

Beyond the Purple Sun

By

Jim Ottaway

Written by

Steve Sheppard

There are few musicians who can take you to the edge of infinity and beyond, one of the few is Australian space supremo **Jim Ottaway**, whose brand of electronic space styled music, literally paints the sectors of the galactic emporium as we listen.

The opening offering sees us breaking free of our space port and manoeuvring into a high orbit of our home world, as we prepare to break free and enter deep space at a slow, but determined speed. Ottaway on **Celestial Rainbows** perfectly illustrates for us the beauty of space and its vast realms with some sublime synth work that draws into view for us the miracle of the universe.

The mastery of Ottaway's modus operandi, is that each track is live and improvised, that talent is a rare gift and on the track **Lavender Moons** we can hear that methodology in full flow, the stylish construction using synths and keyboards gifts us a stunning sight of twin lavender moons to marvel at.

A completely different colour and texture of dimension now greets our eyes as we drop from warp, the ominous deep and mysterious region of the galaxy that is known to but a few wary travellers as the **Dark Spaces**. Ottaway's musical database tell us that this region has barely been mapped and the tones of the performance are ones that warn, there is more here than the eye could ever see. Here lies a powerful and atmospheric offering, one that crackles and rumbles with the intent of a black hole manifesting itself, these swirling synths are absolutely perfect for drawing a musical narrative of a final frontier, perhaps the borderlands of space and time itself!

Now one must bear in mind that the artist has had these compositions in his grip for nearly 10 years now, as they were recorded from 2009 to 2019, but space music is timeless and the production quality on each and every track is faultless.

As we approach the half way buoy, our space beacon tells us we have the opportunity to witness the **Birth of a Violet Quasar**. This long form offering allows us the room and time to explore this expansive opus. There can be no doubt that this piece is genius, I have listened several times now and I am still in awe of its arrangement. The pulsating motif in the first few minutes could well be the actual birth of the quasar, as the feminine divide finally expels the quasar from her galactic belly; the peace that follows is simply sublime. Ottaway on this track has truly excelled, and I am right there on the bridge of our ship watching this occurrence happen.

We explore the deeper regions of what we are told are the Badlands of space, bright flashes in this region of the sector are picked up on our scanners and even via our view screen, as we watch **Space Lightning**. **Jim Ottaway** beautifully narrates this galactic area brilliantly with some simply incredible synth work; his textures are matched with some startling effects, ones that add a layer of tension to the whole composition.

Our mission to explore, record, witness and enjoy the mechanics of space is nearly complete, we must prepare to make the jump to hyperspace, but before we do so, we manoeuvre slowly to port to watch the **Secrets of the Hidden Stars** reveal themselves to us. One by one, with a twinkling of the eye, stars are born and then disappear; as if in a micro second, life and death have been in a simultaneous and symbiotic partnership. This is portrayed to me with such skill and aplomb; the talents of Ottaway and his composure gift us a piece that is the ultimate arrangement of excellent synth work, and a harmonious rhythmic performance that is sheer class to listen to.

We end our voyage now with the title track **Beyond the Purple Sun**, this is the blank canvas that the artist will paint for us the over view of the concept of his entire work, this lush and colourful pastiche is a marvel to behold and at times one feels a little energy of a *David Wright* composition here, the pulsating

onward musical movement mixed with sublime eddying synths, manifest the perfect composition to dock our musical space ship with.

Beyond The Purple Sun in my view is one of the best albums I have heard from Ottaway, it's a tapestry of splendid arrangements are all weaved together in an absolutely beautifully produced collection of quite brilliant compositions. If you're a fan of electronic space music, you would be remiss in not snagging a copy of this for your collection; it is a true masterpiece of just how good this style of music can be, from an artist who clearly knows his own musical soul.