

## Mp3 The Christiana Jade Project - I'm Alive



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World/pop/dance/electronica uplifting tracks. 6 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Dance, WORLD: Middle East  
Details: Christiane Karam is known for moving audiences with her beautifully intricate melodies, hypnotic voice, and captivating presence. With her world music group, the ZilZALA Middle Eastern Ensemble, Christiane blends classical and traditional middle eastern music from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Turkey, with contemporary jazz , to create a truly unique musical experience. The ZilZALA Ensemble has been playing to packed houses in Boston and New York, bringing together music lovers from the Middle East with a western audience that is eager to learn about and enjoy the exotic middle eastern rhythms and melodies. ZilZALA was nominated for Best World Music Act by the 2006 Phoenix Music Poll. At age sixteen, Christiane earned a diploma in classical piano from Tekelyan School of Music in Beirut, where she was raised during Lebanon's civil war. She went on to earn a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics as well as a Certificate in Psychology, while performing in local bands, writing and teaching music. She came to Boston in 1998 to study film scoring, songwriting and voice at the Berklee College of Music, on scholarship, and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a dual degree. While at Berklee, Christiane won First Prize in the 2001 USA Songwriting Competition's World Music Category, for her song "I'm Alive", and Honorable Mention the following year for her song "Breathe", which was subsequently released on Heavy Rotation Records in February 2004. Another song, "Place In The Sun" placed Christiane as a finalist in the 'Electronic' category of the 2003 John Lennon Songwriting Contest, and her song "Look up to the sky" was placed finalist in both competitions. She received a Recognition Award from Berklee for her "Contribution to International Goodwill and Understanding" in March 2002, for producing and performing in a Peace Benefit Concert in the aftermath of 9/11 - as part of the "Shades of Orient" concert series she founded in 2000. She also won the SESAC award in March 2003. Christiane

holds a Masters Degree in Contemporary Improvisation from the New England Conservatory, where she was named the Kimball P. Stickney scholar for 2004-2005, and again for the 2005-2006 academic year. She graduated with Academic Honors and is now an active performer, music educator and choir director in the Boston area. In addition to the ZilZALA Ensemble, Christiane frequently performs with several ensembles and bands in Boston and in New York, including live appearances with her "Christiana Jade" band, a world/pop/dance project that she started in 1999 with producer Angel Angelov. "Christiana Jade" blends Western pop with Middle Eastern musical influences to create uplifting tracks that promote peace and goodwill. Christiane is also a member of Divi Zheni, a Bulgarian Chorus directed by Bulgarian vocal sensation Tatiana Sarbinska. Divi Zheni toured Bulgaria in the summer of 2005. Christiane has performed with the likes of Bulgarian legend Yanka Rupkina and pianist/composer Ran Blake, and has been featured on VH1. Her teachers include Jamey Haddad, Simon Shaheen, Dominique Eade, Ed Tomassi, Hal Crook, Jerry Bergonzi, Frank Carlberg, Hankus Netsky, Tatiana Sarbinska, and Bobby McFerrin.

Natasha Bishop, The Groove "...Following was Christiane Karam's very original piece "Breathe", which featured an extremely tight band. "Breathe" was gorgeous! Christiane came out and shook her groove thang, which the crowd ate up." Songwriter has come a long way from wartime Beirut [- Hide] May Farah-

The Daily Star If there's one thing Christiane Karam can remember with absolute clarity about her childhood is that she's always been passionate about music. Some 20 years later, that unwavering passion is still there and has finally taken her to well-deserved pinnacles of recognition: Karam is the first Lebanese to ever win the USA Songwriting Competition. "I remember when I was a little girl, I was really fascinated with melodies and sounds; I was curious about everything", recalls the 29-year old, speaking from Boston, her home for the past 3 years. "I thought there actually were little men with instruments inside the radio who sang the songs and everytime a song ended, I'd actually flip the radio around and wait for them to come out". They never did- but that had little impact on Karam's enthusiasm and devotion to music. At the age of eight and just three months after beginning classical piano lessons, she got her first taste of performing in front of a live audience. "That was my first stage experience and I guess I've been hooked ever since", she says of the performance, held at AUB's Assembly Hall. For Karam, music was an escape from the harsh environment that was the Beirut of her youth. With war and violence all around her, she found peace in music. "I listened to songs, wrote melodies and lyrics, practiced piano, and that made me very happy," she recalls. "I started writing songs very early; I used to write lyrics first

and then try to set them to music". However, she never entered a competition while growing up in Beirut; it was, she says, too difficult. "I was really doing a lot, but I still felt I needed to be in a more positive musical environment". She applied to the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston, got accepted and later got a scholarship. "So I stayed", says Karam, who is enrolled in a jazz songwriting program and film scoring, and is studying Classical Arabic music with renowned New-York based musician Simon Shaheen. " I won a couple of awards here at Berklee and one of my songs made the finals at last year's USA Songwriting Competition", she says, adding that it wasn't until she got to the United States that she began to appreciate Arabic music. This year, however, she went all the way. "I'm Alive", a song she wrote in Beirut a couple of years ago, won the First Prize of the World Category. "Winning the competition meant a lot to me, both personally and professionally", says Karam. "I've probably written about 20 songs since I've been here; only seven or eight of which I've actually recorded. The I'm Alive project was a big investment; it was a big pop-dance thing and the songs on the album reflect that. Most of my other stuff is a little different- not as pop-oriented". Winning was even sweeter because Karam represented Lebanon in the competition. "It makes me really happy when we represent something positive for the whole world to see... our image was so negative for so many years, it's really nice to be able to contribute to change that". "I'd really like to return to Lebanon at some point and bring what I've learned with me. The music scene has come a long way in Beirut and I'd like to be part of its evolution... There's so much talent in Lebanon; it's amazing." She's not certain just what's next. The only thing she is sure of now is completing the jazz program in which she's enrolled. After that, she may try New York for inspiration... then maybe back to Beirut. "I think what I try to convey is a message of life, of love. A lot of things were very difficult for me during the war, and I think what really helped me was to keep dreaming; I also gained courage from the songs I listened to. So I feel very committed towards those out there who are struggling and I'd like to think that my words could make a difference," she said. Since discovering the beauty of her native song, Karam also has an interest in promoting Arabic music in the US. "We have such a wonderful legacy. I really feel very strongly about getting it out there".

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