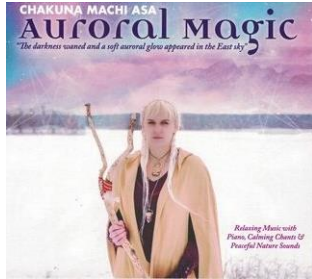


Chakuna Machi Asa

Auroral Magic



I just listened to **Auroral Magic** by Chakuna Machi Asa and I found the entire album fascinating. Chakuna's music skirts the New Age genre, but also resides in the spiritual and world music categories. **Auroral Magic** is curative, thoughtful music, and oftentimes meditative. She uses many instruments on the 12 track collection, but piano is dominant. Voice, droning, chant, and instrumental music blend cohesively in a well-connected mixture offering the listener quite a few different perspectives. Healing may be close at hand.

A watery background and chirping crickets intros the first cut **Blood of Our Ghost**. Looking within, the **Blood of Our Ghost** flows and relates an introspective journey of discovery. Our history is not just written down in dusty journals, but also it is inside us, the memories coursing through our veins along with our blood. Chakuna's primal lyrics and natural, organic music try to connect with those memories.

**Planet Xenon** has a decidedly Native American flavor. Repetitive chant and medium cadenced drums combine in a round song that has a mesmerizing tonality. The music is dream-like, weightless, and comforting with the eyes closed.

**Dancing Reflections** offers nature sounds and just a touch of drone over a wonderful piano song. Chakuna's composition is introspectively serious without being morose. Her melody has just a handful of recurring notes, but they lead you into a world of soulful calm.

**The Wind** is an interesting study that is a bit disconcerting, but in a way that makes one ponder, not fear. Overall it is a delicate tune. A conceptual echoing piano fantasy with wind driven embellishments created by a strange humming voice. The notes fly from the piano like aural wraiths, hanging in the air for a moment and then disappearing. The deep bass voice is reminiscent of Tuvalu Throat singing.

**Space Shift** is one of my favorites on **Auroral Magic**. It begins with an eerie flutter of percussion, an ethereal voice, and a sculptural piano melody. Moving from one astral plane to another, one must surrender to the mysteries of the unknown and accept the unacceptable. The music is the key to opening a door, heretofore locked by doubt.

If you've ever experienced the sound of your heartbeat inside your ears, you will know what I heard on the song **Our Escape**. Modest piano, the humming undertones, and an overwhelming sense of cold permeate the music. I was either very north or extremely south in a land where frost and ice are quietly permanent. There was also a feeling of isolation, but with my path of return clearly marked.

**The Whale Song** features Chakuna's piano prowess in a tender ballad of voice and background with the song of whales. It is presented as a call and response technique, but it is actually a conversation. One must listen carefully for the answers.

**Auroral Magic**, the title tune is the last track. Wind chimes and piano suggest her cold, but colorful Finnish ancestry where the legends of heroes and Gods have been realized in oral history, stories, and poetry for centuries. The music is an expressive and memorable piano piece. Church bells are in the distance, other bells nearby, but each tone tells its own story. Another favorite.

Chakuna Machi Asa can attest to the power of music and faith as that is how she started her journey. Music not only called to her, it dwelled inside her. She creates her music, channeling her thoughts, dreams, and experiences and transcribing the results through her music. I was delighted and often moved by this music. It is quite easy to follow her on her path, but it allows one to make their own path as well. Recommended. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews