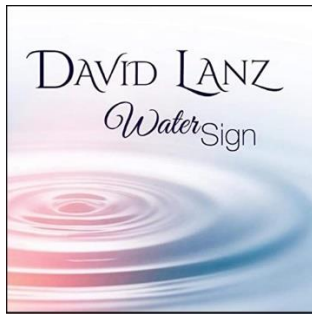


David Lanz

Water Sign



Many times the phrase, “Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose,” is used in a negative connotation, but not this time. I have listened to **David Lanz’** music for almost four decades. And yes, he has changed his style, his subject matter, even his geography, but his music has come full circle. His latest offering **Water Sign** is remarkably like his premiere works of the early eighties. The old is new again. His fourteen tracks of contemporary/New Age solo piano music is as welcome as an old friend. I’ve have mentioned it before, and with a certain degree of pride, that David Lanz was the very first New Age artist I ever heard and saw live. He was talented of course, but he was intelligent, funny, and gracious. Totally approachable. As is his music. (Not the funny part). Water Sign is thoughtful, warm, and hopeful.

I have no doubt that **My Aphrodite**, the first cut on the album is dedicated to Kristin Amarie, his muse, his partner, his wife. There is a great deal of romanticism on Water Sign as well as heartfelt touches of family and life. It seems to be cached in several of the stories. Water is life. Love is life. Add piano and mix. The results are quite appealing.

At some time in their relationship, all lovers cross a bridge, real or imaginary. It could be the bridge of doubt, the bridge that joins hands, or a bridge that, through their intense love, they build together to cross into forever. David’s serenade **Pointe dell’ Amante** is the anthem for the last one. The tune is lushly romantic created from piano notes of passion and promises. Let us dance again, Sweet Heart.

Little arpeggios burst forth in the tune **Wonder Wave**. The driving melody creates the impetus for a surge of sentiment. Half way through, the theme softens, flows, and washes over the listener. The intensity builds into a Mediterranean ballad of exhilarating emotion.

One of my favorites on Water Sign is a contemporary piece called **Rain Dancer**. It puts me in mind of Lanz’ collaborative works with Paul Speers and Tingstad and Rumbel during the early days of his career. It has a natural flow to it, simple and organic. David uses the higher register for the raindrops and the middle keys for the dancers. Combined they make for a vignette of forest dwellers reveling in rain.

One of the more dramatic pieces on the recording is called **The Water Bearer**. Aquarius, the original Water Bearer carried water that made you clear the mind of the past. Perhaps this bold theme is what is needed now as the world tries to revive itself from an inundation of woes. This is another Lanz leitmotif that suggests there is always hopefulness.

Sensitive and lyrical, the music of **Moonlight Lake** paints a gorgeous picture of a serene, gleaming moon casting silver shadows on the water. Each ripple of doubt, of fear, or of despair dissipates the image and then calm returns with hope and the image is once again made whole.

Neptune, Roman god of fresh water and the sea, has his day as David creates an upbeat song for **Neptune Dancing**. The tune is bright, sunny, and optimistic. You can imagine Neptune's dolphins frolic about as the sea swirls around you, a salty celebration for all.

There is an amusing waltz on the album called **My Little Moonbeams**. David has twin daughters that are like the sun and the moon and the invisible waves those little bodies make are surely more than heavenly. Dostoevsky once said that "*The soul is healed by being with children*". If this be so, then we are all blessed by this kid friendly melody.

It's a storybook ending. The last song is called **Lover's Waltz** and although it closes the album, it opens the door to a new world of emotion. This is a sweet melody, but it has an internal strength and a flowing grace within that suggests the slipper was found, the kiss worked, and happily ever after is slated first thing tomorrow.

Grammy-nominated composer David Lanz never fails to delight and entertain and his inborn sense of romance always seems to be tuned to high volume. *Water Sign*, although it uses the pretense of water as a component of life, really suggests that love is the quintessential element and it prevails throughout this remarkable album. Highly recommended.

- R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews