

## Alexa Rodrian – “Mothersday”

### A Roadmap to a Life Well Lived

Multilingual globetrotter, storyteller, poet, musician – Alexa Rodrian embodies all of the above. She has set her suitcase down in Paris and Rome, unpacked it in New York to stay for seven years, moved to Munich and finally settled down in Berlin. She delights in the rhythms, melodies and gentle songs of the various languages she has imbibed over the years. “Mothersday”, her third studio album is a study of the restless yet settled mind, a magnificent tightrope between opposites that unexpectedly form a cohesive whole.

Alexa Rodrian has a flair for capturing the moment, for grabbing and holding on to impressions that might not even register with others. Her songs mirror an avid interest in the world around her, a deep curiosity for people and situations: there’s the clamour of a lovers’ spat spilling from a window; the quiet sobs of a softly crying woman nearby; there’s a group of people behind a hedge dissecting the political landscape of the day; the uncontrollably laughing guy in the back of a car. Mementos of lives lived, hearts broken and humour found in the most unlikely places.

For Alexa Rodrian the tongue of choice to frame these mementos is English. “I have found my musical language in the U.S.,” she says. “I didn’t plan it that way. But this language is so full of metaphors that I can paint a thousand tiny pictures within the larger ones.” It was also during her tenure in New York that Alexa Rodrian teamed up with composer, musician and producer Jens Fischer, aka fischer. Together they performed in the city’s downtown clubs, such as the Knitting Factory, CBGB’s Gallery, Zinc Bar or Small’s.

However, Alexa Rodrian does not feel the need to suppress her multicultural influences. On the contrary, they pop up throughout the album. The piano loop in the song ‘Dindongdilly’ for instance conjures images of ladies in wide-brimmed hats sauntering down wide French boulevards. A bittersweet guitar in ‘Fly’ paints the echo of a gorgeous Italian sky. And in ‘Mr Smart’ Rodrian lets her inner Blues rip, rocketed heavenward by a heavy, Southern shuffle.

Balancing sincerity with self-irony is an art Alexa Rodrian has mastered here. It is a refreshing twist to her songwriting. In the opener of the album, ‘Little Too Much’, for instance, she confesses to a proclivity for talking too much. She has no interest in taking herself all too seriously, and it is precisely that openness about her imperfections, that humorous look in the mirror with the arched eyebrow and the ‘Aren’t you all that?’ attitude that makes her music so accessible. Her songs come across as authentic, her words as believable. And stylistically impossible to pigeonhole.

Alexa Rodrian’s partners in music bring a multitude of colours and textures to the album that support and enhance her songs, never overreaching but always concise, immensely musical and tasteful. Fischer with his rich guitar sounds and Marco Bruckdorfer aka bagbeater - he creates rhythms with anything from suitcases to coffee grinders, without a single conventional piece of percussion in his arsenal – continue to spin the thread of Alexa Rodrian’s stories with deep respect and attentiveness. Their minimalist and yet luscious approach uncovers the essence of each song, allowing for a smattering of rhythmic ornamentations here or a subtle electronic loop there. Each song gets its individual treatment. A fragile sonic tapestry emerges that carries Alexa Rodrian’s sensual, warm and yet insistent voice on gossamer wings, a magical confluence of inspiration and play.

The road map that Alexa Rodrian and her band draw on this album cuts deeper than may be suspected upon a first listen. We hear children delightfully screeching in the background of 'Little Too Much', an indicator of a childlike joie-de-vivre. But by the end we have been witness to a myriad of images, emotions, and textures, all the way to 'Little Black Fly', a moving tribute to a father long lost in a tragic plane crash that speaks of a yearning so deep it cannot be faked. Alexa Rodrian takes her songs on the direct side, sometimes raw, sometimes understated, always completely real. She would not have it any other way.

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