

# **Between Then and Now**

**By**

**Nick Farr**

**Written by**

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I needed this album, I needed some time to reflect in a chilled environment and this release fitted the bill perfectly. **Nick Farr** had been on my musical radar for some years now, since the solo piano album *A View from Within*, back in 2012, so it was a pleasant surprise to hear a multi instrumental album from him, just when my spirits needed lifting.

**Between then and Now** starts in a most friendly style, with the memorable and light jazz styled ethic of the opening piece entitled **Thinking of You**. This is one extremely smooth composition and brings us a light happy feeling immediately as we start our musical journey with the artist.

On **Late Night Rendezvous** we have a truly sensual offering, the brass in this arrangement lays down a romantic, yet heart rendering moment of musical magic. The piano of Farr is the master narrator, which guides us through the waters of love and a late night rendezvous.

I shall have to pass this track onto our Celtic music presenter, I am sure she would love to feature **Celtic Shores** on her show. The compositions and arrangement of this piece is sublime and gives us a true flavour of the heartlands of the Celts. The strings are a paintbrush of sound that colours the vista with a simple brushstroke of tone. Farr drives forever onward on piano and dances with the violin when needed.

As we arrive at **Within Reach**, we come across a lush composition that is performed with a certain layer of sensitivity, but an extremely adept overture

of professionalism. This is a truly magnificent opus, one that shows the masterful performance of Farr at its very best.

Let's turn back the clock now and go back to **Memphis, 1989**. We roll backwards and into the arms of a really smooth and jazzy offering. The gentle nature of this piece gives us an evident sensation of movement, perhaps driving through the city lights, in a nightfall moment, on a warm summer evening in late August.

The percussion and piano introduce us to a piece called **Happy Hour**, the bass joins the band and we can enjoy a track that perhaps illustrates that we have found the entrance to Cheers bar, and we're lucky enough to have arrived at **Happy Hour**. There is simply everything to like about this wonderful feel good piece.

We have passed now into the latter half of the album and come across a personal favourite of mine called **A New Beginning**. Farr's skill at musical illustration can never be more evident than here. There is a certain expectation in the performance of a fresh start; the keyboards create an energy that seems to grow with every note played, and the multi instrumentation segments draw us a picture of an increased energy of excitement.

**Blackberry Lane** sees Farr's skill set on piano really come to the fore, a picturesque offering is now upon us and with a certain symphonic grace we are gifted something that is truly great in all aspects of the word. The melody also has a slight Celtic lilt to it that demands to be listened to. **Blackberry Lane** also has that wonderful use of crescendo and a glorious cinematic quality, which would slot nicely into a movie segment with ease, and yes, this is my absolute favourite from the release.

The flute and piano of Farr dance in a symbiotic movement of nature on this most attractive and charming piece called **Whip-Poor-Will**. There's a beauty and warmth about this track that create an addictive narrative, perhaps being an ornithologist helps, but this charming composition drew such a wonderful musical vista in my mind's eye.

I must admit I have walked some of the **Trail of Tears**, I found it a very sobering and a deeply moving moment in my life, this heinous act should never be

forgotten and the pain and suffering that went along with it should never be either. This track emphasises that, but also the proud nature of the true indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. Farr has also most produced a symphony for the ages here in this classic cinematic offering, but you can also hear echoes of the past, created respectfully by a ghostly flute on the horizon.

As we reach the penultimate track we come across an intriguing offering called **Snow Soldiers**. The percussion draws an obvious narrative, but this is one of those pieces you must listen to all the way through, as the composition hangs in the air, like the sullen clouds of a storm waiting to break, and you never know exactly what is going to happen next. The ability of **Nick Farr** to produce several movie styled pieces on this album is beyond impressive, **Snow Soldiers** falls in that category to and should be saluted as a modern day stroke of symphonic genius.

So we arrive at our last musical doorway, and as we push it open we find tucked away in the corner our last offering from the release, it's called **Aurora Green**. For me, this was a very clever way to end the album, almost where we started off, and Farr's jazz piano style floats back into our minds, rounding off what has been a truly superb musical voyage with the artist.

**Between Then and Now** is an album that adds a colour and depth to the current music scene, one that at times seems to lurch into a banality of receptiveness. This is a musical journey you will never want to end. Farr has created a true album in the sense of the word, one that depicts so many moments in time and illustrates each and every composition with a performance that is simply outstanding. **Between Then and Now** is one of those releases that everyone should have sitting proudly at the front of their musical collection, it's a true breath of musical fresh air.