

## **Ashley Maher**

### *Press Quotes – a selection*

...a vibrant alternative to Peter Gabriel on the whole earth stereo.

**Richard Cook, Vogue U.K.**

Ashley Maher should be a HUGE star!

**Roz Larman, Folkscene syndicated radio**

Imagine the soaring melodies of Joni Mitchell and the darkly lyrical twists and turns of Paul Simon, sung over a steaming cauldron of African rhythms. But, as intriguing as that may sound, it still doesn't quite do justice to the music of Ashley Maher, who manages to use those fertile sources as the stimulation for songs and performances that are uniquely her own.

**Don Heckman, Los Angeles Times**

Today, Ashley's a cult figure for a discerning few. Tomorrow, perhaps, she'll be a heroine for millions.

**Record Mirror, U.K.**

...a hugely talented Canadian singer-songwriter who has incorporated Afro-Caribbean influences seamlessly into her own neo-Joni Mitchell style ... marks the arrival of a major talent.

**Musicweek, U.K.**

Ashley has released the type of album that will prompt many to proclaim her as this year's winner in the annual singer-songwriter stakes. These bewitching tunes make for an exuberant, effortless debut...bound to cause a ripple like Chapman and Vega before her. One of the year's more pleasing discoveries. \*\*\* 1/2

**Nick Duerden, Record Mirror, U.K.**

Unusual and intricately wrought fusion of shimmering African and Caribbean rhythms...recalls Sade at her languorous smokey best... full of strange open plains echoes and twilight campfire charm.

**\*\*\*\*Q Magazine, U.K.**

Ashley Maher should be a HUGE star!

**Roz Larman, Folkscene syndicated radio**

...she exudes a real energy, a lust for taking a song as far as it can go...

**NME (New Musical Express), U.K.**

Hidden treasure...combines West African influences with her complex and jazzy vocals... subtle, interwoven rhythms of drums and percussion...rich, fascinating melodies...Maher proves once again that good music knows no "best before" date. (Four out of five stars).

**Ruud Heijer, Heaven Magazine**

a Dutch Music Magazine.

Canadian-born, Southern California-based artist Ashley Maher deserves widespread recognition for her remarkable new album. It will send your spirits soaring. Her voice not only works wonders with melodies, but also creates infectious percussive energies. Maher's beautiful blend of folk, jazz and world elements brings Joni Mitchell to mind. There is an involving, driving African sensibility to some of Maher's songs.

**Paul Freeman, Palo Alto Daily News**

As I was listening to this for the first time completely lost in the beauty of the music, the wonderful arrangements, the rhythms, and Ashley's striking voice, I was rocked by the spiritual and humanistic insight of the lyrics... 'The Blessed Rain' is an uplifting spiritual good feeling gift...you can listen in a casual way and have the music sweep around and through you, but something inside says, "I need to drink in this splendor slowly and deeply."

**Jack Sutton, Director, Harmony Ridge Music**

a premier website/catalogue devoted to the best in womens' music

Her two albums on Virgin UK ... are amazing. All my worldly musician friends have been flipping over them. The songs and arrangements are extremely cool, with the top African musicians in London including Hilaire Penda/bass and Paco Sery/drums. Andre Manga (monster Cameroonian bass player ...) is producing her new album and Youssou N'Dour's guitar player was just in town and played on a few tracks. Andre plays live with her mostly, too ... Regardless, she has an excellent band and dancers. She's like a world music Joni Mitchell. Nice person too. I have no stake in her career except just that of a friend and fan of good world music.

**Gary Johnson, Conjunto Jardin**

One of the things I love ... is the mix of complex, driving rhythm, under a clear, simple, but beautiful melody line, combined with those gorgeous harmonies. I visualise the combination like an intricate Persian carpet with a garden design, from which the vines and flowers are growing into the room and morphing into glass ... it's like you take the monophonic tradition of European music and the call-response tradition from Africa and land somewhere between - keeping touch with both sides. Genius.

**John Mindlin, London**

Quite simply, if you love music and life, you will love Ashley Maher! Just as rain nourishes the earth, Ashley nourishes the soul. With a thoughtful tapestry of vocals and world rhythms, the Blessed Rain is an afternoon shower that cleanses, uplifts and renews the spirit. I am new to this gem of an artist after the fortunate opportunity of a recent live performance. Immersed in Ashley's CDs for a couple of weeks now, I continue to feel very lucky on my discovery. I think you will find that she assimilates her life into art in a very personal, unique and endearing way.

On the Blessed Rain, Ashley celebrates melody and rhythm with her well layered vocals, reflective words and an implicit thankfulness that resounds. Ashley brings together some very inspirational players and cultivates a musical community that will make your heart sing. I can hear the smiles of the musicians as these infectious grooves lock and soar. A nice blend of traditional world beats, funk, folk and soul. Lots of cool vocal styling. Would love to hear an extended mix as the grooves are very therapeutic. I get the sense that she had a blast singing and arranging these sessions.

The music is so real and the human spirit so tangible. Ashley, as poet, singer and musician, is a true gift to the listener. A wonderful voice for all to hear!

**Jerome Cruitt**

**NB: FULL REVIEWS OF ASHLEY'S SEVEN ALBUMS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**