

Lilac Skies

By

Shambhu

Written by

Steve Sheppard

I am totally in my element here, this is the sort of music that I could listen to all day long, **Shambhu** has such a delightfully fluent way of playing the guitar that it seems to just drip off the fingers like warm Honey on a July afternoon, it simple doesn't get any better than this.

Lilac Skies is a journey I take willingly, and if you also voyage with me through this stunning new release you too will find a place of musical bliss and a sanctuary of heavenly tunes as well. The very first offering is the title track **Lilac Skies**, smooth jazz at its very best can be found right here, the charming techniques that **Shambhu** employs are masterful and majestic moments of crafted genius, the percussion here is also some vibrant, but respectfully chilled.

As a guitarist myself when I listen to albums like this I feel a sense of inspiration. On the piece called **Unspoken Words** we have a composition that actually speaks a thousand words with no need for speech at all, the guitar is the voice, one that creates such an imploring tone that you simply can't help but be moved by it, utterly delightful and deeply moving indeed.

Dochas, now the only thing I can recall is that this maybe the meaning for hope in *Gaelic*, if that's so the energy that this piece gives off, and the distinct Celtic vibe with the flute and ethereal background vocalisations, has captured the mood perfectly; this is one of those compositions that is instantly likeable and one that you want to hit the repeat button with multiple times over.

Apart from the title track this arrangement was one of my favourites, it's called **Blue Whispers**, the sensitive vibe here is beautifully partnered with an almost rocky blues style ethic which is truly exciting; there is deepness to this piece and the performance by the artist is utterly sublime and classy at every turn, the skill set used by **Shambhu** is breath taking here, and at times I could have sworn I was listening to the smooth slow hand of non-other than *Eric Clapton*.

Time to pause and take a breather as we listen to the piece that ushers in the half way marker of the album, this is a simply idyllic acoustic offering called **Pondering When**. This is one of those tracks that reminded me of *Black Sabbath's* acoustic composition on their 70's release *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* called *Fluff*; of course the two songs are nothing alike at all, other than to give us a few moments of ambient guitar to enable us to breathe and enjoy the reverie of the moment.

When we hit the first few bars of **Open Your Heart Sky** we realise that this is a track of sublime quality, the multi-instrumental nature of this offering is of the highest quality you could expect, and one must also applaud the use of the organ within the construction of the song, followed by some simply radiant keyboards and a real driving percussive beat, this is what you call real music.

There is a certain lightness of spirit on this next offering entitled **Dream Walk**, the essence of musical awareness here is divine, one that created for me a true feel good moment, the guitar employed a wonderful fluency that literally seemed to float all around me as I listened, the keyboards and added instrumentation seem to gather energy as the piece moved onwards and created on its conclusion one of the finest pieces off the release.

One of the most unusual pieces for me was **Basis of it All**, this offering gave us a greater understanding of the talents of the artist **Shambhu**, I have no doubt in my mind he could pretty much play any style offered to him, however on this piece we have a track that seems to build like a rock song and then morph into a stunningly vibrant pop composition and with a smoothness of transition, then back into a charming contemporary instrumental arrangement of sheer quality, what a very clever piece indeed.

The longest piece of the release is a track called **Inspired by the Night** and at well over seven and a half minutes long it is a delectable opportunity to

literally bathe in some utterly sublime tones of guitar based magic. The pertinent percussion here is also a treat to enjoy, as is the brass work as well. One could feel the energy of a warm night in September, the glow of the street lights in the city down below. **Shambhu** on this offering delivers a performance that the likes of *Robert Cray* would have been proud of; the piano here is also part of this classy vibe, one that manifests something so listenable, something so graphic and attractive.

I almost feel sad now, I have just realised that this is the last track off the album; it is called **Seeing You Again**. The energy of this piece and the performance on it is indeed like a musical farewell of sorts, but we will see you again. Smooth and tranquil, light and almost ambient at times, this simply has to be the best leaving piece you could ever wish to end an album with.

Lilac Skies is going to be one of those albums that will be played relentlessly by me all summer long, it is so very listenable and all inclusive. The performances on it are ones of the highest qualities, and **Shambhu's** guitar constantly rains down notes of triumphant bliss with a professional consistency right through the album. **Lilac Skies** will give to the listener one of the most sun kissed releases of the year, if any album could be described as cool then this one would be king.