

Memoirs

By

Michele McLaughlin

Written by

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Michele describes her latest release **Memoirs** as a collection of 12 solo piano pieces that she had released as singles over an 18 month period, each track has its own individual story and this is therefore the musical voyage we are to undertake right now.

We begin with the up-tempo and radiant offering **Thankful**, this one bounces along and its vibrant nature and ebullient energies literally flow all around us as we listen, this has to be the perfect track to begin the release with.

One of my early favourites is the delightfully pretty **Pure Joy**; here we have a track with a masterful melody and one that at times reminds me of *Elton John* in content and composition. The fluent nature of this track and the exciting intensity it created for me was a thrill to listen to; I do so adore the major minor combination.

Dark Moon is a horse of a different colour entirely, short form in structure, but never the less so beautifully graphic in its content and energy, this is also a deeply moving and emotional composition, one can really feel a state of deep reflection burning to be set free from this offering.

As we move forever onward we come across a piece called **Triumph**. This one has all the hall marks of an anthem and has that film score arrangement about its construction. This is a delightful opus to listen to and one also has to add that the performance here is simply sparkling with every note played.

On **Little Love** we are gifted one of the most attractive compositions from the release, McLaughlin plays with such a charming level of tenderness on this

track that you won't fail to be wooed by its beauty. This track has a smoothness of tempo that is so crafted and cleverly performed it is a pleasure to listen to.

As I move to the piece **My Life With You**, it's easy for me to glance to my left and watch my lovely wife just sitting there, her radiance fills my heart with such joy. For me this piece says all that and more, it's a musical expression of appreciation and the gratitude of being able to share a life with someone you love so deeply, one has to also add that McLaughlin has created it with such a gentle hand on the keys, this piece is literally bursting with love.

The next offering is incredibly interesting to jump into and called **Beneath The Surface**. This is played with an incredible awareness of creation and McLaughlin's skill set brings us something quite mystical, it is as if we are literally swimming in a crystal clear sea and discovering all manner of new and wondrous things, this is one of those pieces you could listen to many times over and hear something special each time you do so.

For any of us that have suffered that terrible feeling of being **Alone**, then this track will resonate somewhere within you, this is a deeply moving piece and brought back memories to me of those times when I was so low and down it was almost impossible to look up and see the sky. The performance on this composition is some of the best work I have ever heard the artist play; her performance is full of memory, sadness and aloneness, this is clearly played with her heart firmly on her sleeve.

Winter is a strange season, it is the face of death and its dour seasonal cloak of grey seems to shroud the landscape for an eternity, but there is always the hope of spring! Here McLaughlin paints with her piano a track that is quite moody and dark, one that illustrates this tough season perfectly. The arrangement and performance style once again borders on being film score standard, the creational talents of the pianist here is exceptional and masterfully creative.

I so wish I could one day see the **Northern Lights**. The Aurora Borealis is an enigma unto itself, starting and ending as a flicker of colourful lights, this show in the skies is beautifully played on one of the most dramatic pieces off the album. McLaughlin is in full flow here and brings us one her finest

performance's, one that made me think that perhaps this may indeed be a fan favourite one day, it would be an amazing piece to see played live.

Our penultimate offering is surely something the entire planet has to embrace, just drop the fear and hate and give yourself fully to **Peace**. Once more the artist has manifested a composition that is anthem like in its construction; it raises the energy, uplifts the soul, and musically gives us something we all need in our search, hope!

Our last musical gift from the artist is called **Dismissed**, for me I found this a fascinating offering and one that had a slight European feel to it. One could easily listen to this piece and imagine the streets of say Paris, and gaze at the lonely people, who wander from town to town in search of work and find nothing but rejection and of course that leads to despair. This is a dramatic performance from **Michele McLaughlin**, and one that highlights her outstanding talents as a pianist with aplomb.

Personally I rate **Memoirs** as McLaughlin's best work to date, *Life* was a delicious album, but I think that this even tops that. The release is packed with innovative musical compositions that illustrate what an abundant 18 month period it has indeed been for the pianist, she has now added, with a certain sensitivity of performance, an ability to enthrall the listener with many moods and that wonderfully multi-talented approach can be heard within the confines of this new album and it is simply magical. This is truly an album you are really going to want to add to your ever growing musical collections, whether you are fans of the solo piano genre or just lovers of really good music.