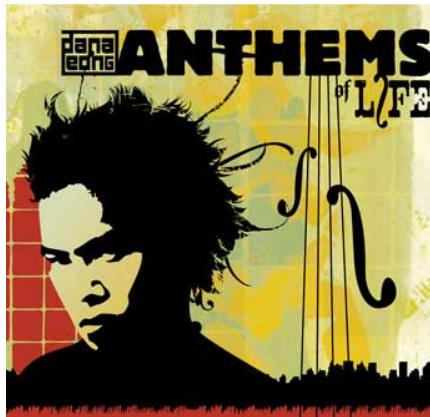




# EVOLUTION OF media



**Album:** *Anthems of Life*

**Artist:** Dana Leong

**Rating:** 

Reviewed by Jessica Dailey (November 2007)

My ears are ready and I am set to take my first blind listen to a Hip-Hop album. That was the assignment, that is where my expertise lies, and as a reviewer writing about Hip-Hop has become a favorite subject for me and I eagerly await my first listen. But I quickly realize, I am not just listening to a Hip-Hop album; I have managed to get a hold of something so much bigger than that. I am listening to a Jazz, Rock, Classical, Reggae and even a little bit of a Trance, Electronica album. I am listening to Dana Leong's *Anthems of Life*. By the end of the first track I realize that I am in the midst of musical evolution, I am in the midst of progression; I am in the presence of musical greatness.

This album shows what happens when the best come together and combine forces to create magic; Dana Leong and his band embody the image of the best of the eclectic bands coming together to create. *Anthems of Life* creates sounds synonymous with The Gorillaz, Pharcyde, Little Brother, and Miri Ben Ari then they mix it with smooth Jazz foundations, and then remix it with a touch of trance over easy with a side of classical. There is no other way to describe the listening experience created in this album, other than to say it is what music is meant to be: inclusive, prolific, thoughtful, and with purpose. From the epic lyrics to the haunting violin of "BIGUP", the grandiose up-tempo intro created by "Bonefied", this album packs heat. Not a let down after the first tracks, the movement, tempo, and lyrical impact are able to sustain themselves throughout the entire album, with each song a beautiful transition, a poetic stanza break in a journey that is displayed especially strong in "One Life".

It is very seldom, especially in this land of music being marketed much like cheap sex and easy money, that albums really touch the soul, enter the mind and make us think, feel, remember what the purpose of music was to do. As I listened to each track with its incredible musical composition and lyrics that speak to the human condition, I was truly moved. I realized it had been so long since an album had truly and genuinely moved me.

Dana Leong and his band--Jason Linder keyboards, Aviv Cohen drums Baba Israel rap vocals--have truly recaptured hope in me. I now realize that Hip-Hop is not dead, Jazz has not been forgotten, and music is still being made that serves a purpose. Dana Leong and his fellow musicians prove there are still artists out there doing their part to show that this generation is not the one that ruined music, but recreated, innovated, and ultimately revolutionized it.