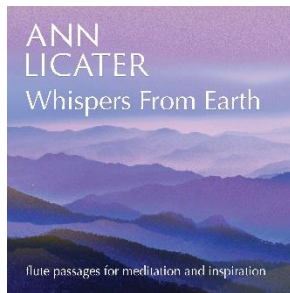


Ann Licater

Whispers from Earth

annlicater.com



It sounds to me like every song on **Ann Licater's** new album **Whispers from Earth** has a secret. These dozen peaceful supplications are quiet and soothing with deep rooted influences from a friendship with the earth that goes way back into Ann's history. Licater's original compositions are for the most part played solo on Native American and Native American-style flutes, but there are a few restrained additions from other guest players. The music itself sort of drifts around from New Age fare to World genres without missing a beat.

The title track is namely **Whispers from Earth**. With just a murmur of synth in the background Ann's melody comes upon you like a warmth from a fresh day. Here in the Blue Ridge endless folds of purple mountains in the distance exude the sounds that make up our small part of the planet. It is almost like a kind of warmth. Ann's tune rises with that up drafted tonality, heating, circling above, and dancing with the sun.

Some say the red cedar flute has the sweetest voice of all the courting instruments. **Red Cedar Calling** is the embodiment of joining with the earth in a kind of prayer. This is an emotional call in a deep, dark quiet night. Soft echoes waft in the air as notes are transmuted into words. The magic of the sound permeates the world in a spiritual connection. This is a love song to the earth.

Silver Soliloquy is a mellifluous magical tune that echoes in a vast space. Ann's composition is a river of music floating in the air coursing to a strange, but beautiful place. We are drawn to the music as it represents the world of quietude that we need. The piece is almost free form, weightless and ambient to the ear, but weighty on the spirit.

It is so easy to imagine a selenium crescent hanging above us like a smile, a gift from a benevolent spirit. When we hear Ann's tune **Forest Moon Rising** we feel a comfort as if we have a friend in the sky. It is no wonder as to why the stars are jealous on this night.

There is a sense of silky liquidness to the tune **Mirror Lake Reflection**. Why does the sky look so blue? The clouds so purely white? And the trees in the background. Why do they stand so tall? These answers are in the music. Without a single ripple, the reflections we see lead to dreams. The dreams to hopes. The music is the key.

Initiation (Awakening) is a new song that is "a nod back to" Ann's previous album *Following the Call* which I reviewed in 2007. This version, although shorter in length, is slightly different with perhaps a different instrument, but the reverential presentation is similar. It is an awakening not of one from a troubled sleep, but an awakening of the spirit. This is the moment, the

epiphany, when one first see the light. Ann's quintessential delivery is soulful with a great deal of spiritual fervor. This was the favorite on Whispers from Earth for me.

Joining Ann Licater on this album is Peter Phippen on Shakuhachi flute and Troy Arnett and Ivar Lunde, Jr. on synthesizers. Each song is like opening a different door to a different place. Each new view is filled with a multitude of sound, color, light, and lyrical abstractions. Although in most cases Ms. Licater uses a single instrument, the reverberations sound and feel as if they are from a thousand kindred souls. Listening to this venerated and sometimes joyous music whose themes are so close to our hearts and spirits, we cannot not help but be immersed in this grace of music. Highly listenable. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews