

DailyOM

Nurturing Mind Body & Spirit

June 18, 2007

All Is Forgiven

Ashana

2006

The first thing you notice about the amazing voice of Ashana is her radiance. An entire children's chorale seems to dwell within this one female voice-timeless, ethereal, and-in its egoless way-powerful. Her voice stays so still and centered that one becomes cognizant of the world turning around it, the music playing, the time passing, but Ashana is outside it all. Her stunner of an album, *All Is Forgiven*, is just five tracks, all perfectly suited in length and tonality for a short meditation. The first song, a blissful rendition of "Ave Maria," opens with a slow three-note-chime series over which her vocals slowly coalesce, surging to operatic highs or holding long, healing energy tones as the music dictates.

Straddling the space between classical, popular, and New Age music, Ashana never falls into any one category to the point where the perfect spell is broken. Consider the constant singing bowl-style drone over "Into Your Arms," which prevents it from ever merging into pop. In it Ashana sings "I am here for you," with the comforting assurance of a divine sky mother. The closing track, "When All Is Forgotten," carries a slight Celtic edge of fathomless melancholy akin to albums by Enya or her sister Moya, but it is much more stately and placid with a gentle keyboard line gracefully supporting long sad tones.

"When All Is Forgiven" turns out to be a most apt title; the miraculous quality of Ashana's voice, its power to soothe and heal as it soars up octaves and holds notes until they blend with chimes into infinity, makes one's guilt and petty crimes against oneself and others-the inescapable by-product of being human-melt away as the unimportant, illusory nothings they are. Her operatic voice comes to us like a message from beyond, bearing white radiance and creating the healing space with which we can remember true destinies and connect with the eternal grace of the present moment. In "When All Is Forgiven" she sings, "Footsteps on the journey / Oceans in the sun / Sunlight on the mountain / Stars across your heart," making us aware that our endless journey upward need not be taken alone.