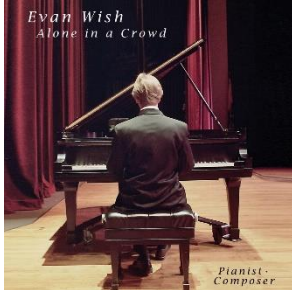


Even Wish

Alone in a Crowd



Evan Wish, a Canadian composer and pianist, is not what I would call prolific, but when he does offer up new material, I am always impressed. His latest work is called **Alone in A Crowd**. The concept is perfectly understandable, especially into today's social climate. These ten intimate improvisations are music in which to lose oneself for the moment. They have an overall classically influenced theme, but they soon develop into contemporary musings full of candid emotion.

The album begins with the song **The Hill**. From the very first cut, you can tell that there is a lot of dark elements meandering around in this recording. Loneliness will do that to you. Evan's piece is not one of a difficult ascension, but an insurmountable obstacle. For some it is just a hill. For others it appears like a mountain.

The title tune, **Alone in A Crowd** puts out a strange vibe. It has a midtempo cadence and it is like walking about aimlessly for hours. The concept is sometimes hard to grasp, but many experience it every day. How can you be surrounded by life, and yet the feeling of isolation is overwhelming? Musically, Evan leaves the door open for you to pursue. The notes of this brooding composition resounds with despair, sorrow, and hopelessness. This is a good cut with strong symbolism.

Falling Into You is an emotional statement with a complex phrasing. The reverberating melody is poignant at times, and the main theme is a gentle one. But there is a bit of confusion as questions need to be asked and answered as represented by Wish's double intonations

(For) Just a Penny is in the Old European style when Arte Deco was the trend and music went from classical to jazz in the blink of an eye. Wish's somber melody is fragile in some places, while in others, it turns pensive. Maybe a penny for your thoughts is the theme here.

There is something moody and poetic about the tune **Sometime Around Midnight**. It is a mix of slow paced, bluesy, dramatic music in a reflective, contemporary matrix. You can imagine the cool, late, darkness. A streetlamp on the corner. And, as the rains sets in, they meet and not for the last time.

Silhouette is a wondrous waltz and one of the album's more remarkable pieces. It has a delicate balance of a childlike sweetness and a nostalgic view of the world. One is the dancer, the other the shadow. They start out together, but sometimes, they don't move in the same manner, in the same direction. In the end, they are back together, moving under a pale light, almost like in a dream.

I Like Us, the final cut on *Alone in a Crowd*, is ambivalently sad and mildly hopeful at the same time. Wish uses a storybook sense of simplicity at the beginning of his run, but the refrain seems

serious and anxious. Still, there is that idea of nostalgia once again with the music sounding like it was performed on an old upright player piano.

It is true. You can be surrounded by people and still feel alone. No one ever knows what you have been through and certainly, no one knows what you are thinking. For many being social is actually painful. Evan Wish fights the loneliness with well composed music that suggests you take a step outside. Outside of your dwelling as well as your shell. You can use his music to break your own path and begin anew. Very good. - R J Lannan. Artisan Music Reviews