

Peaceful Being

By

Richard Noll

Written by

Steve Sheppard

For me, the Flute has to be the most spiritual of all instruments, I'm fortunate that my wife plays flute and it is a beautiful think to watch her play on the shores of our sea line at sunset. She had told me I was in for a treat with this album and she was right, **Richard Noll** has indeed created something truly beautiful and it is this album that we now musically voyage through, and although not flute, you will see exactly what I mean as we travel together.

The starting pathway is a track called "**Calling The Rain**", something we need here in Cyprus. The layered keyboards in the background are a perfect bed for Noll to excel on wooden recorder, and excel he most certainly does. As we listen intently, perhaps we can even see the clouds gather on the horizon, as if being called by the magic of the instrument, which is being played in the style of a Native American flute; this is so very graceful indeed.

I adore "**Grace**", the keyboards actually remind me of a track of mine, so gentle, so delicate and pristine, yet the calming waves of music seem to wash over us with such a charming musical narrative of tranquillity. I thank Richard for this piece, as it has further inspired me to carry on and reconnect with my musical muse.

"**Peaceful Being**" flows with such an energy of abundance it is unbelievable, in the style of the wood flute, Noll manifests something mystical yes, but something empowering too, with a back drop of the keyboards. Whilst listening to this piece I could imagine myself up in our mountain range, being part of all that is creation, all that is nature; the wordless vocals here are also a delightful addition to the overall composition.

We reach the half way marker and we're greeted by a charming opus entitled "**Early Spring**", probably one of my favourite times of year. The recorder of Noll brings a lush sense of colour and warmth in music to the table here, the dualistic nature of two recorders, Alto and Tenor is simply a stroke of genius, then add in the wordless vocals of *Shaina Noll* and you have a superb feel good composition to bring a smile to the face and an extra beat to the heart.

The other side of the musical mirror is found here, from the sun kissed reveries of the previous song, we now move into the inky darkness of "**Nightfall**". The strings here give a mournful essence to the track that brings forth the truly mystical sense of the night and superbly played by *Gwen Franz* on Viola, while Noll is simply sublime on his recorder, and as such, this is one of my favourite pieces from the release.

We now edge ever deeper into the album, and as we do so we come across a composition called "**Open Heart**". This has to be the most fascinating offering from the release, it offers the listener an interesting counter play between melody and harmony, alto Sax and tenor, so let us also add the Viola once more as well; this is extremely inventive and quite unique, but the outcome is a masterful arrangement that is almost hypnotic in composition.

We have arrived at a very important part of the album, the penultimate track, but that's not the reason of importance, this is the longest offering at well over 12 minutes and called "**Inner Journey**", this respectful and empowering piece allows us the chance to journey slowly and surely into the musical narrative. The piano repeats its ever onward mantra and a gentle drum beats in the background, in a similar style to the journeying I used to partake in our shamanic circles. This is indeed a very special arrangement; the build and progression here are highlighted further by the male and female wordless vocals.

Richard Noll's inventiveness and performances on this release have been fascinating and extremely enjoyable thus far, but sadly we have arrived at the last portal of our musical journey and we are gifted an offering that for me feels very spiritual. "**Invocation**" brings us a mystical moment with the Tenor Recorder; this solo is the mark of perfection that we must leave this realm of

the artist with, reverential, respectful and deeply open and the best way to close the book on the album that is **“Peaceful Being”**.

“Peaceful Being” by **Richard Noll** is one of the most unique albums I have listened to this year without doubt, its multi instrumental nature, its very energy and its empowering musical constructions are sheer bliss. Once you open the door to this album you will never want to leave.

Noll’s willingness to manifest an album of this quality is amazing; **Richard Noll** is a man who is truly connected to the source and draws its energy and inspiration from it and it shows, and while listening to this marvellous album, perhaps we will reconnect as well with all that really matters;. a truly superb release and thoroughly recommended.