

Bodhiheart

Out of Doors: Meditations for Piano and Nature

bodhiheartmusic.com



I have to admit the album was sort of an anachronism for me. I learned about New Age music at a time when music combined with Nature sounds was at the apex of the genre. Now, four decades later, the circle comes around again. **Out of Doors: Meditations for Piano and Nature** by **Bodhiheart** is a dozen tracks of New Age/contemporary music mixed with environmental and industrial sounds and it is pleasure to listen to. The album is a collaboration between sound engineer **Matt Wyatt** and composer **Wells Hanley**. They share their love of poetry as a connection and join forces to create this pensive, meditative piano music. I promise you, you are going to lose track of time with this music.

The first tune, **Departure** is post-classical piece without pretense. Not odd that this should start the album. After all, we could be starting a journey and this is the stepping off point. The tune is sentimental, solo piano with maybe a clacking of train cars in the far background. Next stop? We'll have to wait and see.

Sometimes the winds can be unruly. Their force makes them come straight across the land. This is a derecho. **Derecho**, Hanley and Wyatt's tune has an incessant wind in the background. It shakes and rattles objects on the landscape, while the melody comes straight at you. There is really no violence in the storm, just a sense of endlessness.

Ocean waves combine with a focused melody on the song **Migration**. The endless march in our minds could be birds in the sky. It could be red crabs on the shore. Or it could be memories marching unendingly across your memory. Hanley's riff has a cadence, a *lento* of notes that steadily carries his theme. Surprisingly, the ocean waves seem to balance the tune as if the sound fits in everywhere the music does not.

Creek Song is an invitation to explore the world around you. Whether you are on a hike in Yosemite or in your own back yard, the combination of fluid motion and gentle music soothes the spirit. Pull up a rock and immerse yourself in the ambience of the sight, sound, and smell of water and earth and a piano tune that flows along with its own kind of influence. This one put me in mind of John Cage's composition *In a Landscape*.

The wind howled incessantly today. The rain whipped against the tall glass window panes painting pictures in transparent drops resulting in rivulets that could not deny gravity. As it did I listened to **Summer Storm**. It was the music coming alive, right down to the rolling thunder in the background. Hanley's slow, pensive melody was counterpoint to Wyatt's thunderstorm that raced across the landscape. Ironically, I wrote this on the day that a great storm came up from the south and rushed through Tennessee and Kentucky.

The final cut, **Other Worlds** is a bit dark. A touch somber. But the theme is strong, expansive. One wonders if you are looking at a leaf or a world in a drop of water on the leaf. Hanley's eerie refrain is mysterious with a hint that geography may not be an issue. Can we be in Spain? Or Egypt? Or on another planet? The waves of sound in the background give it an undercurrent of electronics making it conceivably ambient.

Wyatt's organic sound blandishments are unobtrusive. They are complementary to Hanley's seemingly improvisational efforts. The music itself seems to originate from many sources; avant garde to minimalism and everything in between, but that's what makes the album musically stimulating. Most of the time the music itself is a square peg in a round hole to categorize, but that is what I liked about the album. Highly listenable. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews