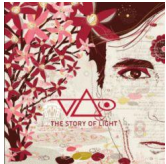


Steve Vai - The Story Of Light (2012)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 21 January 2014 16:47 - Last Updated Saturday, 19 January 2019 20:52

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1 *The Story Of Light* 6:14 2 *Velorum* 6:08 3 *John The Revalator* 3:40 4 *Book Of The Seven Seals* 3:54 5 *Creamsicle Sunset* 3:29 6 *Gravity Storm* 5:32 7 *Mullach a'tsi* 3:55 8 *The Moon and I* 7:16 9 *Weeping China Doll* 6:10 10 *Racing The World* 3:44 11 *No More Amsterdam* 4:14 12 *Sunshine Electric Raindrops* 4:15 Musicians: Steve Vai - guitar (all tracks) and vocals (8, 11) Philip Bynoe - bass Jeremy Colson - drums Deborah Henson-Conant - harp (7) Beverly McClellan - vocals (3, 4) Aimee Mann - vocals (11) Dave Rosenthal - piano (1) Julia Rainy May Vai - Russian narration (1) Bob Carpenter - Hammond B3 (3, 4, 12) Mike Keneally - keyboards (8) Dave Weiner - rhythm guitar (8)

Guitar virtuoso Steve Vai's music has its roots in some unknown interstellar worlds. From his earliest mid-'80s solo output, Vai's largely instrumental tricked-out guitar compositions found some strange middle ground between heavy metal bliss and space-traveling experimentalism. Released in 2005, *Real Illusions: Reflection* found Vai shifting from his alien undercurrents to a more spiritual vibe, with themes of new age discovery and introspection filling the album. *The Story of Light*, Vai's eighth studio album of solo work, continues down the spiritual path, infusing his monolithic metal fusion playing with inward reflections, as well as expanding on the "rock fable" begun on the last album. His signature heavily processed tone and liquid playing characterize barnburning runs like the funky "Velorum" and the roadhouse stomp of "Gravity Storm," while softer tracks like "Creamsicle Sunset" and "The Moon and I" wander longingly through various time signatures and modes, the later dabbling with Middle Eastern scales. The most winning moments on *The Story of Light* are the unexpected ones, as with "No More Amsterdam," a zigzagging ballad about the ennui of world travel that finds Vai duetting with singer/songwriter institution Aimee Mann, who also wrote the song's lyrics. Most uncommon to the guitarist's catalog thus far is his two-part cover of bluesman Blind Willie Johnson's "John the Revelator." This surprising cut is sung largely by Beverly McClellan from television's *The Voice*, backed by a full gospel choir with samples of Johnson's original recording of the song sampled in intermittently. The effect, much like the entire album, is epic, but not the type of epic we've come to expect from one of the longer-running guitar gods of his era. While always prolific, uncompromising, and inarguably shredding, it's refreshing to see that Vai is still deeply interested in expanding his sound. Even at a well-established level and decades into his craft,

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Vai takes some surprising risks on The Story of Light, and the album almost always benefits from them. ---Fred Thomas, allmusic.com

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