

What The Critics Are Saying...

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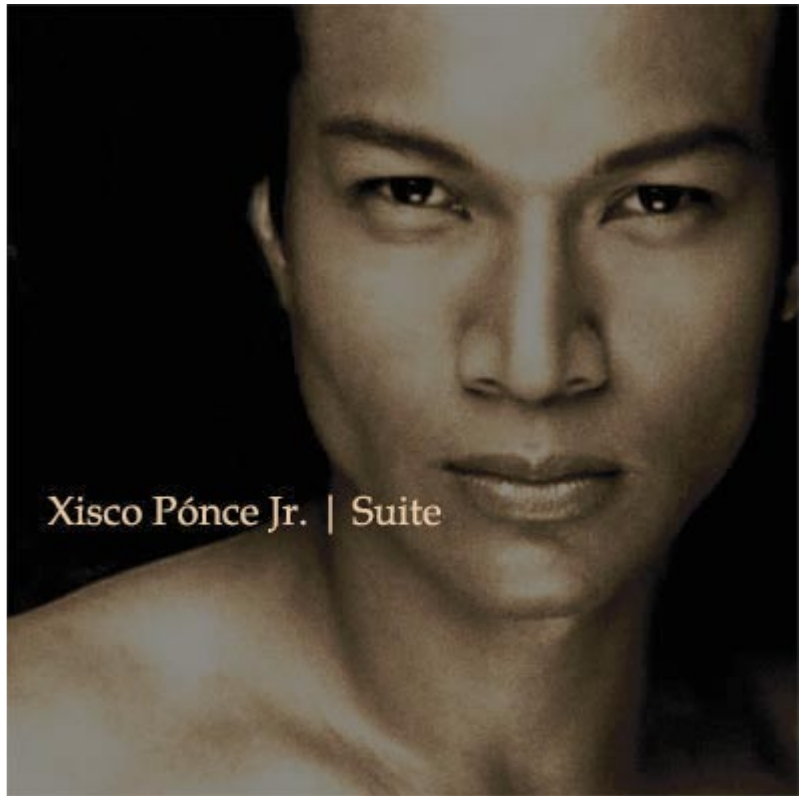
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As "Suite" As It Gets!

By HuiMusic, www.huimusic.com

Once again, MySpace.com brought me to another super artist from Hawaii. I was cruising around and I landed on a profile of a person who had a great track playing on her profile. Just for kicks, I got a hold of the person (Rosanne) and asked whom that was playing on her profile. She said it was a dear friend of hers named Xisco from Hawaii. So what are the chances that I get to a profile out of 18,000,000 people and it's a Hawaiian artist I hear? MANA!

I was really taken back by the sound of the production and vocals of the track called Consciousness of Gravity. I soon got a hold of Xisco and set up a meeting while I was in LA.

Before I met with Xisco I did some homework on this unknown Hawaiian artist. I went to his website and immediately got a big-time introduction. His website is the best one I've seen from a Hawaiian artist representing the mainstream market and made a strong professional impression on me.

So we met and automatically got into the local vibe first before getting to music talk. Xisco was raised in Ewa Beach and went to school at Campbell. Kind of a model type looking guy, Xisco is a very humble artist that had a vision of what he wanted to produce for many years.

His debut CD called Suite is anything but standard for CD concept and production. He took an approach that is usually saved for risk-taking avant-garde music production and it seems to work for Suite. In his CD, he and his producer arranged the music in the style of a suite, which means major pieces of work in movements.

At first glance at the CD you'll notice that there are only 3 principal titles that have an average length of 10 minutes. But there are sub indexes that total 11 tracks that are segmented into "radio friendly" tracks.

The production of the CD is phenomenal. A cross between organic (live) and powerfully placed guitar, samples and intricate arrangements takes you into the limitless possibilities through theater of the mind with Suite.

Xisco's voice is a cross between Seal and Sade but he adds his personal flare that gives him the uniqueness that makes Suite a great CD. The production has European flare that manages to conger up images of a mysterious musical theater event. With musicians that have played for Elton John, George Michael, Toni Braxton, Thomas Dolby and Mister Mister gracing the entire CD, Suite is a major top-quality sounding project.

After sitting with Xisco for over an hour, it was easy to see that the vision of Suite was a pursuit of a lifelong passion for music and doing something different. The fact that Xisco and producer Barry Coffing took the risks that they did, it came with the confidence of delivering a CD that would break the status-quo template of CD's being produced by today's standards.

I have listened to the CD many times and have favorite sections of the movements, but the one that I think has the breakout radio play possibility is the song, Consciousness of Gravity. However, there is a full assortment of songs that have styles that ranges from Ambient, House to progressive R&B and I'm sure that it covers the expectation one might have with this type of production.

However, since the downward trend of CD sales makes artists rely on live performances, one might ask how do you do a show for Suite? Of course Xisco is already in pre-production for a live show that promises a full-on rush to all the senses. He explained his outline for his show and it's going to be a task, but I can see it happening. You just can't go on stage with a band for this type of CD. Xisco does have plans to get back home for personal and professional reason by the end of this year.

As HuiMusic has always believed, Hawaii is a hotbed of many extremely talented musical artists. Xisco, along with many others that we have highlighted throughout HuiMusic show that there's much more to Hawaii than what the rest of the world thinks they know about Hawaii's music industry.

The total packaging of Suite (production, performance, artwork and website) is as professional as it gets. The detail in which Suite was crafted is only defined by the effect it has in the listener. For me it was an experience.

You can learn more about Xisco, listen to music samples and get the details of the production at <http://www.xiscoponcejr.com>



by J. Sin, www.smother.net

Recalling the smooth sounds of Sade, Xisco Ponce Jr. set out to put smooth back into electronica. Catchiness is the first ingredient in the recipe and he dabbles with hooks like a great chef blends spices. Although it's only four songs long it's an incredible journey from start to finish, never relenting a sheer moment to give you a breather. If the word romance could be recorded musically, than this would be the outtakes.

"If the word romance could be recorded musically, than this would be the outtakes."

Evolution of Media

By Maurice

www.eomentertainment.com

We here at Evolution of Media pride ourselves on bringing to you, our loyal readership, and the best in unsigned talent. In that spirit, I'm happy to introduce to you Xisco Ponce, Jr., Philippine-born, Hawaii-raised, and now residing in Los Angeles.

Xisco has given us a wonderful new CD called Suite--an appropriate name, because the 12 songs here are broken down into three suites titled, Err, Tear and Calling. The critics compare him to George Michael, Sade, and Moby, and I can hear why: Xisco can arrange a song like George Michael (and has a similar vocal style), his melodies have the glossy sophistication of Sade, and the native chants of "Mourning Prayers" and "Primitive Hymn" are reminiscent of Moby.

But this album does more than evoke those other artists; the suites flow together seamlessly and appear to be linked lyrically. The lyrics, mostly involving various episodes of lost or unobtainable love, have a very spiritual glow to them and Xisco's delivery of his words left me filled with both sadness and hope simultaneously.

These are the songs that I particularly liked: "Linger On," "Thin Line," "Little Boy," "Consciousness Of Gravity" and "Island Day," the last of which had a rather surprising R.E.M. feel to it. Every song is extremely well played by a band that features musicians that played with George Michael, Elton John and Thomas Dolby, to name just a few famous names. But all this stellar musicianship would mean nothing without the singular vision that Xisco brings to the proceedings.

Suite marks Xisco Ponce, Jr.'s arrival as a major new talent.

By Keith "MuzikMan" Hannaleck

Right from the first track "A Thin Line" I could tell that Xisco Ponce Jr. was maturing in voice and professional stature. In just under 12 minutes, he shows what an angelic voice he has and how his lush melodies and romantically inclined lyrics would soften up even the toughest skinned macho cowboy.

Yes, this young man is "Wide Awake" and seems poised and ready for stardom. I am still waiting for that full length CD that will break him internationally (the full album will contain three suites of three different themes). This EP and more will combine to make one complete outstanding al-



bum that will turn some heads in the industry. I think I may have said the same thing the first time I heard this young man, but I needed to say it again, he is ready for the big time.

Besides his fantastic set of pipes, there is another reason the music sounds so wonderful, he manages to put together a stellar cast of music biz pros to help his cause, along with the help of producer Barry Coffing (gold record for hit single "How Do You Talk to an Angel"). On guitars there is Larry Treadwell (Thomas Dolby), Deon Estus plays bass (George Michael, Elton John), Valerie Davis makes the background vocals (Celine Dion, Whitney Houston, Toni Braxton) something special, and Sammy Tormanen mans the drums (Transistor)...an impressive group of performers to back you up if I do say so myself. I especially enjoyed the terrific vocals of Davis, what a beautiful compliment to Xisco's voice she is.

"...that full length CD that will break him internationally."