



Norway-based composer and performer [Sienna](#) is the ultimate electronic artist, creating enchanting experimental dance music that can be best described as a "waking dream."

A Waking Dream: Sienna's Experimental Dance Electronica

As a Japanese expatriate in Norway and a musical artist who has performed across Europe, Sienna might be considered a woman of the world. Yet her nu jazz music speaks of other worlds, other states of mind, of distant memories and faraway places. Using studio, synthesizer and software as tools, she draws upon a musical upbringing and diverse influences to create music unlike any other.

The magic of the Sienna sound is built in to the composing process. "I start usually with numerous small, often oddly sounding sketches," Sienna explains. "After puzzling over a set of small pieces, something starts to form -- something like a figure or a concept. Then, I may start to let it flow as it should. I don't consciously focus on structuring a song so much. I just try to let a smooth and dynamic flow come out in any possible ways without thinking much about how the results would be."

Members of Sienna's band and others add their sounds to the mix (more on them in a moment), and the result is a waking dream that is at turns funky, dreamy, hypnotic, and ambient – and extraordinarily danceable. As Sienna explains. "I love something groovy," she says. "I love something emotionally washing and atmospheric. It seems natural for me to combine those aspects. Also, I tend to try mixing anything and everything I think is cool regardless [of] genres, from Steve Vai's psychedelic guitar works, the diatonic harmony of Mozart, the Chemical Brothers' funky beats, Paul McCartney's genius bass lines to traditional Japanese pentatonic scales."

A Dream, Deferred

As a child growing up in ancient Kyoto, Japan, Sienna dreamt of a musician's life, yet these dreams were discouraged at first. "Ever since I was little, I've spent most of my time to listening to music and performing it in many ways. I knew I wanted to continue living a life filled with much music," Sienna recalls. "However, I was quite tired of reading musical scores all the time, and being constantly told how often I ignore the scores. I was more interested in playing freely and having fun with it." A handful of hobby bands along with experimental synthesizer tinkering nurtured these dreams, but didn't go anywhere. "To cut a long story short, I was not blessed to do anything with the music at all in Japan. In my environment at that time, it was nearly criminal to focus seriously on the music." It wasn't until Sienna migrated to Norway as a student that her musical dreams began to flourish. It was there that her childhood piano lessons and experiences playing trombone in a brass band and singing in a Catholic choir came to fruition.

After completing a master's degree in Cultural Science, Sienna met producer Abòn through a mutual friend; Abòn saw her potential and got her started working with the Mac-based Emagic Logic Pro software. Since that time she's recorded three albums in Abòn's studio, where she found the perfect creative environment. "Abòn is also an extraordinary producer and studio owner [motivated to] get the best out of people. One of the most important aspects for me is that he's artistically oriented, not profit oriented. I can relax and try making the best effort without thinking so much about a time limit." The three resulting albums -- which are loaded with solid performances, synthesizer wizardry, exotic vocals and sound samples and some of the grooviest synthesizer bass lines ever laid down -- are available at [CDBaby.com](#) and are well worth the price of admission.

Along the way, Sienna has had the pleasure and privilege of performing with some very talented musicians. She now performs as a trio, with bassist Hallvard Gaardlos and keyboardist Kristian Wentzel, both of whom were introduced to her by Abòn. "I'm wordlessly appreciative of having them on my musical journey, not only because they're potentially explosive talents, but also because they have fantastic personalities." Abòn has also made contributions in the studio, along with psychedelic jazz trumpet phenomenon Nils Petter Molvaer, who added some amazing performances to Sienna's latest album "Essence" and the previous album "A Pure Land."

In addition, Austrian based DJ The Square contributed an ear-pleasing remix of "Dance of the White Rhythms" to the "Essence" disc.

Musical Memories

As cultural artifacts, musical compositions preserve moments so they can be shared with the rest of the world. "Music is my method to remember the past experiences, memories, impressions, views, feelings and so on," Sienna explains. "Many people take a photo to remember the moments in life. I do that too. But sometimes I think I can describe [them] better in music." Translating the complexity of her recordings to live performance was a challenge at first, but ultimately one that paid off, as Sienna has enchanted audiences in Norway, Poland and Japan, and fulfilled a lifelong dream of performing in London.

Much to the delight of club crowds, Sienna and her band bring improvisation into the mix. "In this way, we're keeping the very basic characteristics of the music, but still performing differently each time." Synth fans will be glad to discover that Sienna uses a vintage 80s-era keyboard, a Roland D-50, on stage and in the studio, as well as the DJ sampler Roland SP-404 SX to keep the groove going. Keyboardist Wentzel uses a Nord Stage 88 and contributed some tasty Fender Rhodes licks to "Essence". Bassist Gaardlos uses the legendary Fender Precision bass, while in his role as studio guitarist Abòn reportedly uses one of the last G & L guitars produced by guitar pioneer Leo Fender.

As an independent musician using electronic means of production and distribution, Sienna's music has the potential to reach audiences virtually anywhere around the globe. "Fortunately for indie artists/musicians, the so-called digital revolution has opened the door to the world with many possibilities," she says. "It's always ok to have more options to choose from, isn't it? It affects my artistic freedom in a way that I can write my music as I do and want, and there's a better chance that somebody can coincidentally pick up my music and enjoy listening to it somewhere in the world on a daily basis."

To discover more about this enchanting musical artist, visit www.sienna-web.com , www.myspace.com/siennaweb, and www.youtube.com/siennaweb .

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