

Music Review: Avery Sunshine-Avery Sunshine



Avery Sunshine's unmitigated soul music is part working class memoir, spiritual know-how and the universal fancy with love. The Chester, Pennsylvania native who makes Atlanta her home base quickly draws up comparisons to Jill Scott because of their use of jazzy R&B formations and mundane language poetically elevated by the emotional nuances of their voices. But Sunshine veers away from Scott's secular shouts with outright gospel chords and doses of Christian concepts. Those roots of devotional training and spirited keyboard playing put her in the Aretha Franklin tradition of combined talents not always seen by women in R&B. Sunshine co-wrote and produced the project with musical partner Dana Johnson to the completion of 12 tracks plus a bonus. The lurking synthesized beginning of "All In My Head" works like a curtain being pulled back to bare Sunshine's church trained voice sing about a romantic misunderstanding. You get a sense that after years of singing and directing choirs she has a synchronous relationship with her voice. Just as the routine agitations of "Today" take over, she escapes by dexterously phonating and sustaining her notes until she reaches a place of elevated calm. A plainspoken lament about pending mortgages and labor greedy bosses is one of soul music's greatest accounts of 21st century capitalism. The vocal expose persists when the sparse company of a lone acoustic guitar provides all the music for the morally decided monogamy of "Just Not Tonight" bringing to mind Erykah Badu's "Next Lifetime" sentiment. Roy Ayers blesses the album with an unexpected appearance on the predictably picked cover of his "Everybody Loves The Sunshine" giving the album credibility with R&B hipsters and snobs alike. Accessible yet

subtly sophisticated, Sunshineâ€™s debut flows like a harmless background piece that delicately envelops the senses as it introduces one of R&Bâ€™s brightest new voices.