

# Clear Light

By

**Stephanie Sante**

Written by

**Steve Sheppard**

A new experience for me as I get to delve into the electronic world of **Stephanie Sante** and within this review we can traverse the musical oceans together on her latest offering **Clear Light**.

By some strange coincidence I had just been listening to a pre-release copy of the latest *David Wright* album and there is something of him within this album too, but for now, let push our ship away from its tether and voyage through **Clear Light**.

The opener is the glorious sound track; **Clear Light** as a composition is a real scene setter, one can literally feel the energy build and manifest a level of excitement for this up and coming sojourn, this arrangement is simply the perfect musical beginning and the powerful posture of this piece is undeniably brilliant and almost *John Carpenter* in mood at times, and that can never be a bad thing.

We move to the smooth and calming waters of **Deep Impression**, but we seem to have an around view of our landscape, perhaps as above so below. The synths here are sublime and the production quality of the entire project really adds a pleasurable layer of expansiveness to the whole experience. We could almost be travelling under the ocean to this one and watching various structures and fissures pass us by as we do so.

The drops and almost bubble like effects on the next piece are fascinating and within the opus that is **Salacia's Dream** it feels like we have drifted off course and into an alternate reality, perhaps in a time long ago. While Salacia is a Roman deity of sorts, living in Cyprus, I am very aware of all the mysterious

imaginings and mystical deities from the Greek ages of yester year, so I can gaze over our sea right now and imagine through this really grand symphonic arrangement, the goddess Salacia imposing her will on the realms of the underwater world below the lapis coloured waters above. Musically this is an almost cinematic delight; the performance on keyboards and synths here by Sante is utterly fantastic, this is electronic music at its very, very best.

As we move deeper into this oceanic tale of wonderment we come across a piece called **Jade Resonance**. There is a distinctive movement within this track that is transfixing and one can almost feel musically, the pull of the waves as they lap up to the shore line. We also can bathe in another sublime performance by the artist who paints something special with this one; we can also sense the energy of life within this composition, which may portray a delicate balance of nature within the overall construction of the musical narrative. The artist's artistic approach on this arrangement is simply mesmerizing to listen to.

There seems to be a fascinating counter play of musical genius on this next offering called **Melt Like Snow**. The rhythmic water droplets can be heard throughout this composition, leading one to perhaps visualise the polar caps supplying water to the grand vistas of our planets oceans, the gentle and almost hesitant approach also brings in the reverse effect of the melting of the ice caps creating a musical dichotomy of sorts. A very clever composition indeed and once again superbly performed by the artist.

On **The Color of Coral**, Sante manifests something incredibly beautiful, almost wave like in musical motion. There is a delicacy here that must not be ignored, we have coral here and it is so lush and colourful and to watch the small squid playing within the reefs is a sight to see. The peace filled style of this track is sublimely serene, but perhaps also this is a reminder for us to take care of this most precious of marine life.

We now move into the very depths of this ocean of tone and timbre and as we arrive at the portal entitled **Fractured Echoes**. I can gaze at the shoreline here and see many fractures, from the many earthquakes we have had since time began for this land and sea. There is a sense of past and present in this crafted arrangement, almost like through the music, we can view the history of the

world's oceans as a portent of the future. The smooth synths here are simply amazing and the elevation of energy when needed is also a delight to sonically bathe within.

As we touch the hem of the longest track off the album at just shy of eight minutes, we land at the sand bar of a wonderful arrangement called **Moonlit Starfish**. This is a composition that also touches the hem of greats like *Wright* and *Vangelis*, with ease. The added percussion here is perfection and there is a real energy of happiness, perhaps it's not too much of a stretch to imagine a multi-coloured Starfish meeting on the floors of a midnight ocean somewhere, this is also one of my favourite compositions from the album too.

I am a fan of the oceans of the planet and the Mariana Trench is a legend on its own right, here new sea life is still being found to this day. On the track **Mariana** the repetitive progression and then the slow movement into the dark realms of this area is superbly musically narrated by Sante; one can feel truly as if they are there, as if going down as far as you can in a submersible. The synths and keyboard performance here is as legendary as the trench itself, this is a very intelligent and powerful way to leave the album indeed.

**Clear Light** has to be one of the best electronic musical albums I have heard this year, it has a refreshing energy about it and a narrative that needs to be constantly highlighted if we are to keep our oceans clean and well. **Stephanie Sante** has produced a truly gripping release, one that is extremely well produced and will hold you until the very last note of the album.