

CG Deuter

Song of the Last Tree



The very title of **CG Deuter's** album, **The Song of the Last Tree** fills me with trepidation. Beautiful, yet ominous, these seven tracks of ambient idylls fills the spirit with a kind of hope. For more than four decades the genius and compassion of this artist has filled a large space in the New Age genre. He had a heavy hand in Krautrock and other types of experimental music as well, but his New Age works seem to pique my interest more than any other. The music on this album is like a visually stunning movie, except this is a medium you can not only hear, but also experience. Each track is new environment, a new adventure. At this writing the Amazon Forest Region is now emitting more CO₂ than oxygen. The cycle is broken. And we don't have a lot of time to fix things. We have ignored the oracles, we have overlooked the scientists, and we have disregarded the cries of the people. Such is our fate.

The album opens with the song **Evening Gratitude**. What seems like Deuter's simple prayer evolves into gratitude to the Gods that give us moonlight and starlight. Warm breezes and cold winds. The aroma of jasmine and the smell of hickory smoke. Recorder, harp, and flute delight the senses.

The feeling of sorrow permeates the title tune, **Song of the Last Tree**. Sonic angel voice, dramatic synth washes, and somber strumming guitar make me feel as if I am watching the last leaf on the last tree fall in a death spiral. The haunting erhu heightens the scene like some ancient witness. This is a breathtaking piece inundated with emotion and pathos and it is my favorite on the recording.

Blue Horizon combines echoing flute and morose cello over sympathetic piano to bring us a bit of promise. Why the Gods chose blue for the color of the sky is beyond me, but nothing says hope like a Blue Horizon. Our eyes and hearts desperately search the skyline for a sign. There. What's that?

River Timeless provides a flow, a gentle coursing of water looking for its source. Forward, ever forward the music carries us along like a piece of driftwood. Each side of the bank gives us a new landscape, a new vision. Piano and simple synthesizer effects offer us a pastoral ambience.

For me, **Garden in the Clouds** is a modern day version of Claude Debussy's Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun. However, in Debussy's work the impression was somewhat playful. In Deuter's concept, there holds an ominous portent of that which is to come. Still the music has a flowing grace and a wistfulness of ascension. Are we in the crown of the tallest tree ever? Once past the leaves we can see and feel the sun. The sublime melody with a strong piano lead is uplifting with a hymn-like quality.

There are some oceans that contain no water, yet they call to us like any Earthly briny body. Mare Tranquillitatis is far away, yet its attraction is undeniable. Deuter's pensive tune **Sea of Tranquility** is a meditative, if not a brooding theme for us to traverse and explore. Electronic chorus, sound whispers, and a haunting melodica combine to take the listener on a voyage of dreams.

The final song, **Anna Luisa, In Memory of** is an homage to CG Deuter's mother. Clear, resounding piano in a mournful matrix allows the spirit a newfound freedom. This piece has unusual classical influences somewhat like an ambient requiem. The overall feeling is one of weightlessness, as if the gravitational bounds of the planet no longer hold sway. And what about the last tree? Can this mortal sacrifice signal the new growth of a seed, heretofore undiscovered?

The entire album is quite a story in itself. River Timeless and Garden in the Clouds are long cuts, at 11:13 and 12:09 respectively, but you'd never know it. Time seems to lose its power over your thoughts as you listen. Song of the Last Tree has an organic bent, a natural disposition that perks up the senses. All the tracks are dreamy fictions that double as gentle warnings. In more ways than one, it is time to listen. Highly recommended. Although CG Deuter has many albums with other labels, Song of the Last Tree is his own work and I support him in his independent endeavor. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews