

Wishful Thinking

By

Samer Fanek

Written by

Steve Sheppard

This is one of the most impressive debut artists I have heard for quite some time and when I tell you that this young man, of Polish and Jordanian persuasion was only born in 1986 and is self-taught, this will make the journey your about to take musically, even more amazing.

Let's look at this incredibly remarkable album called **Wishful Thinking** and start with a smooth and symphonic opener that is indeed the title track. The opening refrain is gentle and the floating melody and crescendos just add an almost cinematic quality to the piece.

There are so many similarities I can draw here and when we listen to the following piece called **Universe** we can really feel that grand soundscape come that much closer and see those inspirations dance majestically before us. The bass here is superb and works brilliantly with the percussion. This is a really driven composition, which has a real vastness about it and illustrates perfectly the unlimited space of the universe, with an almost rock styled arrangement.

Freefall at just less than five minutes is our longest track off the album and almost suits following on from the previous track, there is a level of ambience here in the beginning that is indeed appealing, the performance then picks up as if the freefall to earth accelerates.

There was a certain delicacy about the piece **Fairytale** that reminded me of the good old days of new age piano, with artists like **Stuart Jones** and to a certain point, **Mike Rowland**, but the essence of this composition has all the elements

of something grander and more striking and as the arrangement continues, this song becomes imperious in its posture.

Lost Waltz is just that, an ode to a lost dance perhaps? Fanek has a way of creating a sincere, but grandiose mood with his compositions and like this piece, can almost draw you back in times to the Baroque era perhaps, with this swaying dancing song that is not only filled with a charming narrative, but musical colour as well.

Well dear reader and listener, are you **Ready to Go?** This is one lively track and it has a wonderful fast paced symphonic structure to its composition. The melody is interesting here and if you can imagine Pachelbel's cannon, mixed with a touch of **Yanni**, then you would be perhaps close.

The more moody side of **Samer Fanek** is now upon us with a really delightful piece called **Left Behind**. The narrative strongly pulls you to the tearful eyes of a loved one, now lost and lonely, but the style of performance is once again extremely cinematic, with perhaps a little flourish of *David Lanz* in there too?

Fantasy was on the button, creating from the off a narrative of wonderment and imagination right on our own doorstep. The climatic build and progression here is amazing, the piano performance almost classic in its finer touches and manifested with its empowering arrangement, one deeply moving piece of music.

The opening of **Desperation** had a really chilling empty street on a rainy night in November feel to it; one could imagine this being played as you walked in a sullen mood down an alley way, lit only by the yellow neon lights that cloak the rain soaked pavements. So lots of imagery there for you, but make up your own mind, when you take a listen.

The powerful **Escape** works well with the preceding track, perhaps our reluctant hero has found a rabbit hole to escape into? The energy here is enticing; the performance here is also like the glory days of *Elton John* and for the second time in a week, for two separate artists I can hear *Funeral for a Friend/ Love Lies Bleeding* in this piece. It has the pace, intention, power and stamina, and in a similar style too.

We find ourselves at the deeper end of this album dear reader and we come across a track called, **Remember Me**. These two words can be a life line or a heart breaker. Fanek creates a really gentle and respectful piece here that serves its intention really well.

We find ourselves at the last but one doorway to the end of the release and come across a smart and clever piece called **Exhibition**. This flows with such confidence and has a really vibrant energy about it, there was also a very slight hint of a Jazz motif hidden carefully in the package, listen to this one over and again dear reader, this is one very artistic composition that is superbly performed.

So we're here, the last track off the album and before we depart this realm of **Samer Fanek**, the artist would like to gift us a tune for us to go on our way with and it's called **Finding Closure**. This is a truly symphonic way to end our journey and a more fluent piano performance you wouldn't find anywhere else.

Wishful Thinking by **Samer Fanek** is an outstanding release for a debut artist, I still cannot believe I am saying that, but if this is the beginning of his career as a recording artist, I can't wait to hear what the next decade may bring for him. He has an immense talent and a very profound level of performance skill, the compositions are all very emotive and powerful and the crescendos come thick and fast, this would certainly be an album I would recommend to anyone who loves piano with instrumentation, played with an abundance of flair and a great deal of style.