

Shocked's talking distracting, annoying

By John Payne
Staff Reporter

Michelle Shocked
"Michelle Shocked Live"
PolyGram

For years, Mel Tillis has suffered from a severe stuttering problem that has hampered his ability to speak, but not to sing. Pop-folk artist Michelle Shocked suffers from a similar affliction: When she sings, she is easy to listen to, but when she speaks she has the ability to annoy the hell out of her audience with endless, pretentious jabber.

So, there are problems with a live album.

Recorded at London's Oxford Apollo, "Michelle Shocked Live" really is a mini-album, containing a total of just 17 minutes of music. The five tunes on the LP all are pretty

good, representing the range of Shocked's musical interests.

"My Little Sister" opens up side one of the album with a fine rockabilly pace and fierce horns. Shocked's



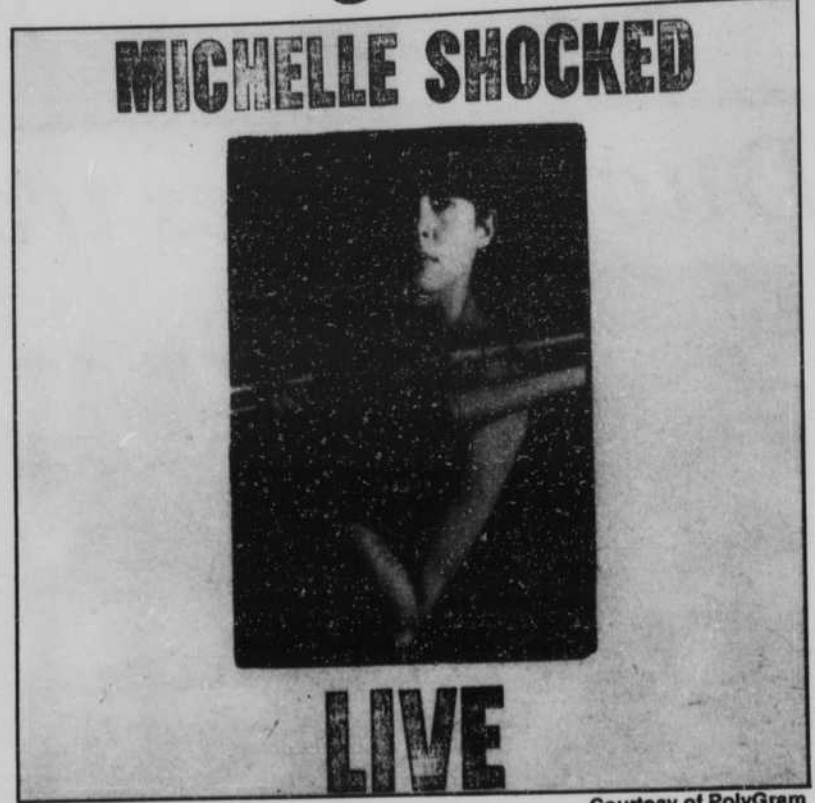
voice is perhaps best suited for this style of music as she screams out her warning: "Don't you mess around with my little sister."

Shocked seems to love to talk between songs though, and if she had something especially important to say, this would be OK. But her ridiculous babbling only serves to interrupt the album's flow.

She comes off sounding like a second-rate Arlo Guthrie as tries to make some sort of point about law enforcement's treatment of drifters in the United States: "One of the dangers of traveling on your own, especially if you're a woman, is that from time to time, it's likely you'll be picked up by the police and taken to the local psychiatric hospital, and they'll call you a psychotic..."

Maybe if you'd shut up and sing, Michelle, that sort of thing wouldn't happen.

With songs like "5 a.m. in Amsterdam," however, Shocked proves that she can be quite eloquent at times.



Courtesy of PolyGram

"5 a.m." is a melodic folk tune about being a drifter that elicits more empathy than all of Shocked's preaching.

Shocked has a knack for sultry blues vocals as well. She moans her way effectively through "Sleep Keeps Me Awake" and "Silent Ways," the two best songs on the album.

It's too bad though that every song must be undermined by a lot of useless talk. Shocked should have heeded her own words from "Silent Ways": "... silence is golden, words are made of lead. And in the apathy of love, some things are better left unsaid."

Just shut up and sing, Michelle.

Modern Cinderella story refreshes; first-class acting captivates audience

By Julie Naughton
Senior Reporter

"Pretty Woman" is the enormously appealing story of how a prostitute and a corporate raider find happiness in Beverly Hills. And it is one of the freshest, most innovative, most charming romantic comedies to come along

in many a year.

This modern-day Cinderella story features Julia Roberts as Vivian Ward, an 11th-grade dropout who came to Beverly Hills from small-town Georgia. When the money ran out, Vivian was too ashamed to return to her hometown, so she moved in to a run-down apartment on Hollywood Boule-

vard with Kit De Lucca (Laura San Giacomo) and became a prostitute.

Vivian has a very low self-image, but she's irrepressible, appealing and full of spunk. She doesn't think much of herself, but she doesn't let a whole lot get her down. She tries to remain optimistic and upbeat.

The movie also features Richard Gere as Edward Lewis, a rich corporate raider from New York. Edward is a contradiction in terms. On one hand, he enjoys, as businessmen would say,

movie REVIEW

"playing hard ball with the big boys." He is extremely tough in business. He doesn't take no for an answer. He buys billion-dollar companies like they are candy bars, proceeding to break the companies up and sell the pieces.

On the other hand -- besides the business degree and the toughness -- he is a classically trained pianist, a gentleman who desperately is afraid of getting hurt, a scared little boy who is looking for emotional security.

The two meet when Edward gets lost on Hollywood Boulevard in his snotty lawyer's car. He asks Vivian, who is working the street, for directions.

"Sure, five bucks," she says.

"You can't charge for directions," he says.

"Hey, I can do anything I want. I ain't lost," Vivian replies.

He asks her if she has change for a twenty.

"For twenty, I'll show you the

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