

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

Galliano Somnavilla's 365' (original song a day for a year) Vol. 18 Chill'd differs somewhat from the musician's past releases, as many of these other CDs have followed specific themes. As he is also a cook, cooking has played a big part in Somnavilla's past efforts. Sample album titles include Music to Dine for and Playing With Food.

The concept for 365' (original song a day for a year) Vol. 18 Chill'd was for Somnavilla to create one new song a day, for a full year. Obviously, all this music cannot be contained on just one compact disc. However, this set includes 12 tracks. Just as the title suggests, too, these are 'Chill'd' recordings. In other words, they're fairly mellow, sort of dance-y, mostly instrumental tracks.

These are also tracks you can imagine as sounds for movie soundtracks. For instance, "Song/Day 277 'And So It Goes,'" has a moody, summer's day kind of vibe to it. It sounds a lot like the new age and ambient musics that were in vogue back in the 80s. The keyboards provide the lilting groove, as opposed to more traditional percussion elements – such as drums. In fact, the melody line sounds a lot like one of those Kenny G. instrumentals from back in the day.

One titled "Song/Day 357 'Got Me Thinkin'" stands out from the pack, in that it has a touch of a folks-y feel to it. Yes, there are keyboards on it; but there is also acoustic guitar, too. It also has some dobro. Dobro is primarily a country music instrument. Therefore, this instrumental has a kind of down home vibe driving it. "Song/Day 47" although it doesn't also contain country/folk instrumentation, also has a bit of the folk thing running through it. It's a little sad, and quite contemplative.

The majority of these tracks do not have vocals. An exception to this rule is "Song/Day 244 'I'm Still Believin,'" which features a double-tracked vocal. There is a soulful singing of the song's title line, combined with a spoken word vocal. The groove is built around a bumping bass line, which supports an electric keyboard melodic part.

While this is a nice set of music, it lacks some of the artistic focus of past Somnavilla's past efforts. Instead of, say, being inspired by cooking various foods, this a challenge to create new music every day of the year. The result is a fairly wide ranging gathering of songs. Part of the trouble with picking up on any themes is the almost total lack of vocals with words. "Song/Day 216," for instance, does have vocal lines. Only these are of the wordless variety. It's the beautiful sound of a woman vocalizing along with the instrumental track.

If there's one overriding mood, it's that of peacefulness. These twelve recordings generally go down smoothly. There aren't many places where the mood is jarring or obtrusive. Instead, the feeling is warm and comforting, almost exclusively.

Somnavilla does, however, prove to be quite the fine instrumentalist. The keyboard parts, though subtle, are nevertheless quite skilled throughout. And the extended variety of places he sets his instrumentation shows how much of an eclectic player he truly is.

Many of us rarely accomplish everything we want to get done in any given year. Yet Galliano Somnavilla has given us a healthy taste of the music he's created in just one year. That ambition alone deserves big kudos. And the fact that it's so good, only makes us respect him all the more. Perhaps we can call this Somnavilla's year of living musically. There are certainly less productive and fulfilling ways to spend a year. It was a good year for this musician.