

Halo

By

Timothy Crane

Written by

Steve Sheppard

I have now listened to this album on no less than three occasions, I am glad I did so before reviewing the album, as I have found more and more within this amazing release each time I did so, which draws me to the conclusion that this is the best body of work I believe from the artist thus far. **Halo** by **Timothy Crane** is not just a joyous moment of symphonic piano; it is also a richly textured compilation of sublime arrangements that are literally bursting with colour and life.

The starting piece sparkles in the dappled sunlight of the day, and is entitled **Waterfall Secrets**. My goodness me, I do not think you could find a more uplifting and radiant opening offering to begin an album with, one that also took me back in time, and reminded me so much of *David Lanz* and his *Spiral Dance* creation.

My favourite composition on the album would be the title track **Halo**. The ambient construct of this arrangement is magnificent and utterly glorious in its compositional structure, this is a wonderfully smooth, creative and calming long form offering of just less than 10 minutes, one that you could literally leave on repeat for hours and be carried away by Cranes performance on a serene warm breeze of music for an eternity. I would even go as far to say that this is film score standard, and most certainly an anthem styled opus.

The One About Light is another warm composition, one of those tracks that will bring a smile of happiness to your face as soon as the piano is first touched, and the melody falls down upon you like soft rain on a summers day.

There is also a slight Celtic touch to the construction that is so delicate too; it is like a musical herb, as it adds more flavour to the proceedings.

There can be no doubt that both the Neo-Classical and Piano with Instrumentation genres are on the rise, and the symphonic genius of this release is even more of an affirmation of that statement, listen also to tracks like **The Boxer**, originally released of course by *Simon and Garfunkel* back in the day. As a singer I love this song, it gives a great opportunity to create beautiful harmonies, with the main instrumentation being piano, it drives the piece and gives it power and intensity, a great job well done indeed.

Ok, there was one track off this album that I literally could not pull myself away from, I have listened to this piece probably more times than any other, **Cards** fascinated me, it created for me a flowing musical narrative that was incredibly compelling and deeply listenable, and one could also find themselves whistling or humming the melody all day long. This is also a wonderfully lush performance by the artist, with a build and progression, along with the added instrumentation and percussion that simply became undeniable.

At the half way juncture we come across a lively offering entitled **Uberchic**, interesting usage of the modern vernacular, and illustrating perhaps that this track is modern, but yet highly classy, and when you listen to this up-tempo, empowering and vibrant performance on piano, who could indeed doubt that aforementioned statement.

One of the most beautiful things about this album is that the Crane has allowed his muse to fully flow, many of the tracks are mid-form length, and some long, but there simply as long as they need to be, and that is nice to see, as sun kissed moments of musical reverie like **Southern Steps**, another personal favourite of mine, as it drifted down the footfalls of a beautifully moving and creative musical footpath, and one also must applaud the artist for his timely use of crescendo as well.

There was something so pretty about **Chelsea Walk**, this offering made me stop and restart it many times, the performance on piano and the symbiotic manifestation of this most glorious symphonic backdrop, was akin to a really good TV theme, the melody was bursting with positivity, and radiating a rich tapestry of colour as it went, how can you not simply love a piece like this?

We have mentioned television and film scores throughout this review, but I believe it deserves it more than ever on this most amazing musical adventure entitled **Tenants of the Heather**. The creative and artistic arrangement here flows with an abundance of a spring mountain river, one full of hope and impassioned intensity. This performance by Crane is one of those splendid pieces that are played with a freedom of expression, and with an appetite of excitement.

We now drift deeper into the weave of the album and find a friendly but respectful composition called **Covenant**. This song flows with a story of an uplifting and almost spiritual narrative, and then increases in its agreed intensity and purpose, an intriguing creation indeed.

The penultimate offering is entitled **I-70 Sojourn**, which is the most up tempo offering from the album, an irresistible drum beat and piano performance that is deeply fascinating, as a little pop and at times almost progressive rock ethics can be found within this quite breath-taking and unique creation.

Our last port of call is entitled **Solaris**, and one has to congratulate **Timothy Crane** for his inventiveness for manifesting this bright empowering, and fast paced arrangement as our parting composition. The melody and usage of minor chords, plays a perfect musical juxtaposition with the major ones, this is indeed much appreciated, and the perfect way to conclude the album.

Halo by **Timothy Crane** is without doubt the most exciting and addictive album I have received and reviewed in the piano with instrumentation genre this year with absolute ease. The passionate performances by the artist, the magnificent symphonic soundscapes are all utterly delicious, and raise both the spirits and mood of the listener.

Halo by **Timothy Crane** is truly an album that will blow the blues away, and those who love the manifestation of wonderfully arranged and performed piano with a symphonic backdrop, should make this a purchase of absolute need as soon as possible.