

Frigid Spark, Drifting Light

By

Cole & Coffman

Written by

Steve Sheppard

The works of Cole & Coffman over the years have ranged from a minimalistic flavour to an ambience that has been described as drone, and drifting to and fro into the open arms of the vast new age genre.

I have been aware of the duo's work for some five years now, and in my view they have produced their best work as of yet, on their latest release **Frigid Spark, Drifting Light**, this is exactly the sort of music I like to work to, or just drift with.

Cold Moon is our opener and delivers one of the most poignant beginnings of an album of this style that I have heard for quite some time. The ambience created by the performance here is both haunting and mysterious, it has a clever cold edge to its tones, but manifests one of the most enticing beginnings you could ever wish for; the bass here is simply sublime too.

Cole & Coffman create compositions with a myriad of instrumentation from the Dulcimer to the Bass, from Synths to the more unusual stringed instruments like the Scheitholts, which I believe are ancestors of the Zither. On **Dancing Embers** you hear all that instrumentational genius in full play as a quite upbeat offering is given to us the ever eager listener, as a slight but perfect level of percussion is added to the mix as well.

There is something about this album that is terribly addictive, one may even be able to categorise it into the contemporary instrumental field if you so wish to, while on the piece **Frigid Spark** we even dip a toe perhaps into the global world

genre as well. The deepness of the bass here is literally compelling to listen to and draws us in deeper as the guitar becomes our constant companion.

At well over eight minutes we come to one of my favourites pieces off the album called **Ghost Light**. Coffman's skill on creating wonderful segments of music with his hand made flutes and other reed instruments is well known. Here on this most evocative of pieces we are gifted a composition that creates such a memorable and lasting effect, it's like the soundtrack for a disturbing dream, one that seems to never end, but in the distance is the gaze of two unceasing luminosities, the Ghost Lights themselves; extremely artistic and brilliantly arranged indeed.

That ability to draw a wonderful musical narrative continues with this next offering called **Sun Through Snow**. Here we have a composition that doesn't only manifest a wonderfully artistic ability; it also paints a picture of a scene so graphically. The guitar and other instrumentations are sublime, and with the synth backdrop added to the mix, we have the ultimate offering of a track that portrays a quality of winter light like never before.

So for our penultimate piece off the release, let's go long form, there is a real dramatic build and progression to the very opening on this offering that manifests something special to come. **Drifting** is well over thirteen minutes of ambient drone class, and the guitar adds a layer and an extra dimension for us to totally enjoy. The segment approaching the four minute mark was very special and created such a power in transition, the track seem to meld from one reality into a deeper and darker one entirely. Brilliantly played and performed and this would turn out to be my track of choice from the release, with added flute a little rhythm and synth magic, we have something here that is so wonderfully fluent and original.

Our last track off the album was performed live and called **Awaken**. This offering reminded me of Eno with stringed instruments and flute. I am going to have to play this whole album again whilst relaxing; it truly is a multi-purpose release for the listener. **Awaken** typifies just why this album is going to be a hit with fans of this genre, it is spacious and vast without being over complicated, and creates a musical territory that anyone would be willing to walk through.

Frigid Spark, Drifting Light by **Cole & Coffman** is truly unique, in some ways they may have created their own genre as well as their own style, but regardless of this, it is one of the most addictive and listenable albums, the ambience it creates is very pleasurable indeed. Personally this one is going on my playlist of choice to use when I am creating, and I would recommend it to you as well, this is music to manifest your own environmental ambience with, superbly performed, with a classy production quality, by two artists who are totally in the flow.