

Sonic Bloom

The Spectacular New Album from
WAYNE BETHANIS

LINER NOTES:

SONIC BLOOM represents the resounding explosion and aftermath of a breathtaking chapter of musical combustion from New Age/Contemporary piano superstar **Wayne Bethanis**. After the worldwide success and acclaim of his two previous albums, “Measures of Light” and “Listen”, **SONIC BLOOM** carries forward the height of creativity from this multi-award winning artist.

Each song on **SONIC BLOOM** conveys a very deep conviction, describing subjects both universal and profoundly personal, through Wayne’s world-renown gift for melody, untouchable arrangements and virtuoso piano skills. As always, his offerings are brilliantly supported by a dream-team of orchestrators: **Marcus Sjowall, Jared Kraft, Ross Mitchell, Benedikt Brydern**.

From Wayne:

“*SONIC BLOOM* is the result of a year-plus of simply allowing my creative pen to find its way. I think this album represents the ever-expanding consciousness; the Big Bang moments we’ve all been compelled to experience almost every day in recent times. Is *SONIC BLOOM* an album filled with big anthems and world-beat melodies? Probably. But the truth is I was writing for all of us; we’ve been through quite a lot lately; and you’ll find something in every song to make you feel good, or at least give you an idea to hold onto, to nurture for yourself on your own terms. It’s this archetypal world of symbolism that binds us all. *SONIC BLOOM* reflects the natural unfolding of my artistry; and the sheer privilege to be able to express it through my piano. I hope you will find a blessing in each song. Here are my notes on each track” – Wayne

Track 1:

We Will Rise Once More

A majestic, magnificent, salient offering from my body of work. I knew when I was composing "Rise" that it would evolve into an **EPIC PIANO** manifesto of rebirth. Composed for anyone who had to live through pain and loss only to come back stronger.

The Music: Breathtaking orchestration from Marcus carries this humanitarian mandate to rise from the ashes like a big beautiful banner across the sky. There are moments of soft reflection that contrast the fortissimo piano as if to imply that rising up again is both hugely monumental and quietly personal at the same time. A hymn leads us into a spectral, yet tightly balanced march to regaining our rightful freedom. Written in E-flat major, an unusual key for me. Key Words: Anthem of Hope, Anthem of Inspiration, Inspiring Music, Inspiring Piano, Wayne Bethanis Piano, Beautiful Instrumental, Epic Piano, Songs of Faith, Songs of Triumph, Cinematic, Orchestral Masterpiece.

Track 2:

Don't Look Back (The World is Changing)

Our experience of time is now vastly accelerated. The moment we try to settle into a solid reality it changes. The Universe is ever-expanding, and we are tapping into the constant creative process more and more consciously. It does us no good to look back unless it's a memory of love.

The Music: From out of a mysterious moment of change, a melody organizes itself. From there an anthem is born. Moments of harmonic uncertainty resolve to a resounding thematic commitment to stay forward-facing and ready for the next phase of wonder and awareness. DON'T LOOK BACK.

Track 3.

You Know I Will Remember You (Room 112)

I've lived through two pandemics now. The first one, witnessed in my young 20's, was worse. Graduate school for me was a dark time; finishing my music doctorate in dark, ivy towers... so I became a hospital volunteer to feel good about life; that spring I took a brief training along with two very attractive women who were there to marry rich doctors. Our first day we were assigned to the AIDS ward. Within 15 seconds our lives were changed irreversibly. I *never* talk about this experience; and I probably never will. There was a certain group of men who

would walk (or be wheeled) into Recreation Room 112 to hear me play an old spinet piano - I became a source of entertainment or, probably, distraction from the darkness of that pandemic. These men used to say “You’re going to be famous someday! Don’t ever forget us!” So, today, many years later, I felt able to write their song.

The Music: My tempo fluctuates more in this song than any I’ve recorded. I was experiencing a universe of emotions in the studio. One of my big melodies outlines the title of the song and spins out from there. Julian, my engineer, told me it was a great performance and simply left the deck on “record” as I journeyed through what I had written for “You Know I Will Remember You”. Jared’s breathtaking orchestral support is unforgettable.

Track 4:

There is a Place Beyond the Heart

My favorite song from an album of gems! Everyone wants to be in love, and there’s a lot of money to be made off that yearning to find a soulmate (I should know, I’ve written more love songs that I can count!). Sitting at my piano one day, I asked out loud “Is there a place beyond the heart??? Where real love connects us together?” Here’s the answer I got: There is a place beyond the heart where our physical senses cease; where we are all one infinite network of light; and we see only bits and pieces of this here in the 3-D sensory world.

The Music: Another lyric melody from me, building on itself to an orchestral climax, contrasted by a stepwise refrain. Jared Kraft embroidered a gossamer symphony in and around my piano that is truly divine. Don’t miss the angel’s voices and brass explosion that echoe the world above, beyond the veil, beyond the heart!

Track 5:

These Are More Than Memories

We never know how early artistic experiences will shape our adult lives. I had a very strict piano teacher from the age of 5 to 18. This teacher prepared me in ways that I could never have imagined, sometimes directly, often inversely. This is the story of the unconscious swirling of growth and maturing of a young artist. Often simple poems that I write inspire the melodies for my songs (at least two on this album!):

*These are more than memories
More that eight and eighty keys
These are friends of mine you see
Voices of my destiny*

*Angel's voices
calling me
Play my heart
Key by Key
Lovers lost in time*

The Music: One of my sweetest melodies describes the fervent strivings for greatness. A beautiful, elegant circle of fifths pattern contrasts my lyric melody with interruptions of lavender syncopated figures. A joyous choral capitulation of the “chorus” signifies the point of arrival where the student becomes the teacher. The coda spins out the main melody in three different keys, implying certainty and mastery now that the lessons are done.

Track 6:

My Dream of the Golden West

I chanced upon a Netflix documentary about Rock Hudson. What struck me was that his real name was Roy Fitzgerald, and that he traveled west to become a star. I absently jotted down a poem while images of his masterful performance in the western epic film **Giant** flashed across the screen. Known for my grand historical songs that complete my albums (usually of the ancient world), this time we travel to the Old West with the mysteries of discovery and promise that ignite the hero in all of us. And this time, it's the centerpiece of the album. My little poem that birthed this work:

*Rock Hudson
Don't forget your name
It's Rock, it's Roy
We'd love you
Just the same*

The Music: This song opens with a lyric melody outlining my little poem. A lilting triplet figure depicting the beckoning, yet somehow calm, rhythm of the Old West unfolds and underpins the ever-strengthening resolve of two distinct melodies. Two virtuosic, fast-moving rodeo dances call to mind the true genius of early American music. A contemplative outlay to Roy's theme ends the movement. This is a study in contrasts, just like the rural frontier of the Old West, and the geniuses who were compelled to answer the call of their hearts to adventure.

Track 7:

My Father Never Saw Paris

My biological father wanted to be a famous artist. I grew up surrounded by art supplies, books (often gigantic in size) about the world's great art, drafting tables and easels. There was a large-scale, pen-and-ink rendering of the Notre Dame Cathedral that followed us from house to house, mantelpiece to mantelpiece. My father drew that image of the great church while I was still a toddler. His journey of his talent took him to prosperity as an architect, but never the bohemian creative I'm sure he fantasized. My father never made it to Paris to see the great cathedral that watched over my childhood like a big gothic god. I have played in Paris, and many of the great cities of the world. And despite the long, silent years of estrangement, I named this song for him.

The Music: Listen for a triadic broken-chord piano figure leaping out of an old black & white film, with Jared's accordion winking from a storybook cafe somewhere on the misty banks of the Seine.

Track 8:

Waltz of the Sirens

I wanted to compose a triple meter song to deliver a nice sway to the tracklist of the album. What ended up happening is arguably one of the most beautiful songs I've ever composed.

The Music: A delicate, breathy waltz melody wanders about until it finds itself bursting with joy to a full choir. Siren's beckoning voices bring a New Age reverence to our sacred dance, ending with a breathless hush of overlapping strands as the siren lays down the final lament of her waltz.

Track 9

Ten of Hearts

Fresh from the success of my song “The Bexley Bop” I wanted to write an “answer song”. Although this piece has a similar vibe, structurally it is very different. My writing seems to be happiest when I hook onto a light pop/jazz idea. This one lays out an invitation to dance, a night on the town, the prospect of that cozy cabin you’ll escape to with a lover without telling a soul. Whereas “Bexley” was an ode to the relief of a break-up, Ten of Hearts is a new beginning, a playing card with all the right numbers and shapes to bring you the romance you really deserve!

The Music: Long phrases, winding melodies and sophisticated bridges abound with a walking strut in the bass. Don’t miss Benny’s sax solo that dances a contagious duet with my piano part! Pizzicato pulses that recall your fluttering heart!

Track 10:

New Age Music Box

I researched so many music boxes before composing this song that I started seeing the piano in a different way. The traditional music box uses a comb to strike a roll of grooves to make that familiar plucky sound. Some music boxes are affordable, some are literally priceless museum affairs with many intricate parts and figures. This one comes from my New Age piano summit, where I generally stake my claim to pop genius, straddling the worlds of buoyant ambient threads and international, unmistakable Wayne Bethanis lines of confectionary, contagious melody! Wind it up and play it again and again!

The Music: This song fits within the range of a standard music box, with forays into a sweet New Age melody. Marcus juxtaposes two guitars, one acoustic, one electric lead, to bring the song to World Beat heights. A big hit.

Track 11:

St. Declan’s Traveling Dulcimer Candy Corporation

I wanted to turn my piano into 60’s Sunshine Pop on this one (hence the Sgt Peppers-esque title). But I wanted to depict the kind of sunshine that lasts for just a moment, filling your vision with sparkling, vivid flashes of indefinable beauty.

The Music: The sweet chime of Ross's dulcimer pops in and out like the glittering denizens of a storybook forest. A deceptively chromatic walking bass supports a dancy melody, with syncopated chords to propel the motions forward. Even the minor key bridges are happy...not an easy feat.

Track 12:

That's How We Say Goodbye

Not a sad song, but definitely ponderous. We tend to be thrown into a superimposed reality whenever we say goodbye. It's a feeling we can't rehearse: we can think about it, foresee it, cry over it, expect it. But until the moment of goodbye decides to reveal itself we are at its mercy and completely vulnerable.

The Music: I used an irregular left-hand pattern here to obscure the time signature, and dropped in a simple melody that is light and heavy at the same time. Just like goodbye.

WB Feb, 2025