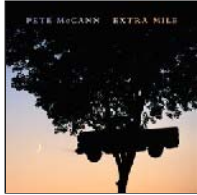




Two Talents, Two Tangents: Pete McCann & Sheryl Bailey

By [Tom Greenland](#)



Pete McCann
Extra Mile
[19/8](#)
2009

Sheryl Bailey
A New Promise
[MCG Jazz](#)
2009

[Pete McCann](#) and [Sheryl Bailey](#), two talented jazz guitarists with an affinity for rock, have each released recordings reflecting complementary tangents of 'mainstream' jazz, Bailey with a guitar-fronted big band, McCann with a new-fusion small group.

McCann's fourth date as a leader, *Extra Mile*, like its predecessor *Most Folks*, is an all-original quintet outing with alto saxophonist John O'Gallagher and drummer Mark Ferber, continuing a trend towards an accessible amalgam of jazz and shred-rock. With pianist [Henry Hey](#) and bassist [Matt Clohesy](#) as new additions, the combo achieves an integrated sound, delivered with turbo-charged finesse.

The compositions have interesting harmonic progressions with moving inner voices and strong vamps. "Tributary," a ballad, has a through-composed, stream-of-consciousness melody akin to Steve Swallow's "Falling Grace" while "Pi," a beautiful acoustic bass/guitar duet, ambles along a pretty pathway with unexpected turns. McCann's playing is chop-laden but never stiff or predictable, his powerful, often edgy lines spinning out with a vengeance, revealing a surprising variety of rhythmic inflections and subtle ornaments. His solo on "Angry Pamela" has fast pentatonic runs that seem to go a note or two further than expected, the phrases jumping off from and landing in unusual places; on "Hybrid," the ferocious onslaught of notes is laced through with sharp corners and brief pauses.

Bailey's *A New Promise* is a collaboration with the Three Rivers Jazz Orchestra and a tribute to the late guitarist Emily Remler. Following in the tradition of Charlie Christian, Kenny Burrell and George Benson, who all fronted big band projects, Bailey more than rises to the occasion, soaring over Mike Tomaro and John Wilson's lush arrangements with agility and aplomb in a set of three originals, three Remler covers and a pair of choice standards.

Bailey's burnished treble tone is bell-sweet, her wide-ranging ideas articulated with astounding clarity and precision. Remler's samba "Carenia" shows the guitarist in slash-and-burn mode over the lilting percussion, sweep-picking arpeggios, crafting each phrase as a finely forged gemstone, turning the gas up even higher for the outro vamp. "Unified Field" and "You and the Night" both begin with well conceived and executed guitar chord solos; on the latter, Bailey's opening quote of "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise" kindles into long-winded, high-flying lines anchored to low-string 'bombs,' an elegant statement of taut logic and loose abandon.

Tracks & Personnel

Extra Mile

Tracks: Fielder's Choice; Isosceles; Stasis; Extra Mile; Angry Panda; Tributary; Pi; Hybrid; Lonesome Prairie Dog; Rhodes Less Traveled.

Personnel: Pete McCann: electric & acoustic guitars; John O'Gallagher: alto sax; Henry Hey: piano & Rhodes; Matt Clohesy: acoustic & electric basses; Mark Ferber: drums.

A New Promise

Tracks: Lament; East to Wes; Miekaniemi; A New Promise; Mocha Spice; Unified Field; Carenia; You and the Night.

Personnel: Sheryl Bailey: electric guitar;; Mike Tomaro: soprano & alto saxophones; Jim Guerra: alto sax; Eric DeFate: tenor sax; Rich Matt: tenor sax; Jim Germann: baritone sax; Steve Hawk: lead trumpet; Joe Herndon: trumpet; Steve McKnight: trumpet; James Moore: trumpet; Ralph Guzzi: trumpet; Reggie Watkins: lead Trombone; Clayton DeWalt: trombone; Ross Garin: trombone; Christopher Carson: bass trombone; Paul Thompson: bass; David Glover: drums; Jay Ashby: trombone & percussion; Marty Ashby: acoustic guitar; Hendrik Meurkens: vibes.



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