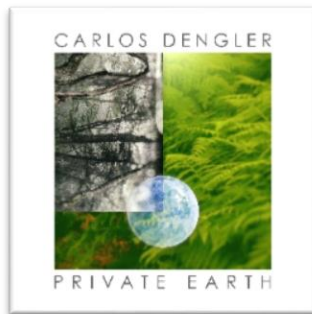


Carlos Dengler

Private Earth

CarlosDengler.com



Private Earth is the new nature inspired release from New York based composer **Carlos Dengler**. His wondrous album has a sparing number of tracks, only six. But oh how the music fills the spirit. Dengler has two previous albums, *Ecospheres* and *Aqueduct*. His music is firmly rooted into the ambient electronic genre, but his current offering ambles toward contemporary soundscapes more than, say New Age or fantasy music territory. Perhaps his music fits smartly into what is now deemed post classical music. On *Private Earth* Dengler uses both

acoustic and electronic instruments making the album a warm mixture of phrasing. The tracks are long, most more than seven minutes and *Desert Flora* coming in at over twelve minutes. To me it makes these finely crafted compositions more than just songs. Perhaps long *etudes* is more appropriate. Taken as a whole, it is a symphony for Mother Earth.

With a hymn-like quality, the opening track **Desert Flora** begins. Dengler's longest tune becomes an exploration of life on the desert floor. The music suggests sinuous vines snaking across sandy earth. Ready to bloom at any moment's notice are the twisted buds of exotic flowers. No mere morning glory these. But desert dwellers that wait at their chance to unwind and bloom despite their conditions. Understated drumming adds a hypnotic rhythm while muted bass calls the cadence in this arid scenario. Imagine cactus; tall, pale green, and stoic, their arms raised to the heavens in silent prayer. They offer up rare white blossoms. Their yellow centers imitating the sun. A singing in the distance echoes ancient voices. Peoples that have also lived and bloomed in the desert. This is an incredible look at life using passionate, yet primal music as the medium. It became an instant favorite.

As the sun withdraws and just minutes before the stars come out we witness a **Violet Sky**. Carlos' nuanced piano, guitar, and flute combination is gentle and calm with a winding flute lead that pulls the listener forward, but the subtext of the piano begs you to stare skyward. There is some light classical innuendo in the composition that is quite soothing, but we keep returning to the main theme; that of the approach of night. Welcome and good evening.

Appropriately next is the tune **Golden Dawn**. Tender acoustic guitar sets the tone for the arrival of dawnlight. The pale sky turns feeble light into a pastel sky. Carlos' tune is a birthday celebration for every new day. A bit of drone, some quavers of sound, and the complexities of a moving planet produce a yellow light across the horizon. There are energies here. Radiance, warmth, and hope all coalesce into this melody that gives light to the spirit.

He said we would see it just after we came over the hill and there it was. Just ahead on the right, the **Ancient Lake**. The arid lake bed seemed endless. White salt crusted the exposed rocks like frost and the layers of a million changes over a million years by wind, erosion, and sunlight made every metamorphic variation become a new tale to our eyes. Keith Bonner's mesmerizing flute is the voice of ancient people telling us story after story. There were times when the earth trembled, when there were fires. And then the Gods spoke. The tunes seem to tell an unfolding story with every note.

It is unfathomable. It is obscure. It absorbs light, but not sound. **Solemn Cavern**, one of Dengler's best tunes on Private Earth, takes you deep into the soul of the mountain. Minimalist piano and flirting flute blend together to make a journey that seems to last forever in somnambulant darkness. Is that water? Some kind of creature? Or something else? The chill of mystery is upon you.

What almost sounds like an unearthly chorus opens the final tune **Rising Mountain**. It is one of the lightest tunes on the album. There is sunshine here. And snowcapped peaks. Along with a jaunty tempo and playful bird song, this tune fits well into any Andean adventure you can imagine. There is joy in this journey as Dengler's song accompanies us to new heights. We are sure, we are carefree. We are upward bound.

Crank up the speakers. Affix the headphones. Dengler's six track excursion is not only an impressive experience, but also an immersive one. Each nature infused soundscape is different and new. And each one is begging for sonic exploration. Dengler's cohesive mix of electro-acoustic scenarios allows the listener to create their own Private Earth and in some cases, it does not have to be the "Earth" that is familiar to most. These lush, musically textured compositions have the power to produce an endless possibility of introspective journeys. Something of a rarity these days, Private Earth is available as a physical CD with billfold style packaging, and, in an extremely limited edition, inside a hand painted wooden box. Excellent. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews