

Kingdom Of Mountains

By

Mystic Journey

Written by

Steve Sheppard

My wife and station manager *Chrissie Sheppard* had been praising this album from the roof tops, so I was more than pleased to get a chance to review it and take a listen to something that she had already given a ringing endorsement to. Chrissie does indeed have excellent taste, and **Mystic Journey** is well named.

I began my journey one late July afternoon in the sweltering Cyprus heat. The day was roasting; the sort of heat that melts the endurance of the traveller and asks him to take shelter and rest for a while. I was fortunate enough to have this album by my side and that journey began its first few steps with the track **Subhadra**. The performance on this piece was a perfect remedy to the draining relentless heat; the flute from Teng so deep and so moving, her rich and colourful narrative was only given extra weight by the most delightful and creative percussion of **Gilbert Levy**.

Home is our next sojourn of music; this album is so delightfully chilled it will bring peace and tranquillity to all that listen to its beautiful refrains. This is so laid back and smooth and wonderfully arranged, Levy and Teng make the perfect partnership on a track that is as warm as the heart, and home is where the heart is, right?

We now arrive at our next musical stop and this is the grand central station of the title track, that ultimate moment when we learn about the entire project, that moment when we see the passion and intent of the musicians as they bring us their signature offering. After the first two splendid pieces, now we languish in the realm of **Kingdom Of Mountains**. We can be completely satisfied here with this film score styled offering, the sheer beauty of this track

and the simply stunning performance by Teng on flutes is off the scale, the added instrumentation within the construction of this composition is like creating a painting with a multi myriad palate of paints and with each stroke, perfection is created, a simply outstanding moment of musical mastery can be found here.

Midnight in Bamako is one of those pieces that you could easily just get lost in. The scene of night is perfectly set and we seem to both hover and float around this nocturnal location, partnered by some of the most laid back and peace driven music of our day. Listen to Teng on flute here, this has to be one of the most confident and sublime performances on flute I have heard for years.

On **Delicate Rainbow Flower** we arrive at a composition that is so carefully played, note the bass here in this piece, and while **Jon Ossman** delivers a perfect depth to the track **Suzanne Teng** reigns supreme with a lively performance so redolent to that of the UK's legendary flutist *Nigel Shaw*.

I found something very lifting about the track **Yunnan**. The tempo was upbeat and a real eastern flavour was created with a lush back drop of sound and colour, the guitars of *Dann Torres* danced beautifully with Teng's flutes, in a piece that really lifted the energies and raised the rhythms.

As we now move into the deeper waters of the release we come across something rather special called **Viento**. The lively skills of multi percussionist **Gilbert Levy** create such imagery and rhythm here. Teng's mastery also created a layered sense of an almost sensual motif within the composition that made this piece completely undeniable.

On **En Passant** we have a track that contains a defined sense of movement within its construction, the multi instrumentation and nature of this offering is sublime and manifests for us a journey within a journey. This is one of those; I must listen to many times over tracks, a composition that has a really addictive essence about its arrangement.

Our penultimate offering is entitled **I Dream of a Castle**. The Teng and Levy combination once more brings into our musical realm, a piece that contains a picturesque vibration about its construction, some simply amazing percussion, perfectly timed and weighted and a flute that seems to create a musical web of

an increasing emotional nature, that hovers all around our melodic and harmonious awareness.

So we have reached the final port of call for our voyage with the band **Mystic Journey**, it is called **Lebanese Girl**. Lebanon the location is not that far from my current location and within this piece we seem to be right back at the start, sheltering from the midday heat under a palm tree or preferably at the nearest taverna. A sultry offering, one that shimmers with the intensity of the day and hangs and drifts like sand in the desert. I must admit I have now listened to this piece three times in a row and I am completely captivated by its beauty, this is without doubt my favourite track off the release.

Kingdom Of Mountains by **Mystic Journey** is one of those albums you cannot afford to miss out on, the album has a stunning production quality, the performances from each and every artist are of utter quality and thus I have absolutely no problem totally recommending this release, it is easily one of the most magnificent and scenic albums I have heard for ages, an absolute must buy.