

DAVID WRIGHT: IN SEARCH OF SILENCE (CDS Review November 2011)

This is the brand new 2011 album from a man who is now becoming one of the 'EM' scene's longest standing survivors, and probably now the premier maker of melodic electronic music in the UK.

He undoubtedly has the finest blending of melodic flair and flowing rhythms that is around today, and if that's what you're after - tuneful music with substance - then believe me, this emotion fuelled album will be par excellence for you.

'In Search Of Silence' is David Wright's 23rd solo release and in keeping with the best of his past works, it offers an extraordinary emotional roller coaster ride through many moods and styles, while cleverly retaining a coherence and strong sense of purpose.

Almost a year in the making, 'In Search Of Silence' is an epic album full of emotive and memorable themes, making it instantly accessible, while reflecting the ebb and flow of life as it goes, reminding us that nothing ever stays the same for long, and guess what - David has taken up the Mellotron (or the sounds of it at least) and added a new dimension to much of what he does on his new music.

So, what is it like then?

After the beautifully atmospheric, slowly building sounds of 'Sanctuary Prologue', which features an organ lead later joined by distant heavenly choirs, we are treated to one of the most joyously melodic / rhythmic tracks David has produced in years with: 'Transylvanian Lullaby'. This is pure, instantly recognisable David Wright music, with an ear catching melody line that, after a haunting opening five-minute passage, is developed and worked over a slowly twisting train-like rhythmic flow, and it's a fantastic eight-minute spell that just sweeps you off your feet and holds you up there for its entirety. There are a few synth musicians around that can come up with a fantastic melody line and hold it for a short time, but can't seem to do much with it after the initial fire has been lit, but not David Wright - He is a craftsman in the art of being able to squeeze every ounce of listening pleasure from such a tune, developing, evolving and expanding the theme far beyond what it was at the start. 'Transylvanian Lullaby' is a perfect example of that art!

'Shine On Cassini, Shine On' is a short emotional piece with a dreamy synth lead set over a soft sea of choral heavenly, angelic voices that almost had me reaching out for the hanky box, then cross-fading into the equally beautifully floating feel of 'Echoes Of Air', but this time the powerfully evocative melody line is driven by a slow delicate rhythmic texture, and this time I really did have to grab a Kleenex to wipe away a tear - A truly moving, emotion filled track featuring some inspired moments of true musical beauty.

'Sanctuary Reprise' continues the spacey, atmospheric of the album's opener with more organ and heavenly choirs, then it's straight over into the album's longest track: 'In Search of Silence', where a string theme gradually emerges from a calm, fluid backdrop. Tabla rhythms keep the flow going whilst David works the melody line into new shapes and guises as the track builds in intensity (if that's the right word?).

At the halfway mark the piece is moving freely with Moog melodies soaring in and out of the background. A rolling harp breaks the flow at the nine-minute mark and the theme goes back to a more simplified version, with alien choral sounds adding a new background texture. Regimented tabla and drum sounds keep tight control as David finds some new ways of treating the main melody line until the final minute where it gets stripped back to a magical spacey place where shooting synth stars and rippling harp synth sounds provide the bridge to cross into: 'Debussy In The Mist', where deep rolling synth sounds introduce a lone female voice sample emerges. A new theme rises up through the sounds of a slow, echoed sequencer rhythm, and a single string synth continues with the melody line until Mellotron strings and flutes take over to slowly bring the evolving track up to the crossover point where 'Alchemy' takes over.

This track starts with an Eastern tinged Mellotron lead line, then, through a hail of different sounds and textures the theme twists and turns through a busy market place of musical sounds, before the rhythm strikes up and grows in power very quickly, taking you off on an enchanting flight over exotic landscapes, weaving and wavering in and out of different places as the flight continues. A lull in the middle signals a new build-up, and the driving rhythms gradually lead us back to the point where the ride started, and into a peaceful, tranquil Mellotron based setting, and preparing us for 'Calmer Waters' where a wistful Mellotron flute dances airily before a slowing shuffling rhythm emerges with piano leading the way over a soft bed of string synths, before closing on a tranquil sea of textural atmospheric sounds.

The wistful 'Sea & Sand' is next and it features a Mellotron flute theme in an ethereal Celtic drone setting, and as you would have expected, it's very atmospheric and dreamlike in its make-up.

The album's 2nd longest track is: 'Worlds Beneath' and it is eleven minutes of David Wright at his Space Music best - the kind of music you can just get lost in as it evolves and flows around and within you.

It features a very simple, yet haunting Vangelis-like synth theme that will make you think of those Carl Sagen 'Cosmos' TV series episodes, and as the track develops, a rhythm slips in almost unnoticed under a backdrop of heavenly choral (Mellotron) textures and strings, which are amply used in the background during this flight of fantasy, giving an epic feel to the picture it creates, and once you are on this flight, you won't really want to come down.

Again David displays the art of finding a melody, fine tuning and steering in new directions to enable it to slowly evolve without making it repetitive or boring. THIS is gorgeous stuff and a perfect example of how space music SHOULD be done!

'Sanctuary Epilogue' closes the album with another dream-like passage of true ethereal beauty, completing the 'Sanctuary' trilogy and the 'In Search Of Silence' album in the same tranquil mood that is started almost eighty minutes ago.

Make no mistake, 'In Search Of Silence' is as good as anything David has produced in 25 years of making instrumental electronic music - It's a cross between 'Walking With Ghosts' and 'Dreams & Distant Moonlight', but with an added sense of maturity and panache that will amaze even his most ardent followers and is certain sure to win him over many new fans too.

David's emotional sensibilities and creativity have never been better, and the beauty and optimism running through this superb album makes for a very classy and uplifting new work to finish off 2011.

From ethereal atmospherics to gentle drifting space music vibes, through foot tapping, Mellotron laced sequencer tracks to Lounge Chill-Out and Ambient, David Wright links the complexity of life to his music in stunning fashion, presenting some truly awesome soundscapes.

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