

I've had the pleasure of reviewing Céran's work before, and his career is one worthy of anthology if ever I've seen one. From the first time I heard him I knew that he was a polished singer that was unafraid to take command of the song, pouring himself into the music completely. When *The Ultimate* crossed my desk, I immediately knew it was something worth celebrating, as it contains work spanning half a decade.

"The Occident" is the first song on the project and sets the precedent with a bouncy rhythm and synth track that allows Céran to nimbly move back and forth on the track. What impresses me about Céran's ability is that he isn't contained to one style of music; one moment he's in the mood to party, the next he's reflecting on times past. The chorus here is amazing because of its fullness and straightforward movement featuring chord stabs and pads that easily keep the pace.

"Noble Fool" features Samara in a duet that showcases probably the best thing about duets—two distinct styles meshing together in harmony to create a single experience—and both Céran and Samara put on riveting performances. "The Wrong of Right" gives a more Reggae-like backdrop for Céran to operate in, and the island sound really compliments him well here. He's able to step outside the norm and that freedom shows magnificently. As dynamically different as these two tracks are, there's a strong similarity in them showing just how far-reaching Céran's range truly is.

"All That You Want Me to Be" is a song that to me, even more strongly than most, connects Céran to his sound due to him being emotionally open and honest on the song. The song has crossover appeal and has a sincere makeup of straightforward good vibes that is so important to the connectivity between Céran and his fans. Both contemporary and traditional in nature, this is one song that can fit in a multitude of places.

"Live and Let Love" is strong and struts out, full of perseverance and a robust sense of self. The song moves at a surprisingly quick pace and is a highlight because in it, Céran speaks of redemption through love and the very necessary understanding that we all gain through experience. It's about this time in the album that I have to stop and think about just how many of these songs were on repeat: a lot. I believe the reason for that comes from Céran's knack for paring things down to the core essentials and providing exactly what the listener wants to hear—quality production, songwriting and artistry—and I'm grateful for it. Overall, Céran's *The Ultimate* is every bit the namesake and for an artist to have such an array of work in a short amount of time means he's inspired and I'm inspired listening to him.

Artist: Céran

Title: *The Ultimate*

Rating: 4 (out of 5 stars)

Written by: Charles Sweet