

THE VANCOUVER SUN

Music

QUEUE

CONCERTS

THIS WEEK

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2004

LEORA CASHE

Inspiration

Birth Records ★★★

Gospel music can either be performed in the restrained confines of a church whose minister doesn't want the congregation to get too excited, or with the joyous expressionism of a performer who feels good about her faith and wants to spread that joy around.

Count Leora Cashe is in the latter category.

The Vancouver singer, blessed with a rich, resounding voice, celebrates her spirituality on *Inspiration*, a collection of traditional and modern songs of faith. On the opening *Be Thou My Vision*, the power of her voice carries

the song as the instruments join in, first piano, then guitar, bass and drums. *It Don't Cost Very Much* moves to a rolling piano played by Cashe's husband Jaye Krebs, and *I Don't Wanna Be Misunderstood* churns to a funk beat. Things slow down for a few tracks before the big-beat *It's Time to Sing*, co-written by Cashe and Krebs, where guitarist Budge Schachte gets to wail on his instrument.

A disc highlight comes in the Chris Rice song *Hallelujahs*, a vocal-piano number played at a slow tempo where Cashe and Krebs create rise-and-fall dynamics as the song builds to a climax, then recedes with just as much power. *Yes You Can* and *I Hope You Dance*, which both blend an infectious chorus with strong backup vocals, would make good Top-30 material, if commercial radio considered this form of music for airplay.

Leora Cashe and her band perform a CD release concert Saturday at 8 p.m. at the Chan Family Health Theatre. For tickets, call 604-257-0366.

— Marke Andrews