

MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 1994

ART ON THE EDGE



Skin Game: Alicia Gbur has exhibited work focusing on shadowy sexual persuasions at Industry, Java Coffeehouse and Gallery 404.

Photographer uses camera to see reality

BY LINDA ANN CIOMIN

SPECIAL WRITER
Alicia Gbur documents a part of life few people see — female impersonators, transvestites and leather fashion shows in stark black and white photographs.

Last fall she exhibited the erotic, avant-garde images in her first one person show at the Java Coffeehouse in Royal Oak.

Using photography's power to record, Gbur allows the viewer to become a voyeur inside the counter cultures. Her images seem almost cinematic like stills from a movie. She merely acts as a lightning rod attracting all who dare look to complete their own story.

Dressed in black leather outfits with S & M overtones, the men and women featured in the Noir Leather fashion shows seem like characters in an X-rated movie. In the photographs of the female impersonators, Gbur captures fleeting moments of their acts unveiling the men's heavy makeup and exaggerated femininity in black and white.

"The question is why would a straight chick raised in Grosse Pointe want to focus on sexual persuasions long kept hidden in the shadows? "I do harsher subjects because it's there. Photography is a way to see reality. It was this whole different aspect of lifestyle that you wouldn't see normally," said Gbur who earned a bachelor's fine arts degree in photography from Wayne State University.

"Art is (meant) to have people see things they usually don't see whether it's a drawing, a painting or a photograph. It gives them a whole different way of looking at things, to give them some kind of insight."

The series taught her about alternative lifestyles. Initially, Gbur had dreamed up the concept for a project to fulfill a final photography requirement to earn her degree. A bit of a rebel, a bit of a photojournalist at heart, Gbur set out with the help of a male friend to portray the gay nightclub scene in Detroit.

"I wanted to spice up my final project but what I found is, there's stories behind the people," said the multi-talented 26-year-old.

See PHOTOGRAPHY, 6B



Counterpoint: Alicia Gbur portrays alternative lifestyles in dramatic black and white images.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Street scene next week:

- Christina Fuoco's interview with Lemonjuice.
- John Monaghan's look at the latest in alternative movies.

Folk roots surface for festival

■ During the last 25 years, The Ark has launched the careers of several folk artists. This month the venue will benefit from the Ann Arbor Folk Festival which will feature an eclectic lineup including Michelle Shocked, Richard Thompson and Bela Fleck.

BY MARK GALLO
Special Writer

There are very few folk music venues left in the country that enjoy the benevolent sort of reputation that has been the Ark's for the past quarter century.

It's therefore appropriate that the 17th annual Ann Arbor Folk Festival, set for Saturday, Jan. 29, will serve in part as a fund-raiser for the Ann Arbor institution.

Both the event and the venue have served as launching pad and home away from home for a widely diverse cast of characters over the

STREET BEATS

years. Though the assembled players at this year's soiree may strike some purists as too eclectic to label "folk," that's precisely where their collective roots lie.

Michelle Shocked, Richard Thompson, Bela Fleck and the Flecktones, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Tish Hinojosa and David Broza will share the stage with the likes of the House Band, Second Opinion, Deadbeat Society and once Cheryll Wheeler this time out. Sure, it's a long way from Tom Paxton and Doc Watson, but consider the following:

Michelle Shocked, best known for her "Short, Sharp Shocked" album and its hits, "If Love Was a Train," "Anchorage" and "When I Grow Up," can trace her roots easily to an indigenous musical homeland in Gilmore, Texas. Rated by critics and fans throughout the country, as the premier recording of 1988, it was a solid seller across the board, which is about as unheard of in folk circles as flying from one pig to the next, as opposed to gazing up the station wagon. Its followup, "Captain Swing," was a most decided sidestep, even for her heroine, but it's a solid seller across the board, which is about as unheard of in folk circles as flying from one pig to the next, as opposed to gazing up the station wagon. Its followup, "Captain Swing," was a most decided sidestep, even for her heroine, but it's a solid seller across the board, which is about as unheard of in folk circles as flying from one pig to the next, as opposed to gazing up the station wagon.

Her latest effort, though, brings her back to her roots. "Arkansas Traveler," recorded on the Winnebago Interstate with an 18-wheeler recording studio in tow, was released in 1992



Shock time: Michelle Shocked will play the Ann Arbor Folk Festival with the likes of Richard Thompson, Bela Fleck and the Flecktones, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Tish Hinojosa and David Broza Saturday, Jan. 29.

to still more critical acclaim. It harkens back to "The Texas Campfire Tapes," recorded in the mid-1980s at the Kerrville Folk Festival, direct-to-walkman by British fan Pete Lawrence and initially released on the British Cooking Vinyl label.

The difference here is that there is a budget and a guest roster from heaven to spice it up. Ranging from Pope Staples to Gatemouth Brown, members of the band, the Red Clay Rumblers, Taj Mahal and The Hot House Flowers to Uncle Tupelo, Doc Watson, Alison Krauss and Michelle's dad, Dollar Bill Johnston, the magic of this "Arkansas Traveler" lies in the enormous passion that she brings to each tune.

Having seen the Michelle Shocked band, with her dad and

brother in tow, a few years ago, I heartily recommend her to anyone with a taste for music that has something to say and a wholly infectious way of imparting the wisdom — sort of like "folk" music.

One of the finest songwriters on the planet, Michelle Shocked remains one of the most impassioned performers out there.

Richard Thompson, through his affiliation with Fairport Convention, the pre-eminent British folk aggregation of the late 1960s and early 1970s, is a name familiar to folk-rock enthusiasts the world over, though rock fans may be more familiar with his status as one of the most revered electric guitarists on the planet.

From 1967, when he was 17 years old, to 1979, he was the guitar voice in Fairport, a group that also boasted the vocal talents of Ten Matthews and, later, Sandy Denny. Their eclectic mix of folk styles with rock, blues and bluegrass made them a popular attraction on both sides of the Atlantic, but Thompson opted for a solo career and later expanded that to a duet with his vocalist wife Linda.

Their 1982 "Shoot Out The Lights" was named Album of the Year by none less than "Rolling Stone" magazine, and since their public divorce a few years later, his reputation has grown even more staunch, with Capitol releasing one of his best efforts last year.

Jimmie Dale Gilmore, a Texas legend on a par with Guy Clark, Joe Ely, Townes Van Zandt and Jerry Jeff Walker, has a pair of outstanding discs out on the Hightones label, the folks who brought you Robert Cray, as well as with his new label, Elektra Entertainment, for whom he has the highly recommended "Spinning Around the Sun" disc. He's just one of those rare folks who can make the earth open up at a wiggle of his finger that, naturally, no one has heard of.

Bela Fleck is one of the great bluegrass banjo players alive. Unfortunately, he doesn't play a lot of straight bluegrass anymore. Like Dylan opening up the Newport Folk Festival crowd with his invention of folk music electricity, though, Fleck is dedicated to moving the music into the future.

Tish Hinojosa sings like Linda Ronstadt wanted to on her "Canciones de mi Padre" album. A wonderful voice, great songwriting and a sense of style that make her the best "folk" singer in the Southwest this side of Deborah Liv Johnson.

David Broza is saddled with being on a rock'n'roll label that's trying to branch out a bit. Relativity is hardly the bastion of folk musicians, but Broza and his Leonard Cohen-ish delivery doesn't care about labels, at least musical pigeonholing ones.

The 17th annual Ann Arbor Folk Festival is at 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 29, at Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University, Ann Arbor. For information, call 761-8350. Tickets, priced at \$22.50 and \$19.50, are available at Ticketmaster outlets, including Herb David Guitar Studio, Schoolkids Records and the Michigan Union. The Ark is selling \$50 patron seats that are in the first 15 rows. Those are available by sending a check and self-addressed stamped envelope to: The Ark, 113 Adams, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. For more information about patron seating, call 761-1800.

DSO makes overtures to younger crowd

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
Staff Writer

To people unfamiliar with the symphony, attending a Detroit Symphony Orchestra concert can seem intimidating or boring.

Keeping that in mind, the DSO started "Overtures," a group geared toward attracting young, urban and suburban professionals. Members of the group throw parties in restaurants like Joe Muer's in Detroit or El Zocalo in the city's Mexican Town district with Detroit Symphony Orchestra performances as centerpiece.

"It was to create a setting for young people to enjoy the symphony (in a) setting that's not intimidating or overly stuffy," said Jill Woodward, public relations director for the DSO.

Steering committee member Lisa Toenniges said the group hopes to pi-

que an interest in the symphony within the "twentysomething to fortysomething" crowd so they may one day invest in the DSO.

"(It is) to get young people interested and involved in the symphony. The ultimate goal would be that they would one day become a subscriber. There is absolutely no fund raising (with Overtures). Other groups do that," said Toenniges, a Bloomfield Township resident.

At the last Overtures outing, guest conductor Hans Vonk led the orchestra through Schumann's "Symphony No. 2." Prokofiev's "Violin Concerto No. 1" and Stravinsky's "Symphonies of Wind Instruments." Featured soloist was the DSO's concertmaster, violinist Emmanuelle Boisvert. Afterward, the Overtures group as well as a few young DSO members, drove to Joe Muer's in Detroit to chat and to

sample the restaurant's dishes.

Toenniges said that trendy new restaurants are chosen so young adults can be introduced to them inexpensively.

Professionals from a variety of backgrounds attend the Overtures events.

"One of the couples I met from the original committee, she's an attorney and he's in real estate. Another guy writes computer programs for children. Some of the young musicians come. It's a lot of young professionals — single and married," she said.

Toenniges, whose husband Jeff is also on the steering committee, stressed that Overtures is not a formal group. Schedules are sent out at the beginning of each season to those who wish to be on the mailing list. Those interested may participate in any or all of the events.

"The group is not something you need to join and we like to stress that. That way people don't feel like they have to make a commitment which is hard for people our age," she said.

Toenniges, who studied music in college, incidentally found out about Overtures through an article in The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers five years ago.

The next Overtures outing is on Sunday, Jan. 23, when the group throws a joint 3:30 p.m. brunch with the Detroit Institute of Arts' Founders Junior Council at the DIA's atrium. The brunch will be followed by a gallery tour and the concert.

"That should be a real big one; they're two groups that have a lot in common. Overtures can be anywhere from 40 people to 80 people and the

See OVERTURES, 6B

IN CONCERT

Ahin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. (rhythm and blues)
832-2355

MICHAEL ZAPORSKI
Followed by Paul Keller/Cary Kocher Quartet at Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor, (solo piano)
662-8310

2 IGUANAS FROM EARTH
Avon Bar & Grill, 3582 W. Auburn, Rochester, (solo piano)
662-8310

THE SMITHS VIDEO APPRECIATION NIGHT
3-D, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak. (video)
(810) 589-3344

HOME SICK NIGHT
Retro alternative music spin at Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. (retro)

(810) 334-1999

Wednesday, Jan. 12
FERNANDE TORRENT
With host John D. Lamb at the Magic Bag, Woodward at Nine Mile Road, Farmdale. (solo piano)
(513) 544-3030

FOUR NAMES
Leonard's, 2101 Bonisteel, North Campus
Ann Arbor, (acoustic folk rock)
(313) 662-8310

MICHAEL ZAPORSKI
Followed by Ron Brooks Trio at Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor, (solo piano)
(810) 589-3344

TRAILBLAZE VISION
With Saucy Jack at Blind Pig, 208-206 S.

First St., Ann Arbor.
996-8555

FLIGHT 407
O Club, 29 S. Saginaw St., Pontiac. (blues)
(810) 334-7401

FRANK ALLISON
Celebrates his birthday at Shadowbox Cafe, 2917 Woodward, Hamtramck. (acoustic)
(810) 973-3250

RETRO MUSIC NIGHT
3-D, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak. (retro)
(810) 589-3344

"EXILE ON ORATORY"
Alternative dance times spun by 80X's Darren Riehl at The Ritz, 17550 Franch, Roseville. Free admission college ID. (alternative)
(810) 776-0404

Thursday, Jan. 13
SAME
With Dave's Night at The Ritz, 17550 Franch

See IN CONCERT, 5B