

Pop Music Reviews

Michelle Shocked's Dance-Happy Revolution

Like Dylan when he "went electric" in '65, Michelle Shocked has alienated a number of fans and critics with her switch from folk-based songs to the seemingly less confrontational jump-blues-flavored music on her current "Captain Swing" album. The foment has been such that Shocked evidently thinks it necessary to justify the switch during her shows.

At the Coach House on Tuesday the slight, impish singer wryly asserted that "political correctness has been a serious social disease for the last several years. . . . Don't make the mistakes I did." She went on to cite a cure, quoting radical forebear Emma Goldman: "What good's a revolution if I can't dance?"

Shocked's flat-out wonderful, dance-happy music needed no explication: The wild, unfettered spirit of the singer and her six-piece Captain Swing Revue conveyed all the liberation one could ask for. Her voice is far from naturally suited to the rigors of a horn-blaring outfit, but, pushing

its limitations, she communicated the crucial life and emotion often missed by more skilled singers.

Though sometimes awash in the band's anarchic-but-tight musical melee, her lyrics remained politically incisive, and evocative of the byways of American life. Coupled with the still-potent solo folk finesse evidenced on the haunting, fragile reminiscence "Memories of East Texas," the "new" Shocked remains one of the best things to happen to American music in years.

Shocked also appears tonight at the Bacchanal in San Diego, Friday at the Ventura Theatre in Ventura and Saturday at the Wiltern Theatre. —JIM WASHBURN

Digital Underground Can't Get Over the Humpt

It was a sad case of *Humpty Interruptus*.

As its show unfolded at the Palace on Tuesday, Digital Underground looked to be the long-awaited rap group willing to make

horn-blaring outfit, but, pushing awaited rap group willing to make