

Steve Rivera
Beyond Measures & Time
Independent Release

“If music be the food of love, play on.” W. Shakespeare



Following up on his wonderful album, *Dividing the Darkness*, pianist **Steve Rivera** offers his latest work called **Beyond Measures & Time**. This one features a little more depth, a little more complexity as he turns his hand at romanticism, and he does it with aplomb and melodic grace. Despite the leaps in scientific knowledge of the past century, there are still things you cannot calculate, like love, emotion, and pain.

Rivera with a gentle persuasion, gives the listener eleven tracks of contemporary solo piano that touches the heart on many levels. There are cuts on the album that are slightly nostalgic, but always in vogue for their musicality. A good example is called **Unlocking the Moments** in which Rivera uses a pendulous rhythm, something akin to playing the upright piano in the parlor, with friends around, making new memories with every note that fills the room.

There is a drifting quality to the track **Suspended Dream** that just lingers in the mind, freeing up the worries, calming the mood, and allowing the heart to take a lighter path. It is the kind of song we need in our lives that takes us away from the everyday. It is the warm fire, the sweet red wine, and the what if? that you hear about, only this time it's inside the music.

One of my favorites on the album was called **Falling Closer**, and don't fool yourself, it's a love song. The opening to the tune is deliberately tentative, as if a little bit of doubt is in the works. But it gains confidence, a faith conceived in a newly formed bond, and then reassurance takes over. In the end, love conquers all. **Waves and Particles** has a deceptive title. As if we are to believe in a scientific explanation for anything that is so melodically pleasing. If anything, Steve's song has the perpetual fluidity of the ocean and the spicks and specks of memories of days gone by. There is an innate warmth to the tune. This is memory making that returns to us in strange and delightful ways. **Dark Tides** is more somber than the other tracks on the album, but balance must be maintained at all times. Another water reference reminds us that without warning, things we thought we let go sometimes come back to us. Like waves rushing to shore, Steve's music has a strong, repetitive motif that reinforces his quiet, beautiful main theme.

Fragmented Dreams has a classical ambiance to it with a cadence that is tender and mesmerizing. It reminded me of the unforgettable, poignant ballad, *Lara's Theme* by Maurice Jarre. Steve's music is a reverie of holding hands, soft caresses, and promises made by love so strong, it has a life of its own. Finally Rivera saves the best for last, the title tune **Beyond Measures & Time**, plays an important role in bringing the theme full circle. Yes, there are many

tracks that are dreamlike on the recording, but if you find it, love is real. This particular tune does not attempt to quantify it, it can only serve to celebrate it.

Steve Rivera's new album is highly-listenable for its quiet subjects that don't attract a lot of attention, but seem to grab your heart with a subtle tenacity and not let go. Every track is emotionally rich in story, with a soft texture that is comforting in so many ways. Rivera's gain in composition skills is a gain for his listeners, who are romantically inclined and tend to find hope in the music they listen to. Rivera's music of quiet beauty fills the bill nicely. Well recommended.

Steve Rivera releases his second poignant piano Album called **Beyond Measures & Time**. Although his tunes are nuanced with scientific terms, believe me when I say this album is one for the romantics. Rivera's artful contemporary works will charm you and make the mood just right.