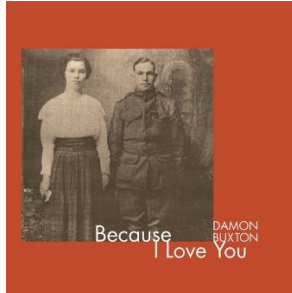


Damon Buxton

Because I Love You

DamonBuxton.com



My opening statement should be something like, “Today’s music will be completely experimental.” I say that as **Because I Love You**, the latest release from guitarist and composer **Damon Buxton** features different tunings, a bit more depth, and a plethora of unrelated themes that just seemed to mesh despite their obvious differences. Each of these twelve songs offers a story of family, a different timeline, or a completely different sentiment for this practiced and proficient guitar composer.

Some musical instruments have their own story to tell. A cherish family heirloom is the subject of the first tune **Olive’s Violin**. Although she did not play it much, her memory is the music written for this sweet, nostalgic song. Buxton’s tune changes from ballad to waltz and back again as his guitar recounts the love they have for grandmother Olive and her violin that made so many happy.

Taken from David Bowie’s Berlin years in the mid-seventies, the song **Heroes** which delved deeply into the aforementioned experimental phase, became one of his most notable songs. Damon’s tribute to Bowie finds itself standing by the Berlin Wall and daring to do the unthinkable, begin a new love when the present one still exists. Damon’s tender rendition takes all the hard edges off the original version and presents us with a poetic version that is sweeter to the ear and the heart.

Empress has some worldly nuances and an opening that is somewhat call and response, but the main melody has an energy and drive that is unmistakable. Damon musters strength from the other side of the world as his song creates a musical path to the past and a solid foothold in the present.

Smells Like Teen Spirit is exactly what I thought it was and it made me wonder about its position on this album, but in going with the theme, why not? Cobain, in his own way, changed and notably affected the direction of the music and for that Buxton offers his tribute. It sounded almost pizzicato at times, but using a deep, resounding bass garnish, the song made a better impression on me than the original.

There were times when you could plainly tell the bad guys from the good guys. The bad guys all wore black hats. Today it is a difficult task at best. Damon recalls that era, the seventies and eighties, when the music of Spaghetti Westerns turned Saturday afternoons into time traveling forays into yesteryear. Like those themes from Morricone and Leone, Damon’s ballad **Spaghetti Western** conjures up scenes from a dusty street at high noon and with the outcome uncertain. We still root for the hero.

Buxton extols the virtues of true love on the album's title song, **Because I Love You**. In the liner notes he suggests that true love is unconditional and not a balanced mathematical theorem and I couldn't agree more. The song is short, somewhat like an interlude, and I wished, after hearing it just one time, that there was more. But all that needs to be said, or in this case, voiced by a guitar phrase exuding ardor, is in these notes.

Near the end of the album Damon gifts us with a reprise of Olive's Violin. His reverberating tones and soft riffs conjures up imaginary smells of spruce wood and red shellac and the music that floated through the air and, as if by magic, turned instantly into memories.

The final tune is called **January Sunshine**. Think of it as a gift. Even Mother Nature herself must balance the cold, gray days of winter with a little sunshine every now and then. As in Damon's tune, one witnesses the bluest sky and brightest sun ever imagined right at the beginning of winter. Carpe diem.

Other songs include Abide the Winter, The Bookman's Nocturne, Silk, and Swords. I liked every song on Because I Love You. Damon Buxton, through his use of alternative tunings has opened a door for me where the music just doesn't sashay in, but pounds on the door and let itself into my imagination. What better gift can there be? This album is Excellent.

- R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews