

Mp3 Neil Jacobs - Secret Places

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Hauntingly melodic acoustic 12-string guitar music . Touches of Classical, World, Fingerstyle, with some eclectic surprises. 16 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Fusion, NEW AGE: New Age Details: "Secret Places" is a follow-up to "American Gypsy" and "World Blue". It contains 16 tracks with everything from an acoustic solo version of "Ravel's Bolero" to a Balkan tamburica orchestra track, "Song of Vojvodina". There are quite a few original compositions as well including, "Sympathy for Salieri", "Martin Eden", "Singing Dunes", and "Train to Zanzibar" (in 24/8 time). Some of the "classical-esque" arrangements include, "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Funeral March of a Marionette", as well as the folk classic, "Misirlou". It's a CD full of "serious" music and some eclectic surprises. Review by RJ Lannan - "The Sounding Board": "Return of the Romani Son" Just noting the titles on Neil Jacobs' album Secret Places piqued my interest. However, I was truly rewarded when the music touched my spirit. I played a 12-string once years ago, but it didnt sound like this. Jacobs' mastery of the instrument is wellmagical. He combines contemporary themes with classical styling and the result is sometimes warm and sophisticated, sometimes playful and exciting. As an added bonus you get a whirlwind tour, albeit a musical one, of North America and most of Europe. Many times Jacobs' phenomenal style made me wonder how many people were actually playing the guitar. Every time it was just Neil. Oh, he had a little help from Arkadiy Gips on violin, Craig Marley on udu, Steven Fox on upright bass and John Douglas on electric bass on a few of the cuts. But on guitarjust Neil. Neil starts you off with a plucky little tune called Singing Dunes. You are treated to white smiles and white sand beaches somewhere along the Mediterranean. Warm breezes and a dazzling sun dance around you as the music gains momentum. As the day wears on there is just the two of you as the world and the music revolves around you. Who or what is referenced in the song Martin Eden? A Jack London character or the French translation of Morning in Paradise? Its hard to believe that Jacobs would go off on a tangent to pay homage to an American writer, so my bet is on the French version. Oh, but wait. In another tune Jacobs makes reference to one of the most spectacular sights in California in the tune Morning at Ragged Point. So now we have the globetrotting writer who hails from that awe-inspiring California coast. Both songs are

sparkling Pacific jewels. Martin Eden sounds a lot like dawn rising out of the golden Pacific and Morning at Ragged Point is a melodic hundred mile jaunt up the coast to Big Sur. On two tunes, Song of Vojvodina and Zlato Moje Neil takes you on a special and very personal journey to Serbia. One of my favorite tracks on Secret Places is the resplendent tune Zlato Moje (My Golden One). This is one of those romantic tunes that tears at the heartstrings with eloquent beauty. On Song of Vojvodina there is a peculiarly energetic mandolin lead and a tick-tock tempo that exalts the spirit of the Balkans. With true classical grace Sympathy for Salieri reminds you of the man that competed with uber-composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Even though Salieri had laudable talents of his own he was a victim of wrong guy in the wrong place syndrome. There is a gentle, sparkling guitar score that allows you hear every glistening note of Jacobs's talent in the composition. It sounds like Jacobs has quite the handle on slack key guitar in the astonishing title tune Secret Places. It is absolutely the best cut on the album and worth many replays. It was a take a walk in the woods tune. Find the biggest hemlock, and sit back and relax under its protective dark green boughs. Sorry, the rest of the world is on its own while I think my private thoughts. Jacobs has been playing and composing for over a quarter of a century. He has traveled extensively from one side of Europe to the other. Neil and his 12-string have been part of an ongoing tour that offers succor to the lost and culture to the found. He has truly traveled the way of the gypsy, but unlike the sad history of the Romani, he is usually welcomed with open arms and hearts. Neil Jacobs has been around the world and, like a rare find in a souvenir shop he presents us with his wondrous gifts of music. The grown-up child in you can find sanctuary in Neil Jacobs' - Secret Places. RJ Lannan, New Age Reporter 3/9/2006 A review written for the Folk Acoustic Music Exchange by Mike Jurkovic On the Friday that Secret Places came in the mail for review, I had spent the week listening to a collection of Vivaldi's concertos and Sam Cooke. Now that's a wide spectrum no matter what demographic you poll, but Neil Jacobs took up his own place within it. When most of us first encountered the 12-string, it was the clang-jangly shimmer of The Byrds. But, for over twenty-five years, this award winning performer and composer has toured the world, bringing a whole new emotional and spiritual virtuosity to the instrument. And, while on his travels, the musical languages he has encountered inspire his new disc. Be it Ravel's Bolero or Tchaikovsky's Dance of The Sugar Plum Fairy Jacobs covers the world vibe on his extraordinary 12-string, fusing flamenco, Celt, Balkan, Greek, jazz and gypsy. Performances of Song of Vojvodina, Morning At Ragged Point, My Norman Rockwell, and Singing Dunes are crystalline moments where mind, heart, spirit and

finger-picking ability meld, creating their own quiet space. With an ensemble of musicians playing exotic and familiar instruments, i.e.: stand-up bass, udu, violin, brac, and bugarja, this is perfect music for those snowy mornings and sunsets, those Sundays where it's just you and the music.

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