

TOL 1A NO. 13 FEBRUARY 23-29, 1994

LAW WEEKLY



FREE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Susan James at Moguls; see Other Rock Events.

•Guitarist-singer-songwriter Susan James is a triple-threat whose multiple gifts come together with provocative power. A superior tunesmith, she's also radically remolding the pop-song format with an apparently limitless supply of tone colors, head-turning chord progressions and an elastic, wildly lyrical solo style. James often plays guitar in open tunings and uses a dulcimer technique — fingerpicking, with her thumb over the top of the neck — giving her songs a rich harmonic breadth and further widening her sound canvas. Her equally adventurous multi-octave vocal technique and pointed postmodern-heartbreak lyrics highlight the 12 strong tracks on her new CD, *Shocking Pink Banana Seat*. All of the above puts James in the rare class of potential superstar performers whose music happens to come way before the image. But I did say she's a triple-threat: onstage, she's got the rarest gift of all — charisma. (John Payne)