

Julieta Venegas - Los Momentos (2013)

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Julieta Venegas - Vocals Ricardo Amado Violin Ceci Bastida Coro Gisela Farias Coro Mariale Gutiérrez Coro Natalia Lafourcade Coro Cecilia Méndez Viola Jaques Morelenbaum Cello Dann Norris Coro Maria Norris Coro Adonhiran Reis Violin Marian Ruzzi Coro Ana Tijoux Featured Artist Sofia Valencia Coro

Julieta Venegas takes a (slight) left turn with *Los Momentos*. Released three years after her last studio album, which is just about par for this endearingly languid artist, its making was influenced by a series of events that made Venegas reconsider her perspective in music and in life. To begin with, at the age of 40 in 2010, Venegas became a mother for the first time. In order to deal more adequately with maternity and motherhood, she decided to work from home rather than in a big studio. This also necessitated ditching her usual collaborator, multiple Latin Grammy winner Cachorro López, and turn instead to promising indie Mexican producer Yamil Rezc (Los Bunkers, Hello Seahorse!). The change in sound is quite telling. Gone are most acoustic instruments, including her trademark accordion, as well as obvious stabs at contemporary Latin pop or hip-hop. *Los Momentos* is a homespun electro-pop record that sounds as if it was made on a laptop by a child of the '80s, where synthetic keyboards and beats reign supreme. It is not, however, much of a dance record, because of the understated presence of Venegas' piano (presumably she composed most of the material on it), and most of all because there's nothing remotely disco diva about Venegas' hushed singer/songwriter voice. Another key factor is the surprisingly somber tone of the album, particularly coming on the wake of the sunny *Sí/Limón y Sal/Otra Cosa* trilogy that turned Venegas into a world music superstar. Venegas has declared that her new songs reflect her sense of defeatism about the drug-related violence that has turned much of Mexico into a quasi-war zone. Such concern is only made explicit on "Vuelve," which features vocal contributions by Anita Tijoux and Ruben Albarrán (Café Tacvba), but permeates the subdued, resigned mood of the entire record. Even the more uptempo songs, like the fine singles "Tuve para Dar" and "Te Vi," feature uneasy lyrics that contrast sharply with Venegas' previous happy-go-lucky output. Above all, regardless of the

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circumstances of its production, Los Momentos seems to be a conscious choice on Venegas' part to distance herself from the naïf hippie image she has been typically associated with since she hit the big time, and regain control of her own career by sending it back to the indie songwriter side of the tracks. As it would be immediately apparent to those who follow Venegas from her beginnings or listen to her entire albums rather than only her radio-friendly hits, this is the course she always intended her career to follow, but was somewhat sidetracked by unexpected mainstream success. Los Momentos is arguably not her best album, in the sense that its songs are all very good but none are definitely great, but it will certainly force many of her detractors to change their minds about her, and help establish Venegas' true place in Latin music. ---Mariano Prunes, AllMusic Review

Si bien Los Momentos presenta una puesta al día de su sonido (con ciertos toques electrónicos que harían denotar que su autora ha estado oyendo a Grimes y similares) y algunas bajadas de línea a nivel lírico que no habían aparecido antes (la introspección ya la tenía, pero parece que la vida no le ha sonreído mucho a nivel sentimental últimamente y eso se nota en algunas letras), en un plano general la Juli se reafirma en la formula compositiva que tan buenos réditos le generara desde su exitoso Sí, pop ligerito y con estribillos fáciles de recordar, aunque en este caso con cierto tono triston. Eso no es algo malo en si mismo, sobre todo cuando su autora maneja bien dicho lenguaje, lo ha ido afinando con el tiempo y el disco se presenta agradable al oído, pero la verdad es que después de 2 álbumes correctos (en el mejor de los casos) yo esperaba algo más que una apuesta a ganador; es evidente que el eclecticismo con el que iniciara su carrera no va a volver más. Los Momentos cumple y es justo reconocer que es mejor que mucha de la música que suena en la radio, pero siento que es aquí el punto en el que definitivamente ya no habrá más sorpresas.

Éste es el último disco de Julieta Venegas que voy a escuchar. ---LesterStone, rateyourmusic.com

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