“Raucous and jubilant - Malone alternates between

soulful ballads and rowdy, riffy blasters. “ Rolling Stone

**Michelle Malone Comes Out Swinging on**

***Slings And Arrows***

Compared to most musical artists in the Americana genre, Malone seems like a pair of distressed blue jeans amidst a sea of pantsuits. Unlike the surplus of self-professed rootsy rebels, one listen to this woman from Dixie and you know you’re hearing the real thing. Credit Michelle Malone with doing things her own way for the better part of the past three decades, and defying expectations in the process.

She’s had her share of success, courtesy of some 15 studio albums, her own independent SBS Records label, numerous top flight film and TV soundtracks, kudos from the critics and collaborations with a remarkable roster of amazing artists, among them, the late Gregg Allman, ZZ Top, Ellen DeGeneres and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Chuck Leavell, the master keyboardist who has backed both the the Rolling Stones and the Allman Brothers, cited her as “One of the best female vocalists I’ve ever heard.” It’s little wonder that *Guitar World* once hailed Malone as “Equal parts guitar slinger and sweet songstress, with masterful lyrical introspection – sublime to raucous.”

Malone isn’t content to simply acknowledge her accomplishments.

A singer, songwriter, guitarist and producer whose music is informed by blues, roadhouse rock & roll and Georgia soul, Malone’s stunning and stirring new album *Slings and Arrows* (Due February 16 via SBS Records) pushes the parameters even further. It’s upbeat, defiant, and jubilant, flush with the raw energy and emotion that’s always been a part of her signature sound all while nudging her deeper into some personal territory she hasn’t explored before. Malone deals with issues that have been burned into her psyche and affected her deeply. These songs speak to desire and disappointment, optimism and awareness, all with a driving and fiery conviction. “It wasn’t planned that way”, she insists, “but inevitably, that’s how the album evolved”.

“The past year seemed to alternate between darkness and light,” Malone reflects. “It’s kind of been the arc of my life in general, but even more so over the past year. In a very real sense, this album is a microcosm of issues that I’ve rencountered, and in writing this record, it became a kind of therapy. It helped change my perspective, and I suspect that there are messages here that can offer affirmation to others as well.”

While it’s not a concept album in the strictest sense, *Slings and Arrows* does look at a myriad of scenarios from the perspective of the characters that populate these songs. It’s through their hardships that Malone draws parallels with situations she’s encountered in recent years with her friends and family. In that way, Malone offers both a connection and a catalyst for dealing with these universal difficulties.

*Slings and Arrows* is more than mere meditation or rumination. Malone, an Atlanta native, describes it as a “Georgia record,” due to the fact that the musicians, studios, and even those responsible for the visual art are all Georgians. ”I take a lot of pride in Georgia and the importance that Georgia music has played not only in my music but also in American music in general,” she says. “Georgians such as Little Richard, James Brown, Ray Charles all laid the ground work. Without them, we would never have had Elvis, the Beatles, the Stones - there would be no rock and roll.”

As the *New York Times* once pointed out, Malone is "The kind of singer and songwriter who can jolt things into overdrive." That’s best evidenced by the fact that the record was recorded quickly live in the studio. It took all of five days to get the songs on tape. “I aim for authenticity,” Malone insists. “I don’t know how to do it any other way. I’m at my best when I’m just being me.”

Produced by Malone herself, recorded by Jeff Bakos and mixed and mastered by Gerry Hansen, Slings and Arrows finds her handling vocals, brandishing electric and acoustic guitars (including her signature slide guitar), harp, and mandolin, with additional support from guitarist Doug Kees, bassist Robbie Handley, drummer Christopher Burrows and percussionist Trish Land.

Malone slyly adds half jokingly and half seriously, “These Slings and Arrows have the power to defeat your blues, move your shoes and put you back together, too!” Who doesn’t want that?

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***Slings and Arrows* at a glance:**

1. Just Getting Started (Malone)  2:55

2.  Love Yourself (Malone)  4:04

3. Sugar On My Tongue (Malone, Eliot Bronson)  3:56

4. Boxing Gloves (Malone)  4:11

5. Ive Been Loving You Too Long [with Shawn Mullins] (Otis Redding, Jerry Butler)  5:28

6. The Fox and The Hound (Malone/Randall Bramblett) 5:12

7. Civil War (Malone)  4:17

8. The Flame (Malone, Eliot Bronson)  4:48

9. Beast's Boogie (Malone/Chuck McDowell) 4:15

10. Matador (Malone)  4:32

**Michelle comments on some specific songs:**

**“**Just Getting Started” - This was written as a catalyst to inspire me to keep on keeping on, not only in music, but also in life in general. The driving beat really wakes me up and gets me moving, and I find strength in the lyrics. These days, more than ever, most of us are looking for additional fortification and inspiration, and music is always a great source for that.

“Love Yourself” - This is the last song I wrote for the record - I actually wrote it pretty quickly the night before we cut it. It went down really easily because the music is so much fun, and I love the message. I'd been thinking about how self esteem is this magical healing thing that made everyone who had it instantly beautiful and commanding, and I thought how amazing it would be if we could show the same love and respect for others that we so desire for ourselves. It sounds heavy, but it's a very simple concept and a very simple fun song. "Until you love yourself, you cant love nobody else!"

“The Flame” -- “This was a co-write with Eliot Bronson and it finds me at my most vulnerable. It was the result of the division that I was going through with my family. At the same time, it opened my heart up more than ever and allowed me to focus not only on my own needs, but also on the realization that we all need to be aware of other people’s needs as well. Compassion is something that needs to be shared much more these days.”

“I’ve Been Loving You Too Long” -- “This is, of course, one of Otis Redding’s signature songs, and it was such a great thrill to have sung this live with the late Gregg Allman. The original intention was to have Gregg sing on the album track, but sadly that never came to pass. However, my good friend, the wonderfully talented Shawn Mullins, stepped up the plate, and the version we recorded not only felt , as I had envisioned it, but also became so emotional that I literally cried while we recorded it. I was thinking of Gregg and was being spurred on and inspired by the band and Shawn - it was so emotionally overwhelming. Surprisingly enough, we managed to get it live, all in one take.”

“Boxing Gloves” -- “This song describes my personal journey through some very tough times. It’s about the challenges of trying to connect with others, but also trying to connect with my own emotions and needs. I was saying that I was taking off my boxing gloves and coming out stronger than ever. It’s about my pride in that accomplishment, and the strength and determination that I found as a result.”

**Credits:**

Michelle Malone - vocals, slide guitars, harmonica, mandolin, acoustic and electric guitars

Doug Kees - electric guitar

Robbie Handley - bass

Christopher Burrows - drums

Trish Land - percussion

Shawn Mullins - vocal (I've Been Loving You)

Peter Stroud - electric guitar (Sugar on My Tongue)

Joey Huffman - keys (Sugar on My Tongue)

Recorded by Jeff Bakos at Bakos Amp Works in Atlanta, GA

Mixed and Mastered by Gerry Hansen at Creekside Studios

Produced by Michelle Malone

Front cover art work Trish Land, Graphics Jodi Hersh, Photography by Michael Nichols and Clay Miller

Visit [www.MichelleMalone.com](http://www.michellemalone.com/) for downloads, merchandise and tour info

FUN FACTS

Malone appeared on the Grateful Dead tribute album, Deadicated (Arista Records) in the Harshed Mellows with Dan Baird (Georgia Satellites) and The Heartbreakers (Tom Petty).

She was featured in a Georgia Tourism TV commercial with Elton John.

The Collectible card game Magic: The Gathering was named in part for her song The Gathering.

"Malone sang backing vocals on southern anthems Straight To Hell and Honeysuckle Blue by Drivin' N Cryin' (Island Records), Shawn Mullins (Better Days), Tinsley Ellis' Moment of Truth, as well as 5 indigo girls records."

Malone started a scholarship for girls, and has awarded 3 scholarships thus far - The first recipient is now in graduate school, the second recently graduated, and the 3rd will graduate next year.

She has appeared on the grammy ballot twice - once for Best Americana Album (Debris) and once for Best Contemporary Blues Album (Sugarfoot).