

Change Is in the Wind

By

Ann Sweeten

Written by

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There are times when into your life comes an album that reflects your own journey back at you, and it seems that this latest creation by **Ann Sweeten**, **Change Is in the Wind**, does just that, although some of the circumstances are slightly different, the songs remains the same, and here I stand the head of the table, but sadly all the seats around it are empty, so with a thoughtful mind I listen to this brand new offering from one of the most emotive and descriptive pianists of her age.

Change is one thing in life that is certain, it is like a sunrise that gleams across the horizon, or a freezing cold northerly wind that brings yet more alterations, and on **Arctic Dance** that is portrayed crisply with a calming hand on the musical tiller, and is a fine opening piece that also contains the blissful talents of both *Nancy Rumbel* on English Horn and *Eugene Friesen* on Cello.

There is a certain lightness of touch and tempo to this next composition entitled **What Blooms Beneath The Snow**. This is one of the finest examples of hope created by a pianist I have heard for quite some time, the performance here is so delightfully textured, but when you add the immortal violinist *Charlie Bisharat* into the equation, you have a piece that simply makes you smile from the heart outwards.

May 24, 42 Years Ago was written by Sweeten for her mother, as it was the day she died. There is an energy here is that is light and positive, one that can be completely enjoyed by the listener, also note this fine performance for its wonderful fluency, it is also a composition that contains a blissfully balanced

Cello, played by Friesen, one that brings a sun kissed radiance to the overall nature of the song.

There can be no doubt that **Ann Sweeten** is one of the most artistic performers of her day, and on tracks like **Turning The Page** that becomes very evident. I feel this is a very familiar point for me, I too have turned the page, but one cannot really understand this without being there and doing it, but the ambience gifted within this arrangement may take you some of the way to understanding it, ahead lays an untouched open path and the excitement of the future lays now in your own hands; Sweetens performance on piano here is so very empowering and insightful.

The half way marker of the album has been reached and it is called **What My Eyes Can't See**. Someone once said to me, during our time here, we are spiritual beings experiencing a physical life, it's a nice thought and the presentation here springs forth a mood of letting go and just being, the symbiotic dance between English Horn and Violin raise this energy even higher, until happiness abounds and flows like a soft spring river in March.

One Last October is a song written for Sweetens father, it is a narrative about their last meeting on this plain of existence. One must applaud the artist here, this is a track packed with emotive possibilities, but played with such a happy heart and a soul, that truly is joyful tribute for her times past, experienced and remembered.

We will always remember the day the earth stood still as the pandemic hit home, and that's exactly where we stayed locked down, literally and legally in our own homes until further notice. **Forever Sunday** has a repeating motif that perfectly illustrates that, it is also one of the rare solo piano pieces off the album, but one that has two parts to it, a level of frustration and wanting to get on, but another that actually is enjoying the slow pace of life, as we all had time to stop and smell the flowers and listen to the wind in the trees.

Emergence has such a wonderfully glorious sense to its construction; I remember this feeling well, akin to walking from a dark room and into the daylight of a thousand possibilities, the resonance hits you and transformation takes place. Here Sweeten produces a performance that is literally inspiring and completely bathed in a reality of truth.

It is time for that all important canvas to be uncovered and of course I am refereeing to the title track **Change Is in the Wind**. This is probably the most reflective song off the album, its melodies allow one to look over the shoulder at the past and recognise the lessons learned. The inclusion of Bisharat on this piece was sheer genius, it manifests a wonderful texture to the composition, and creates a track that literally says whatever happens, now is all you will have, and in fact Sweeten has penned the ultimate acceptance arrangement here.

Being in a reflective mood is useful, but only when one feels the awareness of a lesson thoroughly learned, on this the last track of the album called **Silver Lining**, perhaps Sweeten has written this track for us all, through her performance it could be that over the last year we have all had the opportunity to learn how to slow down and feel peace and the soil beneath our feet, perhaps that's the **Silver Lining**, what a great way to leave an album indeed, with another sublime performance by all.

I do believe that this release, and please, really no pun intended, but I believe this to be a game changer of an album, from the very thoughts and meditations of the creative mind of **Ann Sweeten**, comes her best work so far, and through that work we can all take note of our own journeys, and allow that change to take place.

Change Is in the Wind, is a ground breaking and heart-warming new release from a pianist who has gone with the flow of life's sometimes confusing tapestries, and thus produced something that is a timeless musical lesson of how to live life to the fullest, and smile while doing so, and is a very easy album to recommend.