

Ardor

By

Matthew Mayer

Written by

Steve Sheppard

There is a certain whole heartedness about this brand new release from **Matthew Mayer** that is so appealing. The fluency is not only enticing, it is all encapsulating, and draws you in with a simply touch of the keys.

Ardor is an album that flows with passion, like the first offering entitled **Stars on 123**, a curious title indeed, but a composition that has a vastness about its arrangement that is akin to the galaxy itself, an ambient start that will lighten the load after a hard day in the real world.

The title track is next up and **Ardor** flows from the piano like a mountain stream in winter. The gentleness of performance here is what takes my attention, I would absolutely love to watch the artist perform this, his style is so mesmeric. The reflective nature of this piece is mood filled, but has certain avidity about its energy.

Source Of Blue has a depth and deepness about its essence that is so picturesque, yes it is reflective, but in a thoughtful way. This album would be perfect for those quiet moments I spend by the ocean, in a wistful and studious mood. The melody here seems familiar; perhaps it's the resonance that it creates for me today!

We move slowly now into a track called **Shoe Strings**, the slight use of pause here adds to the structure of the arrangement, then with a wave of the hand the tempo picks up and the track moves from reflection, into action. This upbeat composition rejuvenates us and readies us for the next port of call.

That sojourn now approaches, so it's time to spend a moment off the clock in the realm of a piece called **Disappear It May**. This is a tune of a different colour, as the artist draws a mysterious narrative that is so very addictive. This is one of those tracks that you will find yourself whistling late at night or during the day for no apparent reason.

Doc greets our arrival at the half way marker. This melodic short form arrangement has all the hall marks of a movie segment. The piece is so carefully performed it's a pleasure to listen to, and the light it brings with it, equally so.

Our footfalls are now on the return pathway towards the end of the album and our anthem to take us there is called **A Kindled Soul**. Here is a song that has a real spark; this is an inspired performance by the artist. One that is played with a real essence of rapidity, but with style and panache, this musical narration literally pours from his hands, and brings forth a truly empowering and stimulating arrangement.

One of my many favourites from this release is **Moonlight Walk**. I should do more of these and perhaps this very piece could be the soundtrack for my night time perambulations. A slow and delightfully eloquent composition can be found here, one that seems to ebb to and fro like the tide.

The memorable **When Flowers Grew Wild** is now upon us. Here is a piece that is bathed in a reminiscence that is so deeply felt, and perhaps a commemoration of when life seemed to be far easier and kinder than it appears today.

We now move forever onwards and come across a piece called **Escape**. The intensity here is truly evident and the pace created draws us a splendid narrative of running fast towards freedom and away from fear. **Matthew Mayer** has manifested something here that is cleverly dramatic and radiates with it an exciting gusto of musical energy.

We now arrive at the portal of the penultimate offering which is called **Dreams V1**. This once more has a sense of reflection about its construction and from the performance one could easily imagine waking from a dream into a sunlit Sunday morning.

We have arrived at the departure lounge of the project called **Ardor** by **Matthew Mayer**, but before we make our way back to our reality, the artist has one more piece to share with you, a musical gift if you like, to take with you along your way, it is the ever so fluent and inspirational, **We Met Once**. Gentle and considerate are two words I would use to label this final composition, a truly clever way to end what has been a magnificent musical journey.

Ardor has a real passion about it that is absolutely undeniable, but from that passion emanates complete truth, from that truth comes one of the finest performances of solo piano you're likely to hear for an age.

Matthew Mayer is a true master of his art and this, his eleventh album, will not only placate the legions of his eager fans, but grow that base experientially. The talents of Mayer go to create something here that is not only sincerely special, but could rightfully be called genius in motion.