

Katie Melua – Ketevan (2013)

Written by bluesever

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01 – Never Felt Less Like Dancing 02 – Sailing Ships From Heaven 03 – Love Is A Silent Thief 04 – Shiver Ans Shake 05 – The Love I'm Frightened Of 06 – Where Does The Ocean Go 07 – Idiot School 08 – Mad, Mad Men 09 – Chase Me 10 – I Never Fall 11 – I Will Be There Katie Melua – vocals Luke Batt - Drums, Guitars, Percussion, Piano Mike Batt - Accordion, Conductor, Harmonium, Piano, Producer, Vocals (Background) Tim Harries - Bass Dan Hawkins - Bass Freddie Hill – Drums Paul Jones – Harmonica John Parricelli - Banjo, Guitars, Ukulele Chris Spedding - Guitar Henry Spinetti - Drums, Percussion Paul Stevens - Clarinet, Soloist Fabien Taverne - Ukulele Joe Yoshida – Drums The Docklands Sinfonia

Having reunited with her longtime mentor, former Wombles singer/songwriter Mike Batt, for her 2012 symphonic album, *Secret Symphony*, vocalist Katie Melua continues in an orchestral vein with her sixth studio album, 2013's *Ketevan*. Much like its predecessor, *Ketevan* is a languid, often cinematic-sounding album that builds upon Melua's talents as an interpreter of other people's material as well as her own songs. Having taken a creative detour to work with electronic producer William Orbit for 2010's *The House*, Melua once again returns to her roots as Batt's protégée. Raised in the Eastern European state of Georgia, Melua moved with her family to England when she was eight. Batt discovered the then 19-year-old Melua while she was attending the Brit School of Performing Arts in 2003. Subsequently, they have worked together on most of her albums. Taking its title from Melua's Georgian birth name, *Ketevan* features songs and arrangements from Batt, as well as contributions from his son Luke Batt. Melua also earns a handful of co-writing credits herself, as on the sinewy "Love Is a Silent Thief" and the '60s-influenced torch song "Chase Me," both of which beautifully showcase her crystalline technique and softly soulful style. As with other Melua/Batt productions, *Ketevan* also serves as a vehicle for Batt to flex his melodic skills as a songwriter and arranger. A veteran of '70s bubblegum pop, Batt has also experimented with rock opera and adult contemporary music, all of which he brings to bear on his work with Melua. Here, he frames Melua's voice in grand, sweepingly romantic arrangements on songs like "Sailing Ships from Heaven" and "I Will Be There," which sound something like Kate Bush singing Scott Walker compositions. Similarly, the Melua/Mike Batt/Luke Batt-composed "Where Does the Ocean Go?" is an ambitious folk-inflected epic inspired by poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient

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Mariner." Fluid and utterly gorgeous, Ketevan is a unique and delicate vessel. ---Matt Collar, Rovi

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