

# Seventh Wave

By

Michelle Qureshi

Written by

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The award winning **Michelle Qureshi** is back with another stunning album after her amazing success with her last release *Scattering Stars*, which achieved a huge victory for the artist, by capturing the ambient album of the year award for 2016 in the *One World Music Radio* awards.

The expansive qualities of Qureshi's composition can be really felt here, by listening to the opening piece entitled **Shift**. In my view this is some of the finest work I have ever heard from Michelle, this is true ambience and I can see this one being a real fan favourite, the gentleness of performance, especially on piano and guitar is quite moving.

**Page of Cups** is also a favourite of mine, perhaps some may know of the title through the *Tarot*, so from this creative new beginning, we can listen to this work as a simple moment of instrumental bliss. Qureshi has grown this vast and wondrous ability to manifest works of art that leave us the listener with so much room to explore, listen to the lightness of performance and the calming backdrop of sound, while the guitar very softly weaves the narrative of tone along with us.

As we arrive at track three, we come across the longest offering on the album that's just short of eight minutes, it's called **Velvet Rains**. Qureshi is an artist in the true meaning of the word, and seems to paint with musical brushes that must have been dipped in genius. **Velvet Rains** contains a delicacy that is so rare in music these days, and flows with the same energy as you would expect from an *Al Gromer Khan* album. This is a piece that truly emphasises the artist's skill in creating ambient soundscapes; it wouldn't have mattered to me if this piece had gone on for an hour.

Now if ever a title was prophetic this would be it, we're crying out for this right now, it's called **Each Good Rain**. The production quality of this album is amazing, and gives us a really enjoyable texture to allow us to enjoy the compositions further, this one especially so, its fluency and melody are quite harmonious and tranquil, we can almost sit by the window and be grateful for the rains that fall from the sky above.

**Reason** is a piece that slightly raises the tempo, mainly due to the soft but natural percussive beats contained within. However there is so much in this track, you're really going to want to revisit **Reason** many times over.

As we draw nearer to the half way point of the release we come across a composition called **We Were Once like This**. The piano starts our sojourn here; the moody nature of this track is sublime and draws us into a piece that is so deeply emotive. As a listener, I loved the flow in this track, always controlled and always so very peaceful, the resonance of the guitar latter on is absolutely memorable.

The borderlands have been crossed as we move to, **Radiant Ones**, however the artist has mixed quite cleverly the dark and light, the radiance and shade, once you arrive at around the minute and a half mark, you may well recognise the land you are within. *Om Namah Shivaya* calls across the musical divide and the percussive cleverness of the tabla creates that lush eastern feel to the arrangement.

**Of the Night** is next up, and the almost ethereal quality at the beginning here is a total treat. We can feel the classical influences and can sense the electronic interplay with them as well. **Michelle Qureshi** keeps on pulling musical and magical rabbits out of her hat and this slice of slightly dark ambience is simply perfection. Through the music we can imagine walking the halls of house in a dimension that has yet to come into existence, moody, mystical and very powerful, all in one basket of brilliance.

We now find ourselves deep within the weave of the release and dear reader and listener the piece **Never Odd or Even** is upon your table, the deepness of this offering is balanced perfectly with the lightness of touch on performance and tone. We are almost being lifted out of a place of darkness and laid down gently in a realm of a quite blissful nowhere.

**Stars Seen** is a piece that raises the energies with a quite breath taking repeating ambient melody, that doesn't impose a pattern in the mind, but reassures us with an uplifting *Brian Eno* styled performance, this so reminds me of *Always Returning* from

the master, here Qureshi explores further, she creates a whole universal theme through this quite outstanding offering and is one of my many favourites off the album.

We continue this rise through our musical energy centres with this next charming opus called **Angels**. The creation of this piece is akin to floating on musical clouds and gazing down with safety, on all that is below. The performance on guitar here and the melody structure is among some of the best I have heard for decades.

Our penultimate offering is entitled, **There Lightly**. Ambient, but almost space styled in build, through the electronic essence of this piece we could easily imagine drifting through a region of deep space. There is a careful and soft nature here though that adds a colourful dimension to the element of this composition. The inclusion of the flute is clever and adds even more to what is already a quite beautiful opus of sound.

So we arrive at our last port of call and this final musical doorway is called **Dreaming in Color**. A resonating base sound is preceded by an incredibly subtle electric guitar that seems to hover in the distance like a summer haze in August. The mix of floating new age sounds and keyboards mixed with the guitar brings a very classy conclusion, to an extremely sparkling arrangement.

**Seventh Wave** has not just lived up to all I hoped it would do, it has gone far past that, and then some, this is without doubt one of the best ambient styled albums I have heard this year, and for a long time, and easily Michelle's best so far. If you liked *Scattering Stars*, you're going to be blown away with **Seventh Wave**, her ability to hold the tone and ambience of each track on the album and create some very emotive and moving musical images along the way, with some quite creative but luscious melodies, is outstanding, and as such I would be more than elated to recommend this release, this is an album of outstanding natural beauty.