

“Stunningly Beautiful Music” *Midnight Rain ~ Steve Crump*

Beautiful and sensitive music that is both elegant and deliberate with a gesture toward folk traditions. As with all good music, it brings a vivid sense of place through a contemplative point of view, evoking a gentle drive through a favourite landscape. Jamieson Shaw, Senior Music Editor: *The Get Down*, Turning Studios, USA.

It's taken half a lifetime but finally Steve Crump's music is out there for all to hear. Until now, much of it was tucked into the recesses of his mind for personal consumption only, some of it recorded on reel-to-reel tape in the 70s, then cassette tape, and now converted to or recorded in digital formats, these in-and-out-of-love time capsules have a charm and honesty that have been captured in a collection of 14 pieces, spanning the 1970s to 2015. As Michael Menager (*Clean Exit*, *Not The Express*) explains, “**In Midnight Rain, pianist Steve Crump opens up his sketchbook to us.** It's no new sketchbook, just off the shelf; it's one that Crump has travelled with for a long time, and kept close, before now deciding to reveal its pages”.

Produced by Heath Cullen (one of Australia's most exciting young musicians), and recorded at Night Train Studios in Candelo - a magic place on the south coast of NSW brimming with musicians and artists living in harmony with their environment and farming neighbours - this CD provides a snapshot of a lifetime's love affair with the piano. Sean Lowry (Def FX) is taken by how “Crump clearly possesses a **richly accessible sense of melody and compositional craftsmanship**”. He's impressed by how the tracks on “Midnight Rain” “.. exemplify (Steve's) ability to marry a **productive tension between a liberal use of catchy melodies and a non-pretentious display of musical sophistication.**”

It all started when, as a 3 year old, Crump was dragged along to his sisters ballet lessons. Once home, he waddled over to his 1 octave, red toy grand piano and **improvised one note versions of bits and pieces of what he'd just heard his sisters dance to** - some of it classical, some of it from stage musicals.

This led to **lessons from an assortment of colourful and not-so-colourful nuns** at a girls' catholic school on the northern beaches of Sydney - having advantages in his teens. One nun would hit his hands mercilessly with a ruler if he made a mistake; another (clearly his favourite) would sneak out the window at night and get herself into Sydney to a concert.

His music reflects this seeding ground. As Andre de Quadros (Professor of Music Education, Boston University) explains; “**I love the lyrical quality of Steve's music. It's really stunningly beautiful music without being contrived or overly-constructed**”.

Oxford composer, Beatrix Forbes, enthuses “What lovely music Steve has created. It reminds me so much of “Piano Stories” by the award-laden British film/TV composer, Debbie Wiseman ... **Steve has attractive melodic and harmonic ideas and his pieces are well-structured and well-controlled**”.

Richard Vella (Newcastle Conservatorium), internationally recognised composer and academic, offers insights into Steve's musical journey; “In this CD you can hear how Steve introduces an organic approach to his phrasing, melodic development and their elaboration. **He is developing a lyrical style that emanates from melody**”. This is something Steve is trying to understand better himself as he starts on the next CD, again with Heath Cullen, tentatively titled “Trespass”.



“Midnight Rain” available from:

SC website: www.stevecrumpmusic.com

Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/stevecrumpmusic>

In store: RockSteady Records, 358 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. rocksteadyrecords.com.au