

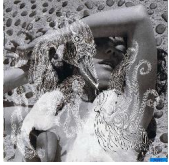
## Bjork – Vespertine (2001)

Written by bluelover

Saturday, 17 July 2010 17:05 - Last Updated Sunday, 26 June 2016 21:32

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1. *Hidden Place* 5:28
2. *Cocoon* 4:28
3. *It's Not Up To You* 5:08
4. *Undo* 5:38
5. *Pagan Poetry* 5:14
6. *Frosti* 1:41
7. *Aurora* 4:39
8. *An Echo, A Stain* 4:04
9. *Sun In My Mouth* 2:40
10. *Heirloom* 5:11
11. *Harm Of Will* 4:36
12. *Unison* 6:47

After cathartic statements like *Homogenic*, the role of Selma in *Dancer in the Dark*, and the film's somber companion piece, *Selmasongs*, it's not surprising that Björk's first album in four years is less emotionally wrenching. But *Vespertine* isn't so much a departure from her previous work as a culmination of the musical distance she's traveled; within songs like the subtly sensual "Hidden Place" and "Undo" are traces of Debut and Post's gentle loveliness, as well as *Homogenic* and *Selmasongs*' reflective, searching moments. Described by Björk as "about being on your own in your house with your laptop and whispering for a year and just writing a very peaceful song that tiptoes," *Vespertine*'s vocals seldom rise above a whisper, the rhythms mimic heartbeats and breathing, and a pristine, music-box delicacy unites the album into a deceptively fragile, hypnotic whole. Even relatively immediate, accessible songs such as "It's Not Up to You," "Pagan Poetry," and "Unison" share a spacious serenity with the album's quietest moments. Indeed, the most intimate songs are among the most varied, from the seductively alien "Cocoon" to the dark, obsessive "An Echo, A Stain" to the fairy tale-like instrumental "Frosti." The beauty of *Vespertine*'s subtlety may be lost on Björk fans demanding another leap like the one she made between Post and *Homogenic*, but like the rest of the

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album, its innovations are intimate and intricate. Collaborators like Matmos -- who, along with their own A Chance to Cut Is a Chance to Cure, appear on two of 2001's best works -- contribute appropriately restrained beats crafted from shuffled cards, cracking ice, and the snap-crackle-pop of Rice Krispies; harpist Zeena Parkins' melodic and rhythmic playing adds to the postmodernly angelic air. An album singing the praises of peace and quiet, Vespertine isn't merely lovely; it proves that in Björk's hands, intimacy can be just as compelling as louder emotions. ---Heather Phares

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