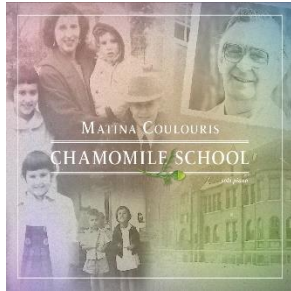


Matina Coulouris

Chamomile School

matinacoulouris.com



Chamomile School by pianist **Matina Coulouris** is a scrapbook full of musical memories. You are going to meet her family and her friends and relive her experiences through her contemporary piano tunes that have just a touch of jazz undertones, and rightly so as her history involves jazz on many levels. From ground breaking radio programs in Boston to prestigious music schools on the west coast, Matina has maintained her love for jazz. On **Chamomile School**, the jazz influences are quite subtle, but they are there for us to enjoy. Let's go open that scrapbook.

Coulouris opens the ten track album with the cryptic tune **August 30**. The intro is delicate and tentative. The gentle melody swells a bit, and it becomes a march of sorts. The cadence is pronounced until the theme changes viewpoint into a lament. The music conveys a somber event.

Water and music have a lot in common; they both travel in waves. Matina handily proves the theory on the tune **Seiche**. A seiche is a wave on a stationary body of water. Science be damned, the event occurs when unseen forces compel changes on the water. Or the life or the spirit. The music ripples quietly, rising to touch all that is around it. An invisible influence.

One of the more noteworthy tracks is called **I Wish You Were Here**. There is a warm familiarity to the tune. Maybe a little déjà vu. I may not have heard it before, but I have felt it before. The longing, the hopefulness of an unexpected return. Matina's doleful rendition, with quiet sweeps of poignant notes is full of a sense of regret. It is a beautiful, wistful tune and my favorite on **Chamomile School**.

An old friend, an aunt, a mother perhaps? We can only guess who Matina is performing for on the tune **Song For Joyce**. The tune is soft and sweet and just a little sad. As a listener, you can stare away at the horizon and the music will conjure up someone you know. Someone who affected your life long ago.

The title tune **Chamomile School** is a timeless waltz. Each movement, each sway is a memory. You may lose the count in your head, but your mind and body remembers and you dance in the middle of the living room. Recalling the stairs, the bricks, the rooms like a labyrinth. The dusty walls. Was this a reality or some young girl's tea time in the parlor? The music has the answer.

Little Girl Flying isn't someone with a wafting cape and glassy goggles. Matina's slow, emotional aire is about the warm hands that hold you aloft and make your dreams come true. Even though we stumble from time to time, the music suggests with assuring smiles and kind words the validation of your life.

The Lucky One, the final tune on the album could be a musical self-portrait, but we do not know for sure. Whether she was the pursuer or the prize, this pondering piano tune results in a dreamy, late night ballad. It has a modern contemporary feel, but it could slide into the sixties easily, and it is one for the after-hours crowd.

Additional tracks include **At the End of the Day - Lake Superior, Raspberries, and Anna Marie**. Matina Coulouris puts a pensive ambience to this solo piano retrospective. Every track is reflective in a contemporary sense with those subtle jazz underpinnings couched in melancholy. It is a day dream sound track of memories, for memories. This is an album you put on Tuesday night and play it while your mood changes. It might still be playing on Saturday. It is not just for a background however. You will be humming all the themes in no time, adding color and texture to your pleasure. Highly listenable.

- R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews