

FIONA SOE PAING – FULL BIOGRAPHY

FIONA SOE PAING is an electronic music producer and vocalist based in rural Aberdeenshire, North East Scotland. The debut album *Alien Lullabies* introduces you to her intriguing world of unsettling soundscapes and unearthly, off-kilter vocals.

Drawing on her Scottish background and Burmese heritage, the tracks in Burmese, English and abstract, experimental vocals create a hypnotic and intense sound, which has attracted the interest of some of the pioneers of electronic music: the 2012 release *Tower of Babel* gained a tweet of approval from Erasure's Vince Clarke - "Very, very cool!" and an "Outstanding" rating in the Noise Festival showcase, curated by Brian Eno.

With a background in performance art, Fiona started collaborating with dance music producers as a vocalist while living in Brighton. Her first self-produced track was sung in Burmese, with random lyrics from a phrasebook bought on a trip to visit family in Burma. The track was released on Warner Music after being found on Myspace by the BBC musicologist, the late Charlie Gillett, who included the song on one of his "Sound of The World" compilations, alongside tracks from international artists including Gotan Project and Devendra Banhart.

While living in Brighton, Fiona teamed up with animation artist Zennor Alexander to create visuals for her music, and the *Alien Lullabies* performances are a result of this collaboration, over a ten year period between Brighton UK, Waiheke Island New Zealand and Aberdeenshire Scotland.

The audio-visual collaboration developed while Fiona was living on the idyllic pacific island of Waiheke, near Auckland New Zealand, in an isolated bush retreat accessible only on foot or by boat. During this time Fiona worked at the remote, off-grid Eco Village Awaawaroa, founded by crew members of the original Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior*.

The debut performance of Fiona's music and live vocals alongside Zennor's projected animation took place at Waiheke Island cinema in 2008. Following a performance at Auckland Fringe Festival in 2009, a documentary feature on Fiona's work was filmed and screened by New Zealand's national TV station, TV one, and music videos were screened on The Arts Channel on Sky TV New Zealand.

After returning to Scotland, Fiona released the "Tower of Babel" EP, which was rated with Four Stars in *The Skinny* magazine. In 2015, Fiona was one of 12 female musicians selected to work with Brit Award winner and Mercury Prize nominee Beth Orton, on the *Brighter Sounds Manchester Creative Directors* series, in a week-long collaborative residency and performance. In August 2015, Fiona performed "Alien Lullabies" in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, as part of Creative Scotland's curated showcase, the "Made In Scotland" programme, where the show was rated with Four Stars from the Scotsman Newspaper's David Kettle "*Unutterably cool, darkly alluring, fascinatingly inventive.*"

The *Alien Lullabies* album forms the soundtrack to the immersive audio-visual performance of the same name, where the music's other-worldly atmosphere is intensified in the accompanying 3D animations by collaborator Zennor Alexander. Dark and surreal, the combination of the electronica soundtrack, animated film and live vocals create a mesmerising live gig + cinema hybrid.

The album was supported with a crowd funding campaign on Pledge Music, and part funded by Creative Scotland, and is dedicated to her late father Maung Soe Paing.

"Stunning debut..." (Mat Smith, *Electronic Sound Magazine* – Print issue 22)

"Something truly remarkable." (Robin Murray, *Clash Music*)

"Utterly beguiling and entirely original" (*Fortitude Magazine*)

"... a bewitching, powerful album" (David McElroy, *Almost Predictable*)

"..unutterably cool, darkly alluring, fascinatingly inventive" (* * * * David Kettle, *The Scotsman*)

"Wonderful, unsettling and incredibly seductive stuff." (Andrew Dubber, *Bandcamp*)

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