

# Garth Prince – Falling in Africa

written by Beach Sloth | October 25, 2020



Garth Prince sculpts thoughtful, world-spanning sounds on the soulful “Falling in Africa”. The highly tactile nature of the arrangements gives them a timeless quality. Rhythms are nimble and the dexterity of the players is pitch-perfect. By far the highlight of the album and its true soul comes from the incredible vocals. Infused with a thoughtful meditative quality these are songs that invite the listener into an energetic caring world. Here Garth Prince features a tremendous array of different approaches, going from almost entirety acapella to infectious rhythms that race on through.

So much joy radiates through these pieces. While retaining a certain glee reminiscent of children’s artists like Raffi, there is a greater acknowledgment of the world at large. His usage of organic real live instruments has become something of a rarity in a Cocomelon-dominated soundscape. Here he brings together western and African music in a way that feels carefully balanced. A lot of delightful twists and turns to the music helps to keep it constantly surprising. As a parent it is doubly refreshing to have something to play my children that challenges as well as remains something that feels so thoughtful.

The tone is set with the mellowed-out atmospherics of “Grazing Back Home (Radio edit)” featuring some particularly lively percussion. With “Dumela Kaufela featuring the Culture Kidz Choir” he combines breezy Chicago post-rock alongside traditional folk melodies, making it easy to get lost in. On the title track “Falling In Africa” there is a giddy anticipation underlying it all, as the narrative possesses a tremendous outpouring of optimism. Great saxophone playing reminiscent of Getatchew Mekurya reigns supreme over the bouncing “Jambo Bwana (featuring Overlanders School students)”. Fantastic full colors come into bloom on the spacious “The Savana is Calling”. The gleaming keyboards of “Culture” intermingle to create a dazzling kaleidoscopic sound. A hushed reference defines the delicate “Mother Sister Daughter”.

A sense of sheer bliss runs through the tenderness of "Tate Wetu (feat. Kuisebmond Primary and !Nara Primary School choirs)". With the "Falling In Africa Instrumental" they show off their impeccable chops as exclusion of the vocals gives further credence to their uncanny ability to craft a giant communal groove. The angular guitar works perfectly on the infectious dance-beat of "Dumela Kaufela Performance". "Jambo Bwana Performance" contorts in unexpected ways, with the horns feeling rather lovely. Great storytelling graces the gentle "Grazing Back Home Young Reader Version". Bringing everything to a satisfying close is the mediative finale of "Grazing Back Home Young Reader Instrumental".

"Falling in Africa" proves Garth Prince to be a truly gifted storyteller reflecting upon lives lived to the fullest in a way that feels uniquely his own.