

Gaia

By

Jon Richards

Written by

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I have now listened to this album several times on my travels and each time I do so, I keep finding more and more that intrigues me, the musical weave on this particular tale is a pastiche of beautifully created melodic colours, which create a tapestry of a tale in the way that a really classic progressive rock album does.

Richard's style and fondness for the aforementioned genre is well known, but there is even more here than that, let's now take a sojourn and drift into the world of **Gaia** by **Jon Richards**, and delve further, into what in my opinion is a superb collection of fine works from one of the most intelligent new age artists around today.

The opener is entitled **Gaia Part 1** and smoothly takes us, the ever eager listener, on a twenty minute plus opus of style and utter class, a track that contains some startling and effective percussion and a lyrical electric guitar, one that melts the backdrop of charismatic keyboards into a truly artistic and very cleverly woven composition.

Richards now contributes further with the arrangement **Gaia Part 2**, a completely different style and complexion can be found here. The nature of this delightful track reaches into the wondrous depths of the new age genre and adds a layer of pictorial splendour to the overall dynamic of the composition. **Gaia Part 2** is shorter in length at just over 6 minutes, but is a sublime moment of new age, world fusion, with a slight hint of *Enigma* thrown in for good measure. The flute resonates perfectly with the theme and adds a lush upbeat global feel to the whole arrangement.

Jon Richards is a musician of deep thought and class, and at times likes to raise the rhythms with some delicious crescendos; you can find some fine examples of that on this next piece called **Earth and Sky**. This composition is almost cinematic in style and brings a chill to the neck and a tear to the musical eye, with the grandeur and power that exudes from this deeply moving track.

We silently drift over the half way marker of the album with the piece entitled **Rhea**. Here in on the Island of *Cyprus* and in the lands of *Greece*, we know **Rhea** as one of the titans, her role was to insure the smooth running of all matters in the lands and kingdoms of *Cronus*. Here Richards times this up-tempo composition perfectly, and the silky performance within the track highlights perfectly the role of **Rhea** herself.

One of my personal favourites from this new release is this one, **Aether**. **Aether** once postulated by scientists to be the all flowing substance that permeates through the entire universe, so naturally this composition is ambient in nature and style; Richards has created something here that is worthy of great praise, the light but extremely pertinent synths and keyboards deliver us one of the best and most meditative ambient pieces I have heard for quite some time.

One of the most graphic and exquisite pieces from the release is **Tethys**, its natural flow and construction is like watching a musical stream of notes cascading with grace from an ever abundant spring of eternal youth. **Tethys** has a magnificent quality about its build and progression, Richard's performance here is amazing, and highlights his genius as both a composer of quality music and his talent as an artist who clearly plays from the heart.

Quite rightly we end our voyage with **Gaia Part 3**; the journey is completed with a long form composition of just over ten minutes, the keyboards of the master performer are impressive and he ends with a similar progressive nature as he opened the album in the first place. A stirring and passionate guitar breaks the piece wide open, while a purposeful percussive beat draws a narrative so strong and emotive. Richards emphasises the quality of performance, with a memorable, almost enlightened accomplishment on keyboards, one that illustrates just what a quality musician he really is.

Gaia by **Jon Richards** is one of those rare albums that crosses genres with ease and touches the heart and mind whilst doing so. **Gaia** is an album that is timeless and beautifully performed and is filled with compositions that will stir the soul and move the heart; you will not fail to be enthused by this album and maybe even inspired by its imploring tones and arrangements, **Gaia** is truly an album that has something for everyone.