

# **The Maestoso Interstellar Suite 10 Year Anniversary Edition**

**By**

**Keith Richie**

**Written by**

**Steve Sheppard**

When something is your very soul, it is hard to bare it to the world and say, this is me, come listen, but here on this latest release **Keith Richie** he has done just that. From the very early days of my induction into the world of Electronic music I was lucky enough to have been bathed with such sonic masters as *Tomita* and of course the great *Vangelis*.

I adored the work *Albedo 0.39* and in some way I feel like I am experiencing 1976 all over again, this album is simply off the scale, of course years flown by since the great man's work, in fact 30 of them and on **The Maestoso Interstellar Suite 10 Year Anniversary Edition** Richie has taken that grand sound and brought it completely up to date.

Listen to **Part 1**, beginning with the **Prelude** and into the first movement titled **Movement I (Event Horizon)**, the excited and wide eyed sounds of the explorer in the audio capturing the sounds of music in space, the masterful way Richie has captured that moment is in typical *Vangelis* mode. When you listen to this album dear reader and listener, it will feel like you yourself, have actually taken a journey through the realms of the universe and I guess in a way you will have.

Each part of this album is like a suite within an opus, for example the segment at 17 minutes into **part 1** titled **Movement II (Naked Singularity)**, gives you a sense of liberation and emptiness, it's as if we are floating, and after the powerful opening one can visualise the sheer vastness of space itself, the freshness of this album is sublime. At the 20 minute mark a rhythm begins to form and through the sequences, we begin to pick up pace and intent. One

thing is for sure dear constant listener; this is an album that once started, is impossible to leave until that journey has been completed.

We drift with the current of the continuum into **Part 2** which begins with **Movement III (Inertial Frame of Reference)**. The feeling and senses almost tell us that we have moved into a region of space that we must scan and explore. The synths begin to create a far deeper image for us all to enjoy, the swirling sequences manifest a real sense of gently drifting at cruising speed, a gentle tap on the thrusters from time to time as we pass great gas giants and planets so spectacular for the mind to behold. **Keith Richie's** sheer class as a producer of superb synth based music is all consuming.

A segment of pace is upon us now, as some extremely rhythmic percussion kicks in at around 10 minutes which forms **Movement IV (Redshift)**, this is the artist at his best, this is the Richie style in full flow as we transverse the solar system to a beat that could be from the very sun itself. As we arrive at a new region of the galaxy, the mood changes, it's as if we have stopped to marvel at the view. At around 20 minutes there is a slight sense of tension built in here through **Movement V (Time Dilation)**, this really adds to a feeling of the dramatic. Then we are off once more as the tempo picks up with some subtle but deliberate percussion, which could almost take us into the realm of progressive rock towards the end of the piece.

The second half of our journey starts with a very careful and tentative beginning as **Part 3** is upon us with **Movement VII (Cryosleep)**. Audio from our virtual Captain is relayed to us, as he mentions his crews sleep periods into a data file for transmission. Through this fantastic track one can feel both the loneliness and the concentration of the crew member. Even though we are in deep space, Richie has given this composition a real night time feeling. An essence of a dream perhaps floats past, and then the intensity begins to slightly increase as we approach the 5 minute mark.

The sheer melodic nature of this piece is almost wondrous in parts; the energy of Richie's arrangement is beyond beauty. There is a slight energy shift at the 10 minute mark as **Movement VIII (Dark Matter)** begins, almost a sense of apprehension, perhaps the crew member has had to make a slight course correction, but soon a pattern and an even tempo is once again found. That

energy shift continues as a timely segment of percussion increases the dynamism of the piece.

The 17<sup>th</sup> minute mark ushers an almost eerie moment with **Movement IX (Gravity Waves)**, the synths create a sensation of swirling, twisting and turning, almost akin to flying through a wormhole, but yet again balance is achieved and Richie's expertise on keyboards creates a more lively passage towards the end of this arrangement, great movement can also be felt through the latter percussive nature of the track and then we once more come to a halt as we have traversed our desired path through the stars and now stand on the threshold of the very last composition.

Our region of space is **Part 4**. Another opportunity to sample a superb performance on keyboards, this has such a lovely melody and calmness about it early on with **Movement X (General Relativity)**, a couple of timely crescendos greet our ears, as we make our way homeward. This part is the shortest track off the album at just over 26 minutes and sees Richie in almost *Kevin Kendle (Light from Orion)* territory as he depicts perfectly the utter beauty of the vista.

The symbols throughout this track are sublime, its builds the dramatic to a level that is not over bearing, but a respectful essence of total power. The angelic harmonies and vocalisations almost seem to carry us towards a distant star. The passage from 7 minutes on which is called **Movement XI (Escape Velocity)** is a real treat, a mixture of *Assault on Precinct 13* and *Vangelis* mixed together, the bass and percussion, partnered with an almost regal keyboard gives us a sense of heading home to a hero's welcome.

The final tracks, **Movement XIII (Aphelion)** and the **Postlude** ends our journey with **Keith Richie** and **The Maestoso Interstellar Suite 10 Year Anniversary Edition**, but dear reader and listener, there is in fact still much more I can download into your linguistic databases. The artist has also released an album called **Singularities**, which is the actual break down into 16 separate pieces of the album you have just been on a journey with. So for those of you who wish for a track by track break down of this vast work by the master, then you can have that as well.

Richie has bared his musical soul to the world here, his longing to manifest something imposing, almost regal and defiantly impressive, he has created a luxurious work of art that is utterly striking and extremely ambitious, but this extensive all-encompassing opus must now surely give **Keith Richie**, the title of Master of the Grand Soundscape. How can I not recommend this distinguished album to you, go buy it now and enjoy your journey too.