

David Gómez

A Letter from Mars

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One of the latest works from pianist and composer **David Gómez** is called **A Letter from Mars**, but he never really leaves the planet. Earth, I mean. Instead, he dazzles the listener with incredibly complex music that represents the journey. The album consists of ten wondrous contemporary/post classical tracks that misdirect the mind into thinking about distance, space, atmosphere, and emotion. And time. The lack of it and the endlessness of it. The music is lightly orchestrated with mainly piano, but the instrumentals all have a flowing and cinematic unified theme. Distance does make the heart grow fonder.

The title track, **A Letter from Mars**, is a waltz slowed down and it is intangible like the red Martian dust. Measured and low key, the music suggests a carefulness in all things. The music is slow, deliberate, but with an eerie subtext. Hidden in the notes is a sense of trepidation. You never thought it would be so empty. So quiet. So very lonely.

With gravity restored to his body, he walks the streets for hours just taking in the sights and sounds of the city. **A Martian in New York** is a work of observation. Gómez's track suggests colors and smells. Textures and weight. And people. You realize you miss the faces of people. People from everywhere, but Mars. **Gravity** is a variation on the main theme, with a bit more solemnness. Ironically, there is a drifting quality to the music as if we are carried away by the somewhat somber notes. There are tiny sounds in the background just below the threshold of hearing. Machinery sounds? Electronic sounds? What holds us here is the music itself.

Spacewoman is one of the more dramatic pieces on the album. It takes on the sound of a prayer sung in an infinite cathedral of stars. The voice of this prayer is some unearthly combination of strings that sings of the dark eyes that reflect a billion stars and of the smile that outshines the sun. This is a serious piece full of quiet reverence. One of the more beautiful works on A Letter from Mars is a tune called **Between Jupiter and Saturn**. It features a melancholic violin theme that talks about journeys not taken and dreams unfulfilled. Gómez's composition weeps with a sense of loss. The piano is a friend, holding your hand and trying to comfort you in any way possible. Now that the Pillars of Heaven have been restored, this world is ready for you.

Welcome to Nuwa is the greeting from our host to the first city on Mars. It is also the name of the final track on the recording, signifying that our journey is over and we are home. We praise the goddess Nuwa who repaired the sky and settle down to our future. Gómez's echoing piano reverberates off the landscape to remind us of the vast emptiness of our new home.

Additional tracks include On Any Planet but Here, Live in Another Life, The Door to the Stars, and Thousands of Pianos Floating on the Moon. Their very names make you want to hear what they have to say. David Gómez's album is a slice of life that few will ever know. Living on

another planet and what it does to the soul. It reminds me of Elton John's Rocketman, but with a great deal more of emotion and composed for the near future. Highly listenable.

-R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews