



Liverpool Sound and Vision

Reviews from a small country

Sananda Maitreya, Pandora's Playhouse. Album Review.



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Liverpool Sound and Vision Rating 9/10

Pandora has received, perhaps unjustly, a bad rap from the lovers of myth and the historians of alternative creation, her name stirs images of the woman who bestowed her gifts upon the world and watched as all the ills that flew out of the box inflicted havoc and misery on all who lived, leaving only Hope as the saving grace for Humanity to hold onto their fingers grasping at the air it circled in, not realising that Hope often is the vulture, the carrion of all that remains in the heart.

This indoctrination of blaming the women for the fear and scourge we live through is not new, it is the basis of cruel and derived misogyny of those who first sought to rule through the aesthetic of a divine God, and yet that Hope can survive and give us reason to live each day despite what surrounds us. is to be sure that the female of the species cares more deeply for our survival than the so-called gods and vessels of their word.

Hope comes in many forms, and Pandora is her own woman and one who deserves our thanks in any artistic form, and for Sananda Maitreya Pandora doesn't just have a box to open and see Hope remain, she is the proud owner of the existential Playhouse whose every room is ripe for exploring, passionately delving into and discovering that the box was just the appetiser, the Playhouse is where all the action takes place.

Sananda Maitreya's **Pandora's Playhouse** starts off darkly, the feeling of disjointed and awkward is not there by accident, for it is the illusion of the cavity in which Hope must emerge from, but as the album progresses, as tracks such as *Don't Break My Balls*, *Mama's Boy Blues*, the exceptional *Her Kiss*, *Life's A Bitch*, the upbeat but hidden depths of *Mr. Skeleton*, *In America* and *The Ballad of Smokey Robinson*, the artist brings their own style and mindful cause to the fore, content to perform in the Playhouse, willing to dance with Pandora and her gifts.

Pandora's Playhouse is exceptional, riveting, a set of songs that refuse wholeheartedly to be dismissed and throws back the lid on every box to be found inside, for in those boxes lays more than suffering, pain and anguish, and even hope, there is the greatest gift of all, love, and it is with that unbound human emotion that Sananda Maitreya arguably has offered to the world his finest work to date.

Sananda Maitreya's **Pandora's Playhouse** is released on March 15th. ■

Ian D. Hall