

Lawrence Furr

Deep Peace



When Hermes stole cattle from the god Apollo, the only way Hermes could assuage his wrath was by playing the lyre, or what we now call the harp. It may be from this myth that angels are often depicted playing the harp in the sky and also why we associate the innate peace we take from hearing a harp. This is my first encounter with the music of harpist and composer Lawrence Furr and I am quite pleased to hear it. His debut album, **Deep Peace** is more than a dozen tracks of harp driven solace. Unexpectedly, there are several pieces on the album that are Native American flute, but for the most part it is peaceful harp music. Some with World overtones, some Celtic. All very listenable.

Dr. Laurence Furr is a Certified Clinical Musician and Certified Therapeutic Harp Practitioner, who grew up with keyboards. He leaped from Church organist to harpist to create healing music. Furr admitted in a recent interview that his music is often written on the spot and influenced by his work setting and by his connection with people. A lot of his music is played in hospital environments and is improvisational.

A resonating bass note begins the first tune, **Quiet Earth**. To me the music represents the time between twilight and dawn where the planet rests and readies for the next day. It is a hush of peacefulness that renews the weary, gives needed rest the laborers, and revitalizes the soul for another day. Furr's opening tune drifts slowly, softly, and most of all, calmly.

**Red Wind of the East** builds on the very familiar Greensleeves theme with a delicate tangential treatment by Furr. You know every note, but in this tune, you must patiently wait for its introduction. It is in those unhurried moments that we find the peace we are looking for. We catch our collective breaths. We can meditate, we can ponder. And, we can renew.

**Gold of the Sun** produces its own heat with a warm, refined melody. The theme is a polyphonic instrumental that captures light and reflects it over the morning's horizon. Mixed with the mauve and copper of dawn, it becomes glowing gems for the eye and the soul.

**Green of Grass** has a slight touch of a Galician motif. Sunny, blue skied, and an open field all come to mind when you hear the song. There is a cheeriness to the harp as if to say, "This is going to be a wonderful day. Come join in."

The breath of life creates an enchanting song called **Flowing Air**. It is a bright, ebullient Native American flute tune that echoes everywhere. Furr's work here is happy and joyful. It sets a pace for a day of exploring the world and giving praise to all the elements. Earth, Sky, Water. Life.

The tempo slows down appreciably for the mysterious tune **Sleeping Stones**. You walk across a mossy path and come out of the trees and you see them. Standing stones that were witness to events that were never written on paper, but became part of the stones narrative thousands of

years ago. Lawrence's awe inspiring tune allows us to contemplate those unwritten chronicles whether they be fiction or fact.

Every so often, outside my window, a leaf on the English olive bush catches the raindrops and tips forward releasing its liquid treasure. It is the perfect time for Lawrence's tune, **Quiet Rain**. The music starts with sporadic notes, the beginning of a rain storm and the music eventually gains volume and expands. But ever so gently. Like every drop of rain that falls, every note is a microcosm of delicate beauty. It washes the spirit until it is clean again.

Deep Peace is of course, more than just harp music. Did you ever hear a rainbow? Not only do many of the track titles describe colors, the tonality of the music does so as well. It is music through the crystal prism of the composer's mind. Colorful, vivid, transporting, and with lots of light. I highly enjoyed all fifteen tracks on Deep Peace. It certainly lives up to its name.

-R J Lannan, Artisan Music reviews