It was always written in the stars that Raveena Aurora would become a healer. A first-generation descendant of genocide survivors and Reiki healers, Raveena uncovered her medium early in life—her voice. Learning to emulate muses like Ella Fitzgerald, Sade, Corinne Bailey Rae and Amy Winehouse in her childhood bathroom helped coax out of her a gift of song that would unknowingly become her calling. Music, it turned out, could be a salve for the dissonance she experienced between herself and the conservatism that permeates her Sikh birthright; it was a vehicle that helped her make sense of her surroundings. “I could create a world that was larger than the one I was allowed to exist in,” she recalls.

Raveena often describes the soundscape that she creates as cinematic; each new world built is a meeting point where all of her influences intersect, from the Bollywood soundtracks that she grew up with, to the R&B, hip-hop, soul, folk and jazz that she later discovered. This confluence is central to Raveena’s ever-evolving practice as an artist: it’s a lens through which she examines identity, culture and healing, and a portal that transports listeners to another realm. Her ability to arrest you with her softness—her greatest weapon—while remaining playful and upbeat is a skill she’s honed over a lifetime of self-examination and manifestation of the goodness she sees in humanity. “I'm really happy that I set out that intention and am continually learning what it actually means to be slower and more intentional with my thoughts, and more aware of how to protect my energy,” she says.

The foundations of her public-facing artistry were established in 2017, when, not long after graduating from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, Raveena made her entrance with the critically-acclaimed *Shanti* EP. Featuring the breakout song, “If Only,” the project is a sweeping and romantic painting of the many facets of love in tumult. Yet despite its success Raveena is now open about the fact that in that season she was actually in a place of unrest as she struggled privately to navigate her nascent queerness. She has since stepped into this profound personal truth, formally coming out as bisexual in 2018.

In 2019, Raveena self-released her debut LP, *Lucid*, a buzzy project that thrust her further into the conversation and showcases her undeniable talent and multi-dimensionality as an artist by blending contemporary R&B with elements from the South Asian diaspora. With this project, she documents some of her most traumatic experiences as the survivor of a toxic and abusive relationship behind the contrast of hazy and hypnotic arrangements intertwined with soft-spoken melodies and depictions of queer romance. It was quickly followed by 2020’s quiet yet sumptuous *Moonstone EP,* featuring the sultry fan-favorite, “Headaches.”

Raveena often jokes that she’s shape-shifted into the persona of a “religious grandma” after her four-year flurry of output was tamped down by a worldwide pandemic. The period of unforeseen rest came with deep inspiration and creativity as she entrenched herself in Indian folklore and carved out yet another dimension within her complex universe. Her latest full-length offering, *Asha's Awakening,* tells the riveting tale of a space princess from ancient Punjab who, through a fantastic journey across the centuries, learns about love and loss, healing and destruction. Conceptually, the album mirrors the rise and fall of this character, opening with upbeat numbers like “Rush” and “Secret” and gradually becoming softer and more speculative as she finds wisdom and singularity, finally culminating eventually in a guided meditation that brings the tale to a close. “I wanted to do something completely new and explore the sides of myself that people don't even know exists inside of me,” she says. “That's why I chose a character to embody something different for this album. There’s some kind of power in that.”

Once again, this album sees Raveena experimenting with producer Everett Orr for an epic deep dive into Indian culture—an endeavor that has been in the works for three years. The lead single, “Rush,” is the genesis of the album and was conceived back in 2016 after Raveena experienced a psychedelic acid trip while visiting the Rubin Museum. Musical collaborators on the album include Vince Staples (“Secret”), TWEAKS (“New Drugs”) and the legendary Indian singer-songwriter Asha Puthli (“Asha’s Kiss”). The album incorporates influences from Bollywood and celebrated Indian artists like R.D. Burman and Asha Bhosle, as well as Western music—specifically R&B, rock and soul—melding the genres prevalent throughout Raveena’s catalog into one cohesive body of work. The album also marries eras in time, fusing together a contemporary take on sounds influenced by Alice Coltrane and Asha Puthli from the 60s and 70s with those of Timbaland, Missy Elliott, M.I.A. and Jai Paul from the early 2000s.

True to Raveena’s past form, there’s a whimsical nature within every song on *Asha's Awakening* that transports its audience to a lighter space. This beautiful body of workcontains a multitude of moods with something for everyone like “Mystery,” an ode to the psychedelic rock era, to “Magic” with its early 2000s sonic references. As longtime fans would expect, there are also devastating breakup ballads like “Love Overgrown.” Tongue-in-cheek wordplay can be heard on tracks like “Kathy Left 4 Kathmandu,” where Raveena teases “I can open up your third eye” as a nod to those that participate in the gentrification of sacred cultural traditions.

“I hope people take away open mindedness to watch an artist grow and experiment,” she concludes. Raveena's forthcoming album offers so much more dimension, crossing timelines and sharing sides of herself she's never opened up about before. “I think it's really fun putting people in uncomfortable positions to receive new sides of you and I'm curious what happens with that. The human experience is so vast.”

*Asha's Awakening* is due out on February 11th 2022via Warner Records.