## Mp3 Alexandra Rising - Pop: Chamber Pop



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Raw, theatrical chamber pop about identity, power, and destructive desire. 11 MP3 Songs POP: Chamber Pop, ROCK: Experimental Rock Show all album songs: Alexandra Rising Songs Details: Alexandra Rising is the stage moniker of one Leia Alexandra Manuel, a curly-haired only child born and raised in rural, south-central VA. In Fall 2006, after eight years of working with multitrack cassette recorders, she assembled a computer-based recording studio in her basement and is in the process of forcing the equipment into submission. Leia grew up listening to the vinyls in her parents' collection, including Simon and Garfunkel, Judy Collins, and Don McLean. Before she was old enough to classify this material as "folk music," she was already learning from it how to arrest listeners with memorable melodies, passionate vocals and skillfully woven stories. Adding variety to her formative years were Roberta Flack's soul and poignant symbolism, the high drama of theme songs from movies and Broadway musicals, and the Mediterranean flava of Greek folk songs. In middle school Leia discovered the alternative rock stations on her radio dial. She recalls stumbling upon a recording of an REM concert, hearing Losing My Religion, and thinking, Gawd, I didnt know music could sound like that. This proved to be the gateway to other things inventive and/or disenchanted, especially The Cranberries, Heather Nova, and (of course) Tori Amos. From there, Leia worked backwards, discovering all the classic rockers from the 60s and 70s who had not appeared in her parents tame library. By college she had also developed a taste for the glamour of the silver screen and the androgyny in some early Hollywood films, as well as the beautiful boys of the glam rock movement. Leia has a masters degree in Creative Writing, which means she is certifiably insane. But also, she likes to think that the many poetry workshops she has been through have made her a better songwriter. Her present musical tastes include anything that conveys genuine passion and rattles the cage of complacency, but her absolute favorite songs are still those that resemble her

earliest influences: stripped down, intimate, and breathtakingly vulnerable. She hopes her music causes us all to question that which we take for granted, to try others points of view on for size, and to remind those who feel somehow marginal (as she often has, and, perhaps, as we all do from time to time) that there is someone out there who understands. ALEXANDRA RISING is a piercing call to the solitary and ambitious who are fighting fang and claw to resist derailment on their way to success. In this vein the album warns against the diversions of erotic attraction and egotism (and the volatile combination thereof) - but, like a youth who recognizes his own foolishness yet determines to enjoy it as long as he can, the album lingers fondly on the very enticements it ultimately criticizes. As a result the pull between what is good and what feels good is enacted dramatically for listeners. Love in the world of ALEXANDRA RISING is a high-stakes game in which one guickly learns, in the words of Leonard Cohen, how to shoot somebody who outdrew you. Two charismatic leaders may be drawn to each other, but the necessity of watching their backs lest they lose power leads to paranoia when the lights go out. In the albums realm, love with trust is an ideal that is prized but never attained. The speaker of these songs is a creature of ambivalence: she craves human connection even as she objectifies her lovers; she glorifies romance even as she declares its futility; and she aspires to a mechanistic detachment even as she fears what achieving such a transformation would mean for her soul. The guestion that arises is of particular universal import: whether it is wise to isolate oneself in the interest of self-preservation.

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