



***Opal***  
**By Ken Elkinson**  
**Label: August Son**  
**Released 4/19/2004**

#### Ken's Gift

My first impression of solo pianist Ken Elkinson's music is that he is a serious composer. His style is no-nonsense and his music is serious, but not stodgy. What you will not hear in his new album, *Opal* is light, diaphanous compositions. What you will hear is music with purpose. Elkinson's music is like a Picasso painting. You may not get it at first but after a bit of retrospection, it all becomes clear and you end up asking yourself why you did not see that before. My perception is that Ken Elkinson wants to say something with his music and he is saying it his way. There is a time in everyone's life for serious music. This contemplative album, teetering on the edge of jazz compositions, is good for what ails you.

Circle is an enthusiastic number that is like a brisk walk through New York's Central Park on an October afternoon. Sure, it is warm now, but fall is in the air. Cold is coming so beware!

The title tune *Opal* was exceptional with an upbeat tempo and satisfying melody. The song is like an adventure in springtime. New growth, new changes and yet somehow, still lovingly familiar. Remember, the opal gemstone is very deceiving. It is cool to the touch, but there is fire inside and it stirs the passions of man and woman.

Indigo has a dark, bluesy feel and a sound that bodes inclement weather. You can imagine glistening, amber-colored taxis rushing by splashing the pedestrians. You can envision puddles in the alleyways reflecting the day's laundry hung on window clotheslines. And before you stands a mysterious woman in a dark blue raincoat looking into a storefront window, her cardboard coffee cup steaming in her hands. You wonder...

The best cut on the album has to be *Afterglow*. Like the sweet taste of clover honey or the heat of a lover's fiery touch, this music stays on your mind for a long time after you have heard it. It is the music in your head after the party is over, the lights turned off and you head up the stairs. *Afterglow* is the resonance of a stray memory from a chance encounter; soothing, warm, unforgettable.

Ken Elkinson is a study in contrast. He has traveled around the United States from New York City to Atlanta and Los Angeles perfecting his sound. His music is cool, sophisticated and at times, sensual. His attitude however, is best summed up as idiosyncratic. His liner notes on the back of *Opal* are a humorous testament to every rip-off email scheme on the web. To muddy the waters a bit more he is allowing listeners to download the complete album of *Opal* from his website at [www.kenelkinson.com](http://www.kenelkinson.com). You understand why I was confused at first. Now you know why I am a Ken Elkinson fan.