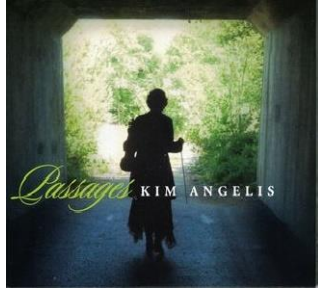


Kim Angelis

Passages



After I heard all nine tracks on **Passages**, the latest from violinist **Kim Angelis**, it is no surprise to think that it is a special musical journey for her and for the listener. This is a chronicle wrapped up in old, faded paper maps and tied with a bow string of faith. Let me just say that Kim Angelis has traveled long, hard, and far to bring her to a place where she can finally rest and reflect. The album is the result of pain, suffering, and a reaffirmation of faith proving once again that music is a living entity that starts in the heart and travels to the soul by way of experience. *Passages* is a pseudo-contemporary mix of ethnic tunes that incorporate folk, Celtic, Spanish, and other genres with all of them having an earthy, listenable texture. Appalachian? Yes, it's in there. Kim is joined on the recording by nine additional talents on guitar, piano, flute and mostly acoustic instruments that give the album an organic feel.

When I heard the first cut, **Lavender Farm**, I am reminded of sun drenched fields in Aix-en-Provence or somewhere along the Mediterranean. Apparently, through Kim's bright, lyrical tune you can replicate that same sensation in the state of Washington. The heady melody is as relaxing and pleasant as the herb for which it is named. A great opening for the album and I could tell that this music is going to be fun.

A little kalimba (Elliot Bergman), bass (Jimmy Johnson), and flute (Brandon Fields) adds to the merriment of the song **Sweet Botswana**. After the warm receptive intro, the song turns into a charming, old English/Scottish traditional ballad and it is if anything, a friendly tune. One has to guess how the English Colonial influences float about the African continent, but music always seems to have a part of history at its core. This is a lazy, laid back tune that is perfect for reminiscing.

The Promise, my favorite and the best tune on the recording, is an edgy, complex tune full of chaotic energies. It is over nine minutes long and it is a vignette of wonders, perhaps adding to the science of time travel. Old world Gypsy style mixed with Russian folk is just in the beginning of the song. Next Mitch Foreman's piano takes the lead and the tunes warms a bit. Then Kim comes along full force with her passionate violin and electrifies the tune. Softer guitar riffs by JP Mourao lighten the theme for a time, but the violin remains triumphant. This tune commands attention.

One of the more sorrowful story tunes on *Passages* with just a touch of pizzicato is one called **Longing**. Dulcet harp by Carol Robbins and Kim's mournful violin blend together in a measured tune that speaks of unrequited love, a forgotten lace handkerchief and the scent of lavender. Waiting for her across the bridge is like her being on the other side of the ocean. Quelle dommage.

Tango de Paco exudes the flavors of Argentina with Kim's swaying, swirly melody. The voice of the violin, which struts to center stage, decries of the pain and sorrow of life, but alas, we must go on. This is a tune with a lot of musical stamina. Care to dance?

The final cut is called **Sequoias (Resurrected)**. The tender ballad is a optimistic tune full of primordial growth that changes into a prayer of hope for the future. Kim's violin is that voice in the wilderness that calls upon all Gods to save us, to succor us, to comfort us in our hour of need. This is another favorite for me.

There is more than one thread of Gypsy violin on several cuts and it is that particular piquant spice that flavors the music perfectly. There are some Celtic or Galician elements that make an appearance as well. Over all, I like the album. Kim Angelis plays skillfully and her compositions are straightforward and inventive. Recommended.

-R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews