

Missouri-based Céran is the product of a rich ethnic heritage stemming from African-American, Creole, Cherokee, German, and French lineages. *Verity* is the follow-up to *The Art Of Céran*, which continues in the same vein of introspective songs that traverse the worlds of soul, pop, jazz, and ballads with a strong dance presence and R&B elements from the 1950s and 60s. The twelve-track release showcases Céran's latest musical creations with a powerful voice, danceable beats, and a soulful, almost nostalgic swagger.

“A Veritable Prelude” opens with Céran's solo spoken word. The delivery is somewhat radio-like with a good degree of echoing. The effect is very powerful and memorable. This is not a musical track or a track accompanied by instruments.

“Change For Me” begins with a good dance beat, atmospheric pads, and swishy percussion that sets the mood in an upbeat manner. The keyboard embellishments are punchy and static-driven, which are characteristic of early dance tunes from Eastern Africa and pop music from the 1980s. At any rate, Céran's vocals are rather mature and varied on this track with a good degree of soul, R&B, and electronica. Some of the vocals are a little forced over the latter half of the song, but nothing is too intrusive to mention.

“Heart On The Line” opens with a few pensive piano ballad notes and Céran's cascading vocals. The piano is joined by atmospheric washes and a simple drum beat. The melody is rather beautiful and enthralling with a great combination of keys, piano, drums, and vocals. This is a memorable ballad with Céran's signature vocal set-up. The vocals are layered and soar near the latter half of the song. The effect is dreamy, melodic, and highly-textured.

“Open Road” begins with a piano melody, piercing keyboard washes, and Céran's soulful vocals leading the charge. The symphonic keyboards add a touch of classicism to the already classic track that is steeped in jazzy soul, R&B, and contemporary piano pop. The vocals vacillate with an inner beauty that is professional and unforgettable at the same time. This is not one of the dance tracks, as the symphonic keyboards and soulful vocals add a touch of romanticism and introspection.

“The Wrong Of Right” opens with a punchy reggae beat with a slight dance presence and Céran's Caribbean-esque vocal intonations. The soft bass tones and organic drum sounds add a slightly island sound to the song, which reflects a tropical feel to the track. The vocals are not particularly loud or overshadowing. The instrumentation kicks in a little bit more near the end of the song with keyboard embellishments. There are a few non-lexical vocals—otherwise known as scat—which occur throughout the track.

Céran adds a more diverse repertoire of instruments, beats, and vocals on his latest release, *Verity*. The album contains twelve new tracks mostly written, composed, arranged, orchestrated, sung, and produced by Céran. The music contains elements of jazz, soul, gospel, rock, pop, new age, classical, R&B, and electronica. The songs are rather contemplative, diverse, and multi-layered with infusions of many genres. The entire project seems to work flawlessly. There are only a few minor quips with the recording quality, but it is much improved over the previous release. Furthermore, the vocals are relatively strong throughout, but sometimes the vocals are difficult to hear or they are a little off-key. There seems to be more world fusion on this album,

too. For example, there are elements of French, Latin, and Spanish lyrics and percussive influences. Overall, Céran steps it up with a more cohesive and solid recording that spans countries, generations, and genres with little in the way of improvements needed.

Artist: Céran

Album: *Verity*

Review by Matthew Forss

Rating: 4.5 Stars (out of 5)