

Reviews

SIENNÁ

Q.o.S

Rebecca Cullen Apr 16, 2017

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SIENNA: Q.O.S

In today's ever saturated world of accessible music, it's always important to keep those brightly shining gems at close hand for when you really need to feel the music or lose yourself in something deeply creative and new. *Q.o.S* is precisely the kind of project you might want to keep out on the desktop for exactly those times. The immediate evolution from the opening piano ambience and quietness of *Yes* to the vast and rhythmic, indie-electronic vibes of *World Citizens* makes this clear from the offset. What will follow is unpredictable, but always impressive and very easy to forget yourself to for a good chunk of time.

World Citizens is an incredible track. The music takes a little touch of various genres and possible influences, a hint of different cultures, and fuses these ideas and sounds – the distorted, the organic, the hypnotic and repetitive chant-like melody – to make something crisp and satisfying from start to finish. *Quintessence* builds upon the soundtrack even further, swiftly directing the collection in the way of classic electronica or house. The vibe is ready and waiting for you, and the set up of the prior two tracks is the perfect way to lead you there – prepared and happy to receive the energy of this industrial sounding bit of downtempo-dance.

Beautifully in keeping with the explicit creative freedom of the project, *Iwashimizu* breaks things down entirely to a mere dream-like land of single instruments and space. And this sort of unexpected yet fitting development fairly quickly identifies itself as commonplace within the walls – or, perhaps more appropriately, the outer rings – of *Q.o.S*. The track itself builds up in a way that isn't easy to expect, but that works, and that you find yourself fully surrounded by without having even noticed the instruments building or the voices stepping forward, or the notes changing. It's a pretty magical few moments of music that genuinely allows you to find yourself wherever the depths of your mind wish to wander.



One of the great things about this collection that really strikes as unique to the SIENNÁ sound, is the very specific and unusual use of certain sounds and effects. Within any one track, the mood is laid out by the emotion of the piece, the vibe is set by the artists precise talent for capturing a particular moment or set of feelings, yet in among that you can focus, if you choose, on any one part of any track, and be quite amazed at what you find there.

Kasuga is a good example of this, as is *Sixth Sense*, though the two are massively different pieces of music in terms of the style and the energy and the use of melody. The latter has that gripping good rhythm that first appeared during *World Citizens*, only this time the vibe seems beautifully positive, hopeful, almost like a party at sunrise – a world ready to take the day by storm, a community of proud and happy and free people. At the same time as letting your mind make up these possible scenarios, you could in fact just use this music to intensely enhance a regular day. *Sixth Sense* would sound superb through a set of headphones as you walked down a busy shopping street or market. A definite highlight of the project, all at once energetic and peaceful.

Aoi builds on the atmospheric side of electronica with a minimal and delicate yet powerful soundscape. Again, the arrangement of this album is hugely important – these completely dream-like, stream of consciousness moments work ten times better in among the high energy and creative bliss of the bigger tracks surrounding them; the contrast creates a strength and beauty that is mesmerising. It's one of those moments we often crave, when we realise the art of the album is not a lost concept, that the thought and effort put into a collection such as this has value and relevance and greatly enhances everything magical about it.

Eastern Plays strips away the melody aspect almost entirely and veers of in a thick and organically rhythmic direction, another wonderful moment of travel-like audio experience. And then, *Follow My Instructions* arises out of the blue, and completely turns things upside down once again. The track has a very retro, electronica-soaked sound about it that actually comes as a brilliant and welcome moment as the penultimate track of the project. The use of lyrics grabs attention here, it's unique and effective and memorable.

PM is a stunning way to end. The artist's leading voice is laid a little bare here, introducing in these final moments a truly human and even vulnerable part of the music. The song takes on a unique and interesting melody, the instrumental riff following the vocal sections does the same, and so you get something that is almost a ballad, but never quite confined enough to the rules of pop. It's something much more original, impossible to predict, and genuinely enjoyable. The scenes set by all of this, the meeting of different cultures, the experimental use of sound – everything within the album – it's hugely refreshing to experience. As mentioned, *Q.o.S* is one for the long term playlist, one for the desktop. Listen in full for the best effect.

Listen and download the album via [Bandcamp](#). Find and follow SIENNÁ on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [Soundcloud](#).



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