

Nicholas Gunn  
Pacific Blue



While noted for creating music in the dry, desert regions of the southwest, flutist **Nicholas Gunn** crosses onto the watery vastness of the Pacific Ocean on his newest album **Pacific Blue**. The contemporary/electronic 10 track album has vocals featuring well known trance singer **Alina Renae**. Her sultry voice is angst driven, imparting the recordings with an aqueous, organic sense. Gunn, who is noted as a perfectionist on wind instruments and the like creates clear, fluid movement and a contemplative atmosphere on his multi-instrumental compositions. Gunn's extensive career began in the early 90s with a World/Instrumental Music album called *Afternoon in Sedona* which put his music into the hands of a thirsty general public. Since then he has put his name on dozens of musical works covering many genres including New Age, Trance, Instrumental and others. Gunn is noted for his National Parks series of albums that contain *The Music of the Grand Canyon* and *Music Through the Great Smoky Mountains* et. al. *Pacific Blue* is his 20<sup>th</sup> studio release.

Two pure resounding notes begins the first track, **Into the Vastness** and, in the mind's eye, the world's oceans are before you. Cool, blue, briny and endless, Gunn's music suggests the true immensity of the water on our planet. Largely unexplored water covers 70% of our world and contains the majority of life. How can we ignore this source? This liquid cradle of life? This is a monumental piece of music.

One of my immediate favorites on the recording is one called **And I**. Alina's delivery on the track is hauntingly beautiful while Gunn's piano score remains buoyant and uplifting with an inner energy. Renae's voice reminds me a little of albums by *Fallen You* or *Lisbeth Scott*. A high compliment. The song suggests that love in all of its manifestations deserves a second chance, including the chance to love yourself again.

*"And I  
Have fallen from my grace  
I missed the most important time of life  
And I  
Just wanted to explain  
A fallen soul can rise again with pride"*

You can imagine the spray of the salty sea, the crash of the waves on the hull, and the thrust of an unseen force. Washes of synth, echoing horns, and a staccato beat transforms **Sailing** into a Trance tune with the music pushing you along. The power in this tune reminds me that no matter how your vessel is constructed; papyrus, bamboo, white oak, or love, Gunn's upbeat score makes it seem as if the very breath of God is at your back. **Adrift** is a calming tune that has a mild tempo. Mellow guitar ripples through the melody freeing your thoughts to seek their own adventure.

The title tune **Pacific Blue** starts with gentle ocean waves and it builds in intensity like a storm in a lonely sea. Gunn's intricate guitar blends seamlessly with Renae's vocal in an impassioned plea to take your life seriously and nurture your spirit. Just as the ocean is immense, so is our own potential. Pacific Blue is another favorite of the album.

The final tune, **Out from the Deep** beckons to you like the otherworldly call of a siren of old. Renae's dulcet vocalization is as sweet as it is mesmerizing. Gunn's music is euphoric as you gain the energy to rise out of an ocean of bliss. As in all the tracks, there is a unseen power to the music that is sculpted in fluid qualities, waves, ripples, currents, and in this case wholly navigable with our spirits.

Pacific Blue plays out like a natural, modern day metamorphosis from an accomplished acoustic past to a bright electronic future for Mr. Gunn. Although the music is primarily electronically produced, it has many dimensions. Some are audaciously obvious, while others subliminal in nature. This is music for contemplation, for daydreaming, for travel of the spirit. It is music that we now consider Deep Listening. Highly recommended. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews