

Wildy's World

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Sunday, April 29, 2012

Rachael Sage – Haunted By You



Rachael Sage – Haunted By You
2012, MPress Records

Singer, songwriter, producer and music entrepreneur Rachael Sage releases her 10th album on May 8, 2012. *Haunted By You* tracks a topsy-turvy period of falling in and out of love, breaking hearts and having her own broken. The result is the three-time Independent Music Award winner's most raw and emotive work to date. *Haunted By You* finds Sage at her most elemental, stripping arrangements down to their bare bones, while baring her heart for all the world to see, while she ruminates on love lost and found, and the never ending cycle of renewal that begets it all.

Opening with "Invisible Light", Sage lays it all on the line in a gorgeous love song full of amazing energy. There's a quirky feel to this number – not mischief but something not too far removed, and Sage's superior melodic sensibility is not left behind. Sage brings a 1970's singer/songwriter flair on "Abby Would You Wait". This is a prospective love song, and Sage fills it with a solid, if subtle groove. "California" is a lamentation, of sorts, of effort put into a relationship that now seems to be falling apart. Sage is up close and personal here, in a heart-to-heart soliloquy that's an intriguing mix of raw emotion and intellect.

"Performance Art" is a lush self-reflection on creation, performance and the drawbacks of being a public persona. The parallel and competitive ambivalence between this career choice and romantic attachments is a sub-theme here, and Sage dresses up the whole thing in a gorgeous, string-laden arrangement that flows like honey-laden water. "Everything" is a song of redemption, with love as the redeemer. From a purely aesthetic perspective, this is one of the most compelling songs Sage has written in her storied career. Sage shows her edgier side on "Ready", and it's hard not to make a comparison to Tori Amos' early work on this song, but it's just sage showing one of her many creative layers. "

Haunted By You pushes aside the curtain of unrequited love in a personal missive that is compelling and impossible to ignore. Sage's powerful lyrics and musical presence will turn heads here. "Birthday" finds Sage exploring good intentions and human faults, perhaps in the wake of a relationship. Well-written and very real, this number brings laying it all on the line to a new level. "Hey Nah" is a celebratory love song pull of jaunty piano, funky bass and smooth horns. It is destined to be a fan favorite and has the right feel to be a summertime hit. "Confession" is a mea culpa full of romantic regret, with Sage bearing her heart completely. "Soulstice" explores long distance love, using a stripped-down song structure with a lush heart. Sage comes full circle to close *Haunted By You*, closing with a reprise of "Invisible Light".

Rachael Sage herself comes full circle on *Haunted By You*, returning to the highly personal songwriting style that has driven her songwriting over the years. Sage's powers of perception and analysis are turned inward here, as she explores the landscape of romantic creation and destruction. Musically, Sage is at the top of her game, creating everything from minimalist piano accompaniment to fully orchestrated arrangements, as befits her musical mood. *Haunted By You* is a **Wildy's World Certified Desert Island Disc**. You're certain to find it a mutual attraction.

Rating: 5 Stars (Out of 5)

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