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The Link Between Piano and Soul

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I'll start this review by commenting the cover. You see, Ken Elkinson's seventh solo piano album, entitled *Link*, has a very funny greeting from the artist written in the cover. So before commenting the music, I'll quote the inside of the cover. It says:

You may be surprised to receive this letter from me since you do not know me personally. I am Mr. Ken Elkinson, the wife of Mr. Thabo Kennedy, who was recently murdered in the land dispute in Zimbabwe. I got your contact on South African trade journal and decided to write you. Before the death of my husband, he had taken me to Johannesburg to deposit the sum of US\$15 Million.

And so on. It is the typical scam mail, right? But Elkinson has added his own twist:

(in order to get the money) I will ask you to do the following in the exact order described: First off, purchase both a Bösendorfer 200 piano and a Yamaha C3 Piano. Then practice a lot of 31 years.

The list goes on and on. Bottom line is: he tells you what it takes to make an album like this, in the "scam mail" format. It is really creative. I must also note that this is not the first Ken Elkinson album to be delivered with a funny and somewhat different cover text.

That said, the album itself is also great – but a bit darker than most Ken Elkinson albums. But don't get me wrong; it is a great album!

Link starts with the title song, which is thoughtful and slow. Track two, *Homecoming*, is like a classical piano ballad. It is gentle and playful, and you can hear that it is fun to play.

Yes, *Link* really is a bit dark. Songs like *Dry Lake Bed*, *Doubt* and *House At Dusk* paint a picture that is filled with shadows. But this makes the lighter songs, like *Awakening* and *Tide* sound even more fresh and alive.

Link tells about a musician that has found his expression, and is able to communicate deep emotions. But if you are new to Ken Elkinson's music, you might want to check out some of his other albums first – like *Midnight Conversation* (1996) – but old fans will for sure enjoy to be linked to this new release.