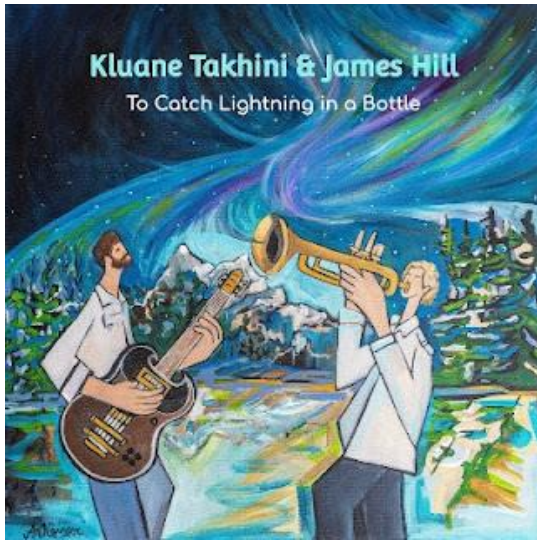


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## 'To Catch Lightning in a Bottle' by Kluane Takhini & James Hill



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Firstly, the phrase **To Catch Lightning in a Bottle** is an idiom, when one seeks in attempting a difficult or challenging feat, can we do the impossible? When one gazes at global events it would seem impossible, but is it? I sometimes wonder how we got through the middle-ages, but we did, and perhaps **Kluane Takhini & James Hill** are creating a slice of musical hope to hang onto on this their latest album.

We start with the title track itself, now I was lucky enough to be given a link to their video for this very song and found it quite moving. **To Catch Lightning in a Bottle** is a classy title track and it illustrates in images and tones our first few baby steps up to our voyage into space, and shows every day humans succeeding when the odds maybe stacked against them, the guitar on this creation was simply sublime and deeply moving, and what a creative way with which to open the release.

The next piece was also released a single earlier this year and called **She Doesn't Know Me Anymore**, it speaks of a story about a daughter and her mother and her parent's journey through *Dementia*. The trumpet of Hill excels in creating a sad mournful vibe here, as the loss of who the person was is manifested; it brought back memories of my late mother's voyage with her father after a major stroke. This multi-instrumental offering casts a heartfelt composition of deep reflection and of care.

I remember this piece very well, **90 Seconds to Midnight**, again I reviewed it as a single earlier on this year, it is another piece that really can't fail to move you, the composition tells the tale of Doomsday clock preciously getting closer to its final countdown, so what to do, drop into the lake of being totally overwhelmed or dance like crazy with every precious second left, it's a juxtaposition that is valid, however I will choose the dance! The piece itself is a symbiotic masterpiece without a shadow of a doubt.

A truly fascinating tale is told within this next piece, also released as a single entitled **Poem for the Shadow King**, featuring the inspirational words and voice of one *Shane Beck*. The skills of Takhini as a composer and performer both come into play here, and the back drop of Hill's mournful trumpet makes you wonder why this amazing instrument isn't used much more than it is in this style of music. The beautifully crafted poem contains words and an overall thread of great importance, to the heart from the heart. Many shattered illusions will be broken on the rocks of the said Shadow King, but here a composition is manifested that will enthrall each and every listener, with each second played, and will leave that said listener, with a musical experience that they will never forget.

For me this next arrangement is a stand out track, the orchestration on **And Then There Were None** was deeply moving, and reminded me of a Pavane at times. This powerful instrumental opus highlights the total futility of war and highlights just how little compassion there is left. This was emphasised on a recent documentary I watched about the *Roman Empire* and their constant failures of wars with the Middle East, the numbers of soldiers lost would always run into hundreds of thousands, skip forward to today and it's still happening. The opening was indeed like a battle cry, but musically what followed was one of the finest examples of contemporary instrumental music around, one must think that music of such a high standard should perhaps be used in a documentary on the pointlessness of war and fighting one another, and for what reason? The orchestration was created by *Ivanov Basso* of Argentina and is a piece that has already won two global awards.

We now move to our next epic opus entitled **Peace Begins With A Smile**. This multi-instrumental twinkling of musical magic contains many crossover moments, from chill out to smooth jazz and contemporary, all of which can be found here with a delicate but classy performance on acoustic guitar, a serene but heart felt trumpet from Hill, and of course the magician himself, the composer **Kluane Takhini** leads the march for peace from the front.

One of my many favourites from this album was the following arrangement called **Lungs of Mother Earth**. This is a composition that desperately needed bringing into reality; the Amazon is home to three million species of plants and animals, and one million indigenous people, yet greed is king in a world of short-term gain and global destruction. This has to be one of the most powerful pieces I have ever heard composed about the *Amazon*, Hills performance on trumpet was simply top of the table, while the natural sounds of the forest were a colourful pastiche of artistic cleverness that was gratefully accepted, please let our mother live!

While many have moved on from the global pandemic, many are still dealing with the psychological scars of things like lockdowns, this truly sensitive creation by Takhini explores that extremely compelling narrative and partnered by Hills trumpet they bring a musical deliberation of great quality on the piece, **I Just Want to Hold Her**.

**Code Red** is the track that will take us into the deeper waters of both the release and of life; **Code Red** is the system that the UN's Panel on Climate Change uses for possible global catastrophe due to global warming, it may well be too late, but is it? Can we overcome greed and miss information? Here Takhini & Hill manifest another power piece in this incredibly intense manifestation, one that contains some of the best rock styled guitar I have heard since *Jeff Wayne's War of the Worlds!*

Our penultimate offering is the wonderfully crafted **The View from Six Feet Under**; this is an interesting track that explores the obvious narrative of death, the confusion of possible after death occurrences, or simply, nothing. I am minded of *Richard Dawkins* quote on the subject "Being dead will be no different from being unborn, I shall be just as I was in the time of *William the Conqueror* or the dinosaurs or the trilobites" the composition is strangely addictive and hauntingly compelling.

The concluding track is entitled **Duet for the Shadow King** and is a soothing musical narrative that ends our journey with **Takhini & Hill**, this is a gentle composition that wonderfully allows us to reflect for a moment on all that we have heard, and allow the entire concept to settle within our minds.

'**To Catch Lightning in a Bottle**' by **Kluane Takhini & James Hill** is the long-awaited musical creation of global awareness, compassion and reality. Here both artists tackle the big picture and wear their hearts on their respective sleeves whilst doing so. '**To Catch Lightning in a Bottle**' by **Kluane Takhini & James Hill**, is an album that will move you to tears, will touch your hearts, will hopefully awaken the compassion and care within you, and is an album that each and every listener needs to have in their collections.