

Onwards and Upwards

By

Forest Field

Written by

Steve Sheppard

I had been looking forward to listening to this album ever since I saw the amazing art work for the album cover just a few days ago, so it was a great happiness when I was asked to write a review for the album ***Onwards and Upwards*** by the project known as ***Forest Field***.

The opening track is simply called ***Onwards*** and is a purposeful solo piano piece that paints a picture of inner strength and determination. This short but poignant composition paves the way for the more elaborate offering called ***The Secret Flame***, starting with an Organ and swiftly moving into strings and guitars this track is a pleasure to listen to, the vocals are supplied by Phil Vincent from the states. The guitar in this track is driven beautifully by Chinawhites Peter Cox and is one heck of a superb rock song.

Now I love different things in life and in music it makes things even more interesting. Here ***Forest Field*** have really brought something completely new to the table, let's just lay this at your feet dear reader, how about Electronic, Native American, Progressive, New Age? In the track called ***Hope*** you pretty much have that. This is a carefully composed track with a steady tempo with some excellent flute playing by ***Sue Shaw*** to bring into birth, a quite remarkable piece of music.

Dreaming starts gently, but starts to slowly progress into a real rock ballad, I am a very big fan of the progressive rock scene and the vocals on this album and this offering are above excellent and would sit nicely next to any band from that genre, the mixture here is sublime. ***Forest Field*** have indeed created a great and very unique project, the harmonies float with great ease next to the percussion and marching tempo, I think dear listener you're going to enjoy this one and will be coming back to it over and over again.

Interesting title next in ***Car Park Pleasures!*** However from the very first opening I loved the chord structures, they really painted an interesting picture as they floated from major to minor, after the initial stages there is a very adept and clever base line, extremely well played and the piece slowly builds to a perfectly pitched Progressive rock style. Cox on guitar is quite stunning on this composition, which then floats majestically into a fast based tempo as the song draws to a close.

Now for the longest piece on the album called ***Stronger***. I had to stop at this point and listen to the song twice; the lyrics here are amazing and totally relevant for me, especially this passage.

"You got to be a leader, where no boundaries exist, the future is wide open, for whatever tomorrow may bring, It's not when you fall down, But when you try to get up again, be strong, and get stronger, Gotta hold on till the end."

The arrangement is so professional this should be a single, it is powerful enough and the chorus alone is so well written it deserves huge respect, and lots of airplay. Musically this is outstanding especially the bass line and percussion which really synched so well with what the track offered.

The Wanting is next up dear reader and listener. A short form track with some smooth guitar and keyboards and a few tasty effects layered within, the driven guitar and melody are quite memorable and I would imagine will stick in your head for quite some time, the tempo is fairly paced and I could imagine this piece being used just before the band walk onto stage or off at the end, you need to listen carefully to **The Wanting** there is much more to it than you may initially think.

Another vocal offering from Vincent now comes upon us, I am already sold on his style, and as a singer myself I can really appreciate all the hard work that goes into getting the right emotion, balance and power needed for a track like this. True love is indeed a miracle and **A Miracle** the track is yet again another composition that would see the fans reaching for their lighters to wave along to this song with, I then began to wonder if you could combine the next track which is a short instrumental piece called **Believe**, a fast paced percussive rock composition with the following track called **Sun Sinks Low**, and have yourself a really wonderful Genesis styled long form arrangement of just under 13 minutes. Both aforementioned pieces do of course stand well on their own right.

The penultimate track on the album, entitled **Sun Sinks Low** is a classic melodic rock ballad, both Cox and Vincent with his lyrical adaptations have created some utterly stunning arrangements and the lyricism is penned extremely well.

Quite cleverly we end the album with **Upwards**, after starting with **Onwards**; this is once more a repetition of that piece but with added instrumentation, this works so well as now we truly do have a feeling that we have all been on a journey through some hard and tough moments of life, yet at the end of the album we still have been able to carry on and win through.

I must say it does take something special these days to thrill and excite me, on a musical level I hasten to add! I have listened to thousands of albums and millions of tracks in my times, but Peter Cox and Project Forest Field have given to the world a truly magnificent release. **Onwards and Upwards** was not only a pleasure to listen to and review, but it was an honour to hear such a professional and utterly amazing performances on one album track after track, this is definitely going to feature on our many shows here at One World Music and please take me seriously fans of Prog Rock of New Age music, you really have to make sure you get a copy of **Onwards and Upwards**, albums of this quality are VERY hard to find.