

Melodies and Interludes Vol. 2

By

Kris Baines

Written by

Steve Sheppard

There is always time for a spot of solo piano at any time of the day, even better when the whole collection of tracks takes you on a poignant journey through thought, heart and mind, as does this latest release by **Kris Baines**.

Melodies and Interludes Vol. 2 is the follow up to volume 1 and gives us an opportunity to experience 17 more tracks from this extremely stylish and fluent composer and pianist.

Kris Baines opens the music door with **Me and My Piano**. This is a lively and happy composition which may well suggest the current reality of harmony for the artist and the symbiotic relationship between the two.

From the Rubble is an almost ambient composition that speaks volumes for those of us who have been down to the bottom and risen up to the top with lessons learned. In my view the performance here is the finest offering off the album and one of the best pieces of solo piano I have heard for quite a while.

The album is rather cleverly split up into interludes and this minimalistic offering entitled **Fireside Contemplation (Interlude)** is as ambient as they come, one that leads us perfectly into the next arrangement called **Waltz for Lilly**. This is a fun offering as only a Waltz can be, a moment of musical fun to hold dear in the memory with a loved one or friend; Baines plays in a wonderfully relaxed style on this smiling opus.

As we move forever onward we come across a track called **To Have and To Hold**. There is something very reflective about this offering, perhaps of an essence when one understands the complete meaning of how special someone

really is. One very passionate performance by Baines can be found here, but one that has a gentle energy about its nature as well.

The lighter side of the moment is felt through the piece **A Day with You**, a chance to share the glory of another 24 hours with someone who means a lot to you perhaps! The presentation of this offering is easy on the heart and mind and offers up flowing and confident enactment of happiness.

Time now for our second interlude, as we walk hand in hand with the piece **Through the Mist (Interlude)**, this is actually a really beautiful composition as Baines seems to have the ability to create a lush state of ambience at will.

This leads us onto the next offering entitled **The Depths of My Heart**. Here we have one of those pieces here that will truly move you, the minor nature of the composition is sensitive and heart rendering in its honest and open construction. Baines plays from the heart to the heart with this piece, perhaps showing us that at times we are even prepared to be hurt for the only thing in the universe that really means anything, love.

The gentle nature of this composition transfixed me, the melody is so familiar and mood filled. **The Watchmaker** works in his studio, alone with only the ticking of the clocks around him for company; this is one of the finest and most cinematic offerings from the album and one that I completely fell in love with on the first listen.

By Your Side is a song filled with the aforementioned love, it is played with a rhythmic passion and a lightness of spirit as well and perhaps is an affirmation that all is as it should be when I am **By Your Side**.

We now move to our third interlude as we open the door marked **Gentle Persuasion (Interlude)**. Here is a piece as calming and as peaceful as a spring shower on an April afternoon, and that takes us beautifully into the next composition called **Memories of the Ballroom**. There is something quite mystical about this piece whether it is meant to be or not, for some reason whilst listening to this, I could see in my imagination a dust filled dance floor, sunlight creaking in through the torn curtains, and two ghosts of the past dancing, perhaps for one last time on the ballroom floor. I wonder what it conjures up for you?

How many of us have gazed out upon the day as the rains fell, and with a sombre heart and sullen mind wished for something better, a little more sunlight in our lives perhaps, missing this total gift from the sky above. The performance here by Baines is soft and extremely ambient in all that it creates and I personally could listen to this soothing narrative for an age and more. **Raindrops on the Window** is both inventive and quite beautiful to listen to and blossoms into something wonderfully happy and almost empowering at the end.

We have now drifted into the deeper regions of this musical lake and as we do we come across a mournful offering called **Please Come Home**. The narrative here is really imploring and heart felt as if one is crying out to the universe for a second chance perhaps; the slow and moving energies of this track speak its own truth, a desire to perhaps be one again.

Our last interlude is upon us and is called **The Other Room (Interlude)**, without doubt a little mysterious moment here for us to enjoy, and once on the other side of the room one will find another doorway to the penultimate track off the album and called **Tribute**. There is a certain feeling of the past entwined within this offering and at the start really it took me to the classical and *Dvorak's New World Symphony* in particular. The composition is respectful and **Tribute** is a fine example of **Kris Baines** at his very best, as a wonderfully charming performance can be heard right here.

So, we now stand on the threshold of the last portal to this musical dimension, it is this last gift of great quality from the artist we are given to take with us on our way home, it is called **Final Words**. We leave with this musical souvenir, one that will close the door to this world in a style almost processional, but calming and peace filled in its conclusion.

Melodies and Interludes Vol. 2 by **Kris Baines** is a 17 track album that will enhance your solo piano collection threefold; the performances are packed with a sensitive and passionate nature and heart of the sleeve presentations. This album has been crafted with a desire to take you on a journey and the music and compositions are the lessons to be learned along the way, a cathartic and liberating collection of sublime solo piano pieces can be found here.