



Christine Collister "**Into The Light**" Topic Records

I guess my hesitation surfaced with the discovery that the dozen tracks featured on Collister's sophomore effort for Topic, and overall her sixth solo recording, required the input of three separate producers. Steve Lima produced five tracks, Misha Nikolic was responsible for three and Dave Armstrong for four. That said, "**Into The Light**" is an extremely cohesive collection, as Collister and her powerful and wonderfully husky voice voyage further into the folk/jazz field that has become her mainstay.

Collister worked on three of the tracks for Lima's "**Temple Of Light**" Anglo-World fusion music project, and stylistic shades of that relationship have found their way on to the closing pair of tracks "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" and "Quiet." The respective song catalogues of U2 [Bono, The Edge and Larry Mullen] and Paul Simon may appear an odd paring for a folk tinged album, yet Christine makes both songs her own. Lima opens the former song with droning other worldly sounds [a programmed keyboard ?] and then allows Collister's semi-spoken voice to enter the fray. As the melody develops, Lima adds an acoustic guitar and percussion [tabla ?] while Christine's singing voice soars as only it can. Further layers - drums, Collister's backing vocal etc. help the song to build to a gradual climax. Lima employs the same technique on "Quiet," and as the percussive sounds that close "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" fade, the gentle, lapping wave-like sounds that underpin the melancholic Simon song begin.

The set includes half a dozen Collister originals, some co-written, of which the opener "Ashlands" is probably the strongest selection. In the former, Collister declares "*I didn't know that I could be so strong.*" Later, her voice rises emphatically as she delivers the ultimatum "*I will rise,*" over and over, in the closing seconds of the cut. Barb Jungr, one of Christine's long time pals, helped co-write "A Kinder Heart," as well as "Brittle Man" which features some atmospheric late-night trumpet work from a non-credited player, plus "Little Bird." In addition to the U2/Simon covers, the collection also includes Roddy [Aztec Camera] Frame's "Hymn To Grace" and "Lost And Found" from Kit Hain, who was part of late seventies pop duo Marshall Hain.

By way of establishing atmosphere, a number of the tracks employ sound effects - the opening seconds of "Ashland" features a bird chirping, while the opening and closing [twenty] seconds of "Little Bird" features the sound of a rather scratchy old vinyl record. The melody being played, is not unlike the opening to Paul McCartney's "We All Stand Together."

Folkwax Rating 7 out of 10

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