

Review of decembergirl solo EP from Musical Discoveries

(14 January 2001) The first solo EP to emerge from Marina Belica since the breakup of October Project is entitled *Decembergirl* (Decembergirl Records (USA) DCE011, 2000). The first 1000 copies are individually numbered and inscribed by the artist and include 3D glasses to get the full effect of the cover artwork. It is a wonderful EP and raises great interest in a full length album. Of the five tracks, two are penned by Belica alone, one is co-written with Dana Pomfret, one is an October Project cover and the final track is traditional. Read our full length feature on Marina Belica incorporating an exclusive Musical Discoveries interview [here](#).

Marina Belica is perhaps the unsung hero of October Project. Her keyboard and backing vocals added significant texture to the band's sound as evidenced in video footage released by the band during their heyday considered by fans as the Holy Grail. October Project's albums are still generally available and regularly receive acclaim worldwide to this very day. A comprehensive artist biography is available at Marina's official [website](#).

Marina provides lead and backing vocals as well as some keyboard and piano parts on the EP and is joined by a variety of guest artists: Joy Askew (guitar and backing vocals), Bill Debron (drums), Matt Garrison (bass), Cheryl Ann Futton (harp), Michelle Kinney (cello), Francois Mouttin (bass) John Peckman (drums) Randy Brecker (trumpet), Dave Richards (bass), Jim Thomo (tympani) and Chris Cunningham (guitar, keyboard, computers), Yuri Matveyev (guitar) and Artjon Yakushenko (violin). Backing vocalists also include Dana Pomfret, Deobra Kewallo.

Emil Adler (keyboards, harmonium), Jim Chapdelaine (electric guitar), David Sabitano (guitar), Urbano Sanchez (percussion) and Julie Flanders (backing vocals) guest on a stunning cover of October Project's "Return To Me". Naturally the return of several of the band's original members contributes to the faithful reproduction of the song albeit with Marina's sweeter and more crystalline lead vocal.

Decembergirl opens with an original track entitled "When You Go" written very much in the October Project style. We were reminded instantly of "Where You Are" when hearing the song's arrangements and drum part. Marina's voice is delicate yet powerful and it is wonderful to hear her singing lead. "The Wheel" is an upbeat coffeehouse-style track. Layers of harmony vocals contribute add density in the chorus. Instrumentals are richly arranged but achieve a live sound in the recording.

The bluesy ballad "Come With Me" illustrates the evocative sensuality of Marina's voice. The trumpet part is especially notable and carries the instrumental arrangement poised against the cello. A unique arrangement of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is the final track on the EP. It is dominated by vocal layers with only a hint of instrumentation until the bridge where it echoes the theme established by the vocals building to a dramatic climax. Sensitive vocals, violin and guitar conclude the piece.

Marina's *Decembergirl* EP provides a wonderful introduction to plans for a full length album. Read our full length feature on Marina Belica incorporating an exclusive Musical Discoveries interview [here](#). The EP is destined to achieve widespread critical acclaim and worth a cross-country journey, we certainly think it is a *must listen!*

Musical Discoveries' interview and review:

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