

Artist: Galliano Somnavilla
Album: 365 (original song a day for a year) Vol. 18 Chill'd
Reviewer: Van MacIntosh
Rating: 3

Galliano Somnavilla's album 365 (original song a day for a year) Vol. 18 Chill'd, is a 12-song collection of instrumental music. The album begins with "Song/Day 324." This one sounds a little like something out of a spy movie. It rides to an insistent synth groove, over a percolating percussion bed. Its melody and structure brings to mind the Miami Vice Theme by Jan Hammer.

Next up is "Song/Day 295." For this track, a lighter tone is applied. It has a lilting quality about it. When this melody plays, one can almost imagine a sunny day in the park. Children are running around. Dogs are chasing and retrieving thrown sticks. Everybody's having a good time eating and just relaxing.

"Song/Day 150" is ominous. It suggests somebody sneaking around and committing covert acts. It's built upon a dance-y groove. The melody snakes in and around the groove.

For "Song/Day 309," a gentle approach is applied. Speaking of theme songs, this one may remind you just a bit of Bob James theme song to the sitcom Taxi. It's a keyboard exercise that is pretty, warm and comforting.

There is a skittering, vibes-like intro that precedes the meat of "Song/Day 364." It echoes, swoops and flies around - like a bird. This track is also highlighted by a very nice, very jazzy acoustic piano part. Not that there's anything inherently wrong with electronics, but there is something truly beautiful about natural piano music - especially jazz piano music. It has a real human touch, which stands out on this track, and among the tracks on this album.

Another one of the slight funky tracks is "Song/Day 320," which has a bit of a retro feel to it. It reminds one in places of 70s cop show themes. The percussion section is particularly sweet.

The track "Song/Day 321" has a bit of a Latin groove driving it. It's sometimes difficult to decipher if the lead line is a saxophone or some keyboard instrument or other. It's a little on the moody side.

"Song/Day 337" is another jazzy sounding track. It is also one of the album's more organically arranged tracks. It's subtitled "Somewhere, Out There?" One wonders if this is a song/cry out for love and romance. Is it the lonely outreach for companionship? Or could it be about a loved one that has since passed on? Many times we feel these family members and friends are out there, somewhere, just beyond our reach. On the track, one can also hear the barely audible sounds of someone's voice. Perhaps that's the person that's out there in the distance.

"Song/Day 361" has a bit of a Middle Eastern suggestion running through its melody/groove. It's slightly eerie, and difficult to fully grasp its intent.

For "Song/Day 306," acoustic piano is brought to the fore again. It sounds a little like a George Winston track from back in the day. Of course, much of his music did not include a rhythm track the way this one does.

There is a kind of tribal vibe to the beat that supports "Song/Vibe 360." This is another one of those eerie ones. It's ominous, and not particularly comforting.

This album closes with "Song/Day 306." It pits a piano part against swirling synth backing.

These 12 recordings are all different, even though they fit together well. It's a bit like jazz for the non-jazz fan. Smooth jazz fans will get it, while traditional jazz lovers might have a problem with all the electronics. Somnavilla has a strong sense of melody, which he applies to these memorable recordings. He felt, and rightly so, these recordings are best served chill'd.