

Michelle Qureshi

Within



You are given 25 chances at attaining a modicum of peace from within and without. What do you do? You listen to the latest album from guitarist **Michelle Qureshi** called **Within**. Qureshi's monumental work is more than two dozen New Age, ambient, and contemporary guitar tunes all deftly defining moods, actions, and emotions. It's a bold task, but Qureshi is up to it and more. Michelle Qureshi is an award winning, chart topping composer that marries spirituality with intention. Once united, her music offers calmness, peace, and comfort to any listener in need of a little time for introspection and quiet. At this writing, I'm pretty sure it applies to the entire planet.

The collection opens with the tune **Above Us**. It's not just a song about blue skies and sunny days, but what is beyond that which we see with our eyes. Many time we look to the skies for solace. It is just an acknowledgement that there is a Higher Power out there. Since man could not fly, he/she/they looked up in wonder with what ifs on their lips. It is that wonder that Michelle artistically imparts in this song.

Many of the tune titles are introduced with the word "With". I imagined that each of these is prefaced with *Live Your Life*. One of them is **With Anticipation**. There is a bit of quiet frenzy in this dynamic song. The nerves are bare, the heart is pounding. Whatever is about to happen will deeply effect you. Hold on. Live Your Life With Anticipation.

The name is ambiguous, but the tune **Content**, assures us of a time when we have a happy balance between life and existence. Life is the outside forces that sculpt your every day of work-family-self. Existence is the degree of attention you give them. We often ignore self in this earthly trinity. We should not have to pay a heavy emotional penalty for giving one a little more consideration over the others. Even if it is for a few minutes. Do not ignore self.

Atlantis. They call it the lost continent. Revered by ancient philosophers and denounced by modern historians, it is place of power and peace. Michelle's gentle guitar tune **Shores of Atlantis** lets us believe is a special place where utopian ideas are created. If only we had the time to count the ocean waves all day and count the stars at night. Where is such a place? Easy to find if you keep the album title in mind.

Michele adds a touch of Baroque to her tune **Storyboard**. As you savor the music, your mind creates these vignettes full of color, joy, and cheerfulness. Don't like that one? Erase and start again. The music is endless. The storyboard is yours to command.

With Languor is a slow, calm song that constructs day dreams and fantasies. The music suggests for you to let the world revolve around you rather than allow the rotation to rule your time. The morning sun on your face, the smell of pine on a clear afternoon, and the purple and gold colors of a sunset stand still for you to enjoy.

One of my many favorites on Within is called **At Twilight**. This minimalistic musing is perfect to not the end the day, but begin the miracle of night. Sparkling star diamonds take their place in the sky, the heat of the earth gives way, and the planet gives off an inaudible sigh. That and a promise to do it all over again tomorrow.

With Thoughtfulness is a drifting, effortless piece that has a great suggestion. Do everything with thoughtfulness. Lend your hands, give of your talents, and devote some time for others. Kind-heartedness and empathy go hand in hand and when you give to others, that gift, that grace comes back tenfold. Michelle's simple tune is a quiet anthem for compassion.

This music overflows with melodic mindfulness. You can put Michelle Qureshi's music on and hit Shuffle and Repeat and just slip away. Get ready for some instrumental bliss. Highly listenable. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews