

Mp3 Christina Maria - Stars & Satellites



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A fresh bouquet of folk, jazz and popular music. 11 MP3 Songs in this album (35:58) ! Related styles: FOLK: Folk-Jazz, JAZZ: Contemporary Jazz Details: CHRISTINA MARIA Stars Satellites Christina Maria is a genuine free spirit, and her personal adventurousness infuses the highly original and genre-defying music she creates. The muse of this young Vancouver singer/songwriter gets fired up by travel, as is strikingly demonstrated on her debut solo album, Stars Satellites. There's the 40 hour train ride in China that sparked "I Don't Speak Chinese," the trip to Mexico that inspired "Don't Cry," the Mediterranean references in "It Ain't Easy," and the tales of on the road romances in "Belize," a tune as airy and warm as a tropical breeze. The cinematic road movie feel of these irresistibly melodic and lyrically evocative songs are matched by subtle musical touches and Christina Maria's fluid and sweetly seductive vocals. There are no borders here in terms of the stylistic settings of her songs. She confesses that a simple definition of her style is beyond her, noting that "it's folk, but not really folk, jazz but not really jazz, and pop is in there too." Even at her young age, she has a wealth of musical study and performance behind her, all put to good use on Stars Satellites. By age 16, she was performing her original songs in her first band, and frequently singing as a duo with her younger sister, Lisa Rieder. Her talent was quickly recognized by The City of Surrey (her hometown), when they awarded her a Creative Contributions Grant in 2004. Full-time study in the Jazz Voice Program at Vancouver Community College followed, with her teachers including famed vocalist Kate Hammett-Vaughan. Christina's subsequent ability to cover the jazz standards in a compelling fashion was demonstrated by the enthusiastic response to recent shows in two Hong Kong jazz clubs. Armed with her now-proficient technique, Christina Maria and noted jazz guitarist Myles Kump performed across Western Canada, and their musically diverse work together was collected on the well-received 2006 album, Reason. After striking out on her own, Christina began writing and recording

the songs that now come to vivid life on *Stars Satellites*. Extensive busking and frequent open-mic night appearances helped hone her vocal chops, and she then began work on the album with multi-instrumentalist/producer Ian Cameron. "He has been a great mentor, and he helped me mold the songs. He is so patient, and his experience helped open up the possibilities of where the songs could go." Sessions in the relaxed confines of Cameron's studio followed, with some of Vancouver's best musicians dropping by to add cool cameos. The guest list includes trumpeter J.P. Carter (Inhabitants), drummer Sam Cartwright, percussionist Robin Layne, violinist Jaron Freeman-Fox, guitarist Neil Cruickshank (Brickhouse), and backing singer Jasmin Parkin. The focus throughout remains on Christina Maria's voice and fluent guitar, but the deft instrumental touches of her accompanists shine through on repeated listenings. The cool trumpet work of Carter on "Belize" prompts some inspired scatting from Christina, the lilting electric guitar on "I Knew All Along" adds to its tender and bittersweet feel, and the gently plucked Pippa adds an exotic air to the jaunty "With Care." Complementing the understated intelligence of the vocal and instrumental work here is the lyrical ability of Christina Maria. "I just really like great and clever lyrics," she says, singling out Joni Mitchell as an inspiration. "My mother always told me to write stories. It's nice when a song is about something, not just an emotion." Christina Maria's creative imagination has been further boosted by her recent relocation to Toronto. Performances in prominent clubs in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto and support appearances at the Danforth Music Hall in Toronto and Oshawa's Regent Theatre have all been warmly received. She pledges to retain the freewheeling musical adventurousness she has shown by studying gamelan in Bali and Hindustani vocals in southern India. "I think that is the only way to go," she stresses. "Music is so much like life. It is always changing, and if it's not, then what is it? I have to keep learning and getting better." Motivation to do just that has been regularly supplied by guitar great Pat Metheny. Since she met him at a Vancouver concert three years ago, Christina has been in regular touch with Metheny, who constructively critiques her work. "He stresses that music is an unlimited entity if I keep working at it," she reports. "It's inspiring to hear him talk about the importance of the art, in a world where the business side of things is so dominant." With the release of *Stars Satellites*, word of the presence of a shining new star in the Canadian constellation is destined to spread fast. On the hauntingly beautiful title track that closes out this album, Christina Maria sings "I'm staring at the infinite." With this strikingly accomplished record, we can all see the infinite potential of this young artist.

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