

## Album Review For "Orenda: Breath of Angels"

Written and performed by

DYAN GARRIS

Review written by Kerry Barnes

### Introduction

I'm so thrilled to be writing a review for such an esteemed artist as Dyan Garris. Global music awards adorn her, and the New Age movement would certainly be at a loss without her!! Dyan '*feels music*' almost like no other, and this was very evident even as a small child. She went on to gift the world with her speciality talents in music for *meditation and relaxation*, and I can vouch for that on hearing her music, fit for the ears of angels.

### Track 1. "Every Time You Breathe"

I'm immediately drawn to an ethereal, almost middle eastern vocal from Juliet Lyons, and as it breathes a heavenly breath, a silver filigree piano deposits a divine energy, empowering yet gentle. They are in complete symbiosis.

A tender and persistent percussion reassures us of a quadruple metre and invites a beautiful vibrato from a flute, so sweet that it could only be played by the wonderful Sherry Finzer. This instantly informs me of the brilliant musical decisions Dyan has made, and her casting is impeccable!!

I'm loving the 'call and response' phrasing of Dyan's piano writing, full of 'cantabile tone' and exquisite lyricism. I can feel this music breathing close to my cheek, and sense an exhale from a male creation, warm and comforting. Passing notes weave their way through an angelic mist, with a lightness of spirit and healing energy.

These words are sung "Every time you Breathe" .....and I can't help noticing their construction, major third followed by a semitone, it just works so beautifully. Little trills, turns, and embellishments dance and twirl, cleverly shared by the piano and flute, they move together in new-age counterpoint, almost like a Bach fugue. I feel as if I'm emerging from a bronze singing-bowl which has a certain vibrational desire. I now sense a closure, the music starts to feel somewhat muted, somewhat felted. It fades out and rests as it knows 'another place' is waiting. But where? .....

### Track 2. "Another Place"

This other place, I believe, is where waves break on the shoreline and kiss those with sandy feet. I also believe in its symmetry of ideation, like the feathered creations on our planet. I can almost smell the carved cuttlefish in this timeless piece. Timeless because it has no particular time-signature, and this is so clever of Dyan, she washes us in swathes of sound that carry us anywhere, and everywhere so we can pick out what we like best about this dream like composition.

What I like best about this composition are devices such as the slower tempo, the electric violin, the silvery-sparkles on piano, the lovely contrapuntal threading, the use of higher registers, how beautifully it has been recorded, mixed, mastered and produced by the amazing John Herrera at Clamsville Productions in Arizona, sorry I'm going on a bit.....but I literally could go on marvelling about this music!!

### Track 3. "Forest Whispers"

This beautiful tropical rainforest piece is playing tricks with my mind.....I can hear the conical main instrument upon the lips of Sherry Finzer but this time it sounds like a native-american-flute, which by the way is one of my favourite instruments, along with the harpsichord.....what polar opposites!!

I see in my mind's eye Dyans' passion for music that can be meditated and relaxed to whilst walking through a forest populated by birds-of-paradise, and they follow me all the way to the end. I see also their stunning colours and heavenly construction through a dappled light, gently vibrating. They play a beautiful duet with the music, and this 'call-and-response' seems to be a feature on this delicate pink album by Dyan. I envision a harp being played in a green and lush clearing, but the strings are made from flowers plucked and picked to perfection.

I have been allowed to enter a magical and mystical place that only exists in this writer's head. Thank you so much Dyan Garri!!

#### Track 4. "Orenda"

I'm really learning something here, that such a title would be so symbiotic with the music it's describing. There's a spiritual energy within this piece. An energy that allows 'interplay' between all those making this beautiful sound world. Very thought provoking. Some inspirational moments wash over me, would for you too if you heard strings and a female 'ah' vocal in unison, on a breath that could only be made in heaven!

Oooh, my favourite.....sparkly top notes with synth reinforcement. A tribe of angels fizz in my ears with their omnipresent empowerment, I feel enthused to make a change in my own life!! I feel free!!

#### Track 5. "Moonlight Breeze"

I've never meditated in my life, but I feel I'm half-way there with this one!! There are recurring images for me on listening to Dyan's music.....forests and the sea. If you hear this track through headphones you'll be treated to a deep and resonant sound world, peppered with sweet twinkly piano stars in a positive major tonality, all is very happy!

This cool and moonlit breeze emits a salty air you can taste, as it watches waves breaking on the shoreline. Dyan's piano work is just right in terms of balance, everyone has an equal share of the limelight, or should I say, the moonlight!

Again, I have to say what comes to me.....a forest is sleeping except for a tawny nocturnal flight that keeps the peace as fauna and flora rest in the dark.

A young fox tries to follow it's shadow of inexperience and dances with a tree, what for, he does not know. A wilting daisy for dinner, that is all.

Am loving the ends of phrases, they seem to go on forever and I'm very happy to let them wash over me while I meditate in the moonlight, kissed by a gentle breeze.

#### Track 6. "Gentle Traveler"

I really like this track, it has more form and structure, I can sway with the gentle four-four time signature. Very piano based at first, then a real focus on the violin, with melodically shaped phrases, gorgeous!

The first showing of Rebekah Eden's ethereal vocal is sublime. I notice in this track that Dyan's composing and arranging skills are really coming to the fore, because she starts to write a 'major-3rd' apart between the solo instruments, including a heavenly strummed guitar in the hands of Tony

Garviz!! ...and then I catch 6ths-apart to open up the sound a little, excellent work Dyan!! Throughout this track there is clearer rhythmic shaping, which might be because when playing with fellow musicians it has to be this way so they can hook on to something and not lose their way. It sure works!!

I'm picking up on a fragment of melody that reminds me of 'starry-starry-night' a pentatonic motif in ascent sounds so beautiful. Very clever.

The hairs stand up on the back of my neck as a chimed-instrument crawls like a spider across it.....ooh, rejuvenating indeed!! Bravo sweet lady!!

#### Track 7. "Water For The Soul"

I'm connecting with the images that are uniquely stored in Dyan's musical being.....a lilac-blue mist whose tail touches the earth, cleansing and refreshing. I feel it free my own internal spirit, it is washing away my fears of the human world we live in and giving me hope anew. A brave piano starts to sing from the start, and I recognize a quadruple measure in it's song. Descending melodic motifs are in unison with a baby's breath, so soft, so gentle and fragile. There's almost a Celtic-Folk structure and form and I can imagine 'Enya' singing it. A relaxed dotted rhythm in the piano writing has freedom within it, very elastic and produces gorgeous sequencing. Super inspirational!!

#### Track 8. "Timeless Traveler"

A glorious sound with strings and piano immediately in unison again and speak to me of 'Gregorian-Chant' just fleetingly. Sherry Finzer's flute has a slow and measured vibrato, through headphones is emphasized beautifully, she really has a God-given gift and can play with anyone and anywhere, probably at short notice too!! The tone quality is super cantabile and I feel my face warming with a sunlit glow. Rebekah's wonderful vocal washes have been so beautifully recorded as to sound like an age unknown, full of microtones and portamento.

At 1.56 the music becomes a little more urgent, the motifs a little shorter, a 'stretto' emerges and bares a little tension, but of course not like Bach, just gentle and perfectly paired. I sense a very relaxed 'appoggiatura', so sensual I'm almost falling asleep here!! Sherry and Rebekah hold a conversation, and our attention as flute descends and vox ascends, a lovely hint of contrary-motion. Well, I know where I'm traveling to after this, a hot tub or a snuggly duvet xx

#### Track 9. "Home"

Ah, back to home-sweet-home, and time to reflect on a journey well travelled!

There is a reassuring safety in this sound world, and a major-tonality suits well. I can imagine sitting down with family, a comforting beverage in hand with lots of reminiscing to do, and photos to see. The string arrangements by Louis Anthony de Lise are beautifully done and lend cohesion to the whole tapestry with great contentment in mood.

I love how VOX and Fargo-family express their unison and symbiosis, creating the perfect backdrop for a fluttery-flute and a filigree piano. Dyan's delicate touch on keyboards reminds me of the flight of butterflies, like sweet-peas with wings, so light and water coloured.

Individual voicings share their interplay, quite happily, lots of smiles.

I sense closure now, my breathing is calm in exhalation, with parted lips I sit.

#### Track 10. "5th Eye Trance"

Well, the finale in all its Orendian glory! We have come full circle now. Dyan presents to us the final Breaths of Angels, with approval from Orenda in an image of flowing golden locks and baring a provocative sun kissed shoulder. A fragrant flower she holds, lit up by a glowing insect who lay in its bed of petals.

We see the return of Rebekah Eden, sprinkling her vocal magic, free flowing and beautiful. I hear a fragment of Lesley Garret vibrato in the slightly louder places, which also reminds me of how my beautiful daughter Penny used to dance and sing around the house, with no inhibitions at all, and captured at the right moment!

Dyan's closing thoughts about this lovely track are spot on and I quote "We can effect change in the world by staying in a place of light and love through vibration, and music definitely helps!!

I have so enjoyed steeping myself in this body of work, I have learnt a lot and have been inspired to keep this experience within for the greater good of music and life. Bravo Dyan and please may we have an encore!!!

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