

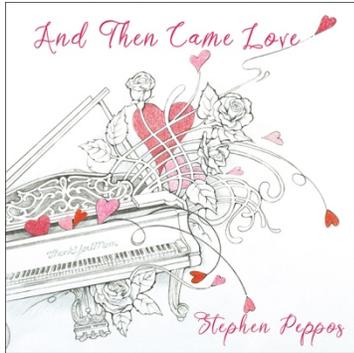
And Then Came Love
Stephen Peppos
2020 / Sonic Bear Music
46 minutes
Review by Kathy Parsons

Musical exploration of the subject of love is nothing new, but Stephen Peppos gives it a fresh take with beauty and heartfelt sincerity flowing from every note. *And Then Came Love* is Peppos' eighth and most piano-centered album to date, much of it solo piano. Sometimes melodic and sometimes more ambient, this is some of Peppos' best music yet! A few of the fourteen original tracks have keyboard enhancements or effects, but most of the album is solo piano. Even the cover artwork (by Barbara Peppos) is special, with a drawing of a piano on the front and back covers that has "Thank You Mom" on the fall-board (where the brand name of the piano usually goes). This refers to the fact that Peppos' mother bought him a spinet piano when he was five instead of the drum set he really wanted. (Thank you, Mrs. Peppos!) Not all of the music is bright and spritely - some is actually on the darker side - reflecting the true nature of the ups and downs of love and of life itself.

An award-winning composer, Stephen Peppos has produced more than 2000 tracks for his original music libraries, composed national TV jingles, and worked with some of the best music library companies in the world. He released his debut album, *Vertigo*, in 2008, and has also done extensive work as a sound designer.

And Then Came Love begins with the tender and graceful "Love You," which seems to be speaking the title (without words) throughout the piece. This is one of several pieces where the mic is placed in such a way that it picks up the sound of the dampers on the piano strings and sounds very much like a sigh or a breath. "Meant To Be" is very free and expressive - almost dreamy. In a few places, it sounds like the piano strings are lightly muted, which softens the tone of the piano significantly and adds to the dreamy effect. "Love So True" is very ambient and atmospheric, flowing slowly and easily. "Love & Affection" is a favorite. The first part of the piece is quietly mysterious, gradually building. The second section becomes livelier and more intense before returning to the original theme. "For a Lifetime" mixes electronic effects with the beautiful piano melody and flowing arpeggios - also a favorite. I really like the slow, gentle grace and the harmonic progression of the rolling chords in "The Spark of Love." "Since I Found You" expresses a simple, heartfelt honesty that is both poignant and touching. At almost 4 1/2 minutes, "My Sweet Love" is one of the longer tracks on the album and is also one of the most beautiful. Peppos again blends acoustic and electronic sounds to express a variety of thoughts and feelings from tenderness to a darker mysterious tone that trails off at the end. The title track is the final piece on the album and is a sweet closing to this lovely tribute to the wonders and beauty of an enduring love.

And Then Came Love is available from www.StephenPeppos.com, Amazon, iTunes, Apple Music and Google Play.



And Then Came Love By Stephen Peppos
Written by Steve Sheppard – One World Music

The multi-talented Stephen Peppos is back with a new release, this time a mostly solo piano offering is laid on our table of musical pleasures. Peppos is one of the new age genres most creative souls, and here he embraces the piano and delivers something to us that is truly artistic and inventive.

This journey of plenty starts with the smooth tones of the opening offering entitled **Love You**. The slow, but pertinent onward movement of the heart can be felt here in this charming opening piece, one that leads us delightfully into the next track entitled **Meant To Be**. There is something deeply moving about this piece that hooked me in with ease, the performance is heartfelt, but bathed in the energy of acceptance; I adored the melodic structure here, it is one that haunts the feelings and lies in the shadows of uncertainty.

A Love So True is our next port of call, from this arrangement I felt a wonderful resonance of tone and timbre emanating from it; the flow here is wonderful to experience and at times quite ambient in construction, but at all times holding true to the original new age piano styled ethics.

One of my personal favorites is up next and called **Love & Affection**, I felt a distinct desire to keep this specific track on repeat, it has a little sense of mystery that drew me into this most compelling of solo piano narratives, and one that perhaps flows through life's rich pattern, illustrating the power of a love so true, that we are able to navigate through it's sometimes choppy waters.

For A Lifetime has a sense of intrigue about its build and progression and is one of only two tracks that are not from the pure well of solo piano. The keyboards create a slight electronic backdrop, a textured offering indeed. I found this one of the most addictive offerings off the album.

We now find ourselves moving towards the fulcrum of the release and as we walk this musical pathway, we come across this fine composition entitled **The Spark of Love**, and what a fine slowly escalating offering it is too, with ease one of my favorites off the album, it's ambient and fluent nature manifests for me a wonderful lightness of touch and tone.

So we now gaze down into the valley of the second half of the album, but before we take those footfalls we can listen to this next gift entitled **Everlasting Love**. There is a certain feeling of intensity here that I found most compelling, perfectly mixed with a true honest performance by the artist.

Soothing and gentle, those two words can easily describe this next song by Peppos, and the title granted to this musical manifestation is **In Your Eyes**. There is something about the melody and construction of this piece that in my view would make an excellent ballad, and as I listened I could hear the words come, in what is another extremely crafted performance by the musician.

How charming, how idyllic, and so very graceful, this is how I would describe the natural tones and energies of this next offering entitled **A Playful Glance**. This is one of those pieces that you simply cannot help but fall head over heels in love with, from the very first key stroke, to the last note played.

A deeply moving musical narrative can be found on this next piece entitled **Since I Found You**. I have now played this particular piece several times, and each time I do so I find more things to love about the offering, its mix of minor and major energies are simply sublime, it is an arrangement that just begs multiple listens.

We now arrive at the second of the two tracks that are not of the solo piano genre, here a soft back drop of sound ushers us into a composition that has a sense of grandness about its progression, it is entitled **My Sweet Love**. There are many facets within this piece that are so fascinating, a rich melody, a new age swirling keyboard feel, and even a little suspense, all built into what is one of the most intriguing pieces off the release with ease.

The calm and tranquil vibrations of this next track are absolutely beautiful and called **When We First Met**. Here is a piece steeped in memory, one carefully constructed to offer up moments of loving reflections. This piece has been so craft-fully arranged; it is a track that literally speaks to the heart with such a loving intent.

Our penultimate offering is called **Forever in My Heart**, this imploring composition speaks volumes about the feelings of love and the roller coaster ride of emotions along the way, the elevation of power and intensity with this arrangement is indeed deeply moving, and is once again, one of my personal favorites from the album.

This voyage of love within music is nearly done, but before the artist draws the final curtain down on his performance, we are gifted one last piece to take along with us on our musical journey of the heart; it is called **And Then Came Love**. A fine track to end with, but I urge a careful listen to this offering; it is a truly sensitive composition, one beautifully performed by Peppos.

And Then Came Love by Stephen Peppos is an album that will touch your soul and move your heart, these works of art created by Peppos come at a time when we all need to show each other a little more love across the world, and this timely collection of work will be a very valuable addition to those who adore all things piano, and have a desire to be moved by the honest refrains of a really good album.

Album available worldwide at

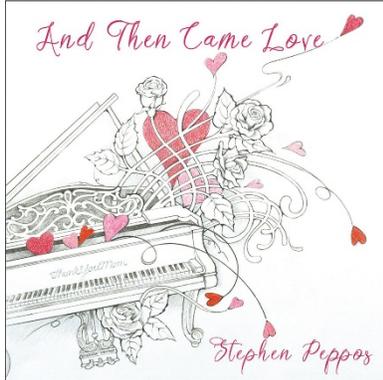
www.StephenPeppos.com

AMAZON, iTunes, Amazon Music, Apple Music, and all streaming outlets.

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MuzikMan's Reviews And News

Music Reviews And News From Around The World



Review by Keith "MuzikMan" Hannaleck

Heart Warming and Spiritually Uplifting

And Then Came Love is the third release I have had the opportunity to hear from Stephen Peppos. The all-instrumental new age and contemporary piano selections are all about the same topic, love. Interesting enough the title track is the very last track. I have not noticed that too much on releases in the past. It is a good idea however, as it reminds you once again what the title of the recording is and the entire meaning of the fourteen tracks being offered. There is a reason for the order of tracks, I think if you asked any artists that, their

reply would yes, and for many different reasons.

There is a common-sense thread with the way the tracks are titled and a definitive meaning and progression. Some folks may think that is not that important or even notice, but I do. I try to look at the entire package being presented including artwork, track names, and order or any lyrics. In this case, it is all instrumental so it is entirely up to each listener to find their meaning and interpretation of every track and in the end, what it means personally. After all, isn't the subject of love a separate meaning for everyone? Whether it is for another person, place, event or a family pet. The word love can be applied to all of that and more.

Stephen plays a very expressive and poignant type of piano. The title and the track do fit if you can look beyond the music, then let it encapsulate your being and open your heart to whatever comes your way. Music like this has no barriers of time and space, it inhabits the space you're in and moves you to another plane of thought and existence. And thank god for that. With all of those thoughts prevailing, the power and healing that this kind of music can bring you is boundless. You can call Stephen the Doctor of Music on *And Then Came Love*. Love is coming your way by the end of this recording, and yet another reason why to have the title track as the curtain closer!

The beauty and grace of the music contained on this album will be enjoyed by all those that come within listening distance intentional or not, it will catch your ear and warm your heart. To know there is such magnificence in one instrument is one of the wonders of life. Because of that realization, I find a tremendous amount of gratitude when I listen to this music. My suggestion would be to listen to this as much as you can, particularly if you need a reprieve from stress or a very busy day. *And Then Came Love* will turn it all around and put a smile in your heart and soul.

Keith "MuzikMan" Hannaleck