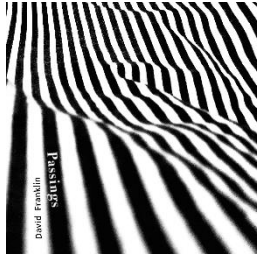


David Franklin

Passings



It's always fun when the neighbors come over and music is created. Such is the case when self-taught composer **David Franklin** has legendary bassist **Michael Manring** over to the house. Included is family member Owl Licks, or **Alex Franklin**, the well-known son. The musical results in this case happens to be a 15 track album called **Passings**. The overall theme of **Passings** is to allow the harried humans a chance to recuperate from all the turmoil to which they have been subjected and to garner a sense of well sought after peace. Trust me, there's a song for you on this album.

David Franklin has been playing daily for more than four decades. He believes that music is an important tool for healing and that music plays a key part in relaxation and recovery. **Passings** is his 10th album that follows up on his previous chart topping triumphs, *Songs of Potential Embrace* (2017) and *Dancing with Shadows* (2015). Exploiting Manring's expressive bass accompanied by Alex's energetic guitar, Franklin uses everything in his arsenal, including a touch of the avant garde, to get his messages across. We hear you loud and clear Mr. Franklin.

Passings is about what has happened in Franklin's life and the aftermath and no song is more on point and poignant than his opening number, **I'll Never Hear My Father's Stories Again**. It's about things that were conveyed by words and shaped into actions. Franklin's tune positively recognizes those fatherly deeds in a flowing, effortless instrumental. The music is serious, yet fervent with piano and bass easily balancing the guitar.

The voice of Franklin's piano and Manring's fluid bass combine flawlessly on the tune **We All Become Ancestors**. The title alone is food for thought as we consider that even though today is staring us right in the face, we will be somebody's ancestors someday. My thinking is then, how we act today is going to be part, if not all, of our history. Franklin's thought provoking tune is the anthem for the present and just maybe, we should all pay attention.

One of the lighter tunes on **Passings** is called **Carousel**. It's the one where Manring plays this bass guitars that bends sound around corners and Franklin steps up his lively pace until we are whirling around with him. The tempo slows considerably on the tune **Changes**. A falling cascade of introspective notes washes down over everything. It is an action virtually unseen, but the erosion reveals itself eventually. Manring takes center stage on the tune **Ghost Tree**. The song is an eerie vignette shrouded in mists and it is way past midnight everywhere. There are some bright harmonics that warm the tune a bit, but the spooky scene plays right up until the crack of dawn.

Franklin is big on the subject of perspectives as in two tunes called **Another Perspective** and **Perspectives**, respectively. Let's go with the second one. **Perspectives** is a fast paced, high energy tune with definite forward movement. I'm thinking that Franklin plays an electric semi-

hollow guitar (Maybe a Kiesel?) and the tone is superb in creating a very exciting sound. It's hard to keep up. Yes, the world moves just that fast.

Back, In a Different Place is a very light tune and becomes an intricate duet for Franklin and Manring, almost matching note for note. There is an ethereal background on this one that gently permeates the mood. The sound is soothing, like a familiar voice. **Dancing in Memory** is a solo piano tune with a lot of heavy notes, weighted by high emotion. This isn't a waltz, but a passionate contemporary choreography of reminisces. Caution, there is some pain here, a bit of dissonance, and the shadow of darkness at times. That smidgen of previously mentioned avant garde comes in on the very last tune called **A Musical Essay**. There is this clockwork sound, a child's xylophone, and a tune that starts out as a lullaby. Then it becomes strangely dissonant like a dropped toy. The tiny piano closes the tune like the end of a fairy tale.

David Franklin has a lot to say about his past and his adventures and misadventures. His complex, entertaining, musical stories are woven tightly into a cohesive body of work on Passings. We can learn by his experiences, we can find consolation, and we can start healing from our own life long wounds. Such is the power of music. Highly listenable.

- R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews