract with a company that wouldn't let her record.

"I had a contract to do seven records with Mercury, and I did three," Shocked explained. "I wanted to make another record, but for nearly four years they didn't return my phone calls.

"I filed a lawsuit in August of '95 that challenged Mercury under

the California labor laws enacted to prevent indentured servitude. It opened a can of worms, and then they returned phone calls and negotiated a settlement."

The settlement included one more release for Mercury, a compilation, that will come out later this year.

While she was fighting with the label, Shocked put a CD out on her own, *Kind Hearted Woman*, and sold copies at her gigs. When Mercury released Shocked, she took *Kind Hearted Woman* to the Private Music label. The CD was released this week, and Shocked is touring behind it.

Shocked's tour will feature old songs, but the interpretations will be fresh because her band is new. Musical director for the Casualties of Wah is organ and keyboard player Carl Wheeler, a church choir director who has worked with Tony! Toni! Tone!