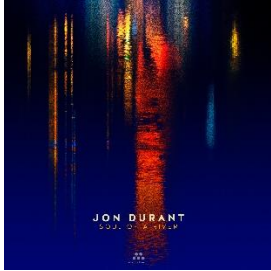


Jon Durant

Soul of a River



Composer **Jon Durant** offers up his latest release **Soul of a River** and his music does everything water does, only musically. It flows, it covers, it envelops, and it nurtures. Durant is known for his singular brand of guitar work that never seems to sound like the guitar. On *Soul of a River*, a number of instruments and techniques blend seamlessly to create six tracks of atmospheric delight. Each track is a unique experience. He puts me in mind of another ambient artist, Jeff Pearce, but Durant's music comes from a different foundation.

Track 1, **Tributaries** opens from a quiet silence and advances unhurried, but steady. Durant's melody permeates the mind like rainwater that accumulates and then flows on the path of least resistance. Its pleasant-sounding rivulets form hands that comfort and nurture.

The uncommon mixture of briny and fresh water combine at an **Estuary**. These special places are important meeting places for many life forms, the two and four legged kind as well as the two winged kind. Think of them as transition zones and think of Jon's music as such.

Transitions. Changes. Metamorphoses. Thoughts and feelings come from different parts of the mind and mix, co-join, and blend into experiences. Jon's intermittent piano and sparkling notes produce flowing colors and textures that intermingle and then unite.

Speaking of sparkling, the next tune **Glistening** segues into the flow and conjures up cobalt blue and emerald green shimmering gems of sound. Think of iridescent stars on a cold winter's night. Or the indigo sky reflecting off the lake at twilight. Every ripple a liquid diamond. And every diamond a pleasurable thought.

Slow and serpentine, the tune **Watercourse** wanders about, but never aimlessly. As with most waters, it creates its own track and that track leads to the sea. In this case, Durant's soft, gentle melody delineates so many choices in our lives. There is more to life than right, left, and straight ahead. The paths can be curving or oblique. They are ours to choose. Durant's guitar deft skills play a part in this one, adding a dimension of polished fluidity

The strength of water is the **Current**. On this piece there is defined motion that gets stronger as the music plays on. It is not forceful, but allows the mind to follow as the theme floats along. Where will it end? You will have to allow the music to take where it will and have faith that the destination is optimistic. For me it is.

The final tune on *Soul of a River* is called **Flow**. It is a distinctive piano piece blended with a synth chaser. Flow is movement; forward, free, and continuous. Jon's quaver throughout the song is sort of a guide, a soulful siren that calls to you. In this music there are no rocky shoals to disturb your journey. Only a positive flow.

Although the overall theme of Jon Durant's music is water based, no songs sounds like another. Yet they flow into each other as if musically, the rain started and it developed into a tiny stream, then a brook, then a river. The music gains strength and reminds us to keep in mind the power of water. After all, from a little stream came the Grand Canyon. Highly listenable. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews.