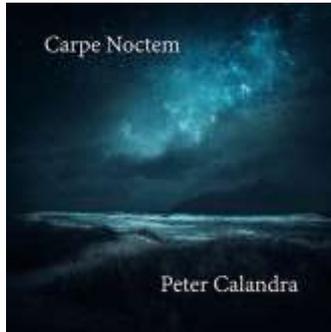


Peter Calandra
Carpe Noctem

The Breathless Prayers



You might not be familiar with **Peter Calandra's** name, but it is a good bet that you've heard his music at some time or another. Calandra is a prolific film score and TV theme composer and a much sought after accompanying pianist by a countless numbers of well-known performers, and he has been, if you'll pardon the pun, instrumental, on the Broadway music circuit. His musical repertoire is quite diverse, encompassing, but not limited to, genres such as jazz, world, contemporary, and pop, and on the other side of the spectrum New Age and neo-classical. But believe me, he is not a one size fits all musician. He is a thinking man's composer and a master of nuance. His music, as exemplified on his latest release **Carpe Noctem**, captures deep emotion and poignant connections to worlds that exist in the heart and soul. Carpe Noctem is symphonic sacred music that is meditative and introspective. The compositions are complex, the scoring bold at times, and the message simple.

The first tune is called **Agnus Dei** or Lamb of God. It is a humble prayer asking for compassion from our God. "*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.*" The seraphic chorus is softly reverent and the music exudes driven passion.

The title tune **Carpe Noctem** or Seize the Night uses a sublime violin lead. It has a melodic tempo and to me, it is the sound of supernatural breathing. Soft, gentle, and resplendent. Angelic vocals lift your spirit into a sense of Divine quietude. Peter's music is a thousand starry nights, a trip around the planets, and a private audience to listen to the Music of the Spheres.

Heartrendingly sad, the tune **Crusifixus** gives me a sense of awe and sorrow, but not entirely in a bad way. Some believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of man and with His sacrifice, we are redeemed. It is the redeemed part I consider when I hear Calandra's remarkable score. A single horn, a herald so to speak, announces to the world that the end has come. But it is the beginning.

Illuminare takes a softer course than most of the tunes on the album and I liked it for that. There is a reticent beauty to the synthesis of orchestra and violin. The music is quite complex with a piano interlude surrounded by a mellifluous cinematic theme. It could be the sound track for the dawn's pastel light or twilight's glistening star performance. This was my favorite on the album.

Invictus Bellator is a powerful piece invoking the wrath of gods and defying known mythology. Although the intro is calm and ethereal, it mutates into a kind of march of heroes. It has triumphant voices and strong piano blandishments that continuously build the theme. The resonant piano plays a strong lead in the refrain and it conducts the glorious melody into a successful conclusion.

The last tune on Carpe Noctem is called **Spiritus Mundi**. World Spirit. This is enthralling music that could not be more uplifting. I could almost imagine my spirit flying. Strong, organ like passages, flute and voice polyphonies, and fluid orchestration turn this tune into an experience for the soul. I could not help being emotionally and spiritually effected by this wondrous composition. By far the best of the best. It is joyful.

The inspiration for this magnificent collection is Ecclesiastical Latin, the rites and traditions of the early Catholic Church. For more than ten years I held a missal in my hands and followed these rites, often participating in them. The strength of faith is inspiring on many levels. As an adult, I learned that the quiet, beautiful, power of God is not limited to just my acknowledged faith, but to that of many, many others. The album reminds me of music by Bill Douglas and of late, Rachael Currea's Reformation 500 album. Calandra's work confirms to me that his music is a form of beautiful truth. Highly recommended.