

Ancient Voices

Under Open Sky



Piano and flute make a great combination and the partnership between pianist **Dan Kennedy** and Native American flutist **David Rose** with their new album **Under Open Sky** is audible proof. The contemporary/ambient/ethnic recording is nine tracks of skillfully blended themes that offer quiet and comfort for the spirit. The music of this duo, now deemed **Ancient Voices**, is truly a story of east meets west culminating in a positive get-together. Easterner Dan Kennedy is a veteran of Whispering and Enlightened Piano Radio and performs vigorously all over the United States. David Rose is a Native American Music award winner and plays throughout the southwest. This isn't their first rodeo.

The album begins with the haunting ballad, **Autumn Lament**. Leaves turn gold and the wind turns cold as the music eddies through the air. David's flute voices a soft forewarning that the seasons are about to change. Dan's piano answers the call with a gentle melody of reassurance. It didn't take long for **Desert Snow** to become my favorite on Under Open Sky. Dan starts this one with piano notes that are cold and crystal clear. David's flute glides in like a white dove, unseen in the snow, but with a perceptible presence. They combine to make a sonic blanket that covers all in calm and quiet.

There is a certain time of year when the planet Venus appears in the clear night sky and she becomes a star. On the album, the tune **Venus** becomes the muse of David's solo flute. To some cultures it is known as the Morning Star and responsible for rain and growth in nature. Rose's beautiful track is rain for the soul.

The duo kick it up a musical notch on the quasi-jazzy tune **Fences**. This up tempo song is fresh, feel-good, and fun. It sounds improvisational, but with plenty of solid structure. Brubeck would be proud. On solo piano Kennedy offers up a complex, accomplished impression in the song **In The Days of Old**. Dan's nostalgic turn of phrase is filled with time. The time of seasons, and years and ages, all going by like a flash, but still with plenty of detail. It's one of the best on the album.

The piano and flute go hand in hand on the tune **Bloom Road Acoustic**, the last song on the recording. It is the gentlest of tunes, meandering, flowing, and content. The melody is memorable as it suggests warm afternoons, back porch rocking, and bees buzzing in the garden. You can feel the warmth exuding from the music.

I liked all the tracks on Under Open Sky and I think that Kennedy and Rose, aka Ancient Voices, accomplish what they set out to do, that is create some highly listenable contemporary music with purpose that is not only rich in its complexity, but abundant in its quality. Good debut album for this duo.

- R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews