

Art of Acoustic

By

Joseph Sullinger

Written by

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Songs throughout the ages have the magical ability to create many memories for us, so when a performer creates a compilation of well-known hits for us all to enjoy, it's like opening up an attic filled with reflections of the past. On **Art of Acoustic**, the latest album by **Joseph Sullinger**, we have just that.

Joseph is one of the finest acoustic guitarists of his day and a very nice person to deal with in real life too, so with an open mind and heart, I am going to take you on a journey of my memories through the artist's music and we start with the *Roberta Flack* hit **Killing Me Softly**. Joseph could well have been playing right in my kitchen back in the early 70's with this one, I sat there the day this was released, recording it to my reel to reel, I was always mesmerized by the voice of Flack, but this melody is so delightful and very memorable, the gentleness of Sullinger's performance on guitar is so evident here.

Now the artist takes me further back in time, I remember my Grandad playing this hit back on his old turntable and being spell bound by the tender growly tones of *Louis Armstrong's* voice, of course it's **What a Wonderful World**, but then at the time I was only 10! Sullinger creates a really happy vibe here on this rendition and for some reason, this really hit the emotional strings for me, see this is what I mean about the power and music and memory.

Do you remember the days of the old school yard? As *Cat Stevens* once said, I do with this song; **The Sound of Silence** by *Simon and Garfunkel*, a well-known hit from 1964, it was always so empowering and popular back in the day. Here Sullinger adds a few extra layers of brilliance through his performance to add to an already classy tune.

Erik Satie created the *Gymnopédies* and number one has to be *one*, if not **the** most relaxing track ever composed. Sullinger's performance on this offering **Gymnopédie No 1**, is divine; one with ease could imagine being on a boat, slowly sailing down the stream on a summer's afternoon with this little slice of acoustic magic.

The year 1964 pops up again, with the artist's performance of the *Beatles* original, **And I Love Her**. My mum used to buy me *Beatles* vinyl when I was a child and this single, a huge hit from the *Hard Day's Night* album is given a real softness by the guitarist **Joseph Sullinger**, the beautiful fluency and flow here give us something so pleasurable and memory gilled to enjoy.

At the mid-way section we have a true all time classic, even I sing this one at karaoke, it is an all-time favourite of mine. I was just 10 when this came out in 1967, but it's one song that seems to have stayed with me all my life, of course I am referring to **Nights in White Satin** originally by the *Moody Blues*. You will be very glad to hear that though his playing; Sullinger recreates the same imploring tone as the original, the careful attention to detail on this piece is also something to applaud.

The Skye Boat Song is a weird one for me, as the first version I can remember was by folk singer *Roger Whittaker* back in '68, sitting in my Grandad's living room where he used to love to listen to Whittaker and the Aussie outfit the Seekers. Here Sullinger gives this well know piece a really fun makeover, with a few added taps on the guitar as well, listen to the careful note picking and the timely strums that all go to create something quite warm and homely to listen to.

Now *Mason Williams* released this next piece back in '68, and it has been sampled more times than I have had hot dinners, but **Classical Gas** is a superb acoustic guitar offering that has withstood the ravages of time and tide, and with this new version by **Joseph Sullinger**, will continue to live on with style. I also have to say, that this is in fact one of the most classy versions I have ever heard of this composition.

Now, does anyone remember the album *Help?* Yes we slide back to 1965 for the *Grammy* winning **Yesterday** from *Lennon and McCartney*. Here the artist manifests a memorable musical moment about, well memories of a lost love!

Sad and reflective this song has survived the decades and still resonates strongly with most people to this day, Sullinger adds to those memories by playing with such a respectful and moving energy.

So let's go classical, it is time for some *Bach* with **Air on the G String**. If you ever wanted to hear an arrangement that highlights the superb skills and professionalism of the artist, then this is the piece. I could listen to Sullinger playing this all day long; it is crafted and performed with such panache and fluent style.

We find ourselves at the penultimate offering of the release and at a memory box entitled **Pavane, Op 50**. My dear father had such a great love for all things classical and would introduce me to material like the aforementioned *Bach* and also *Gabriel Faure*. This is a track, I have to be honest, that is one that I have tried to play over the years myself on guitar, but never quite mastered, listening to this new version by Sullinger I can see why, the technical aspects of the artist's performance here are sublime, but thoroughly enjoyable at the same time.

Strange, but true, I know *Bread*, a favourite band of mine, released **If** back in 1971 from the album *Manna*, but for the life of me I still cannot rid myself of the image of medallion man *Telly Savalas* obtaining a number 1 hit with the song in 1975, shaking my head to remove the image, I decide to allow myself to fully flow with the artist here on this one, as he leaves us with the perfect ending song, a performance that will leave you in such peace and serenity it is simply blissful to float within.

Art of Acoustic is the musicians memory filled attic of tracks that he has lovingly re-created and placed before you, it is an album packed with classic reflective songs that will take you back through the magic of memory filled music, and done in such a way you will feel the tranquil nature of each performance. There can be no doubt that **Joseph Sullinger** is one of the most talented acoustic guitarist around today and through his selections, perhaps you may also get to know him just that little bit better as well.