



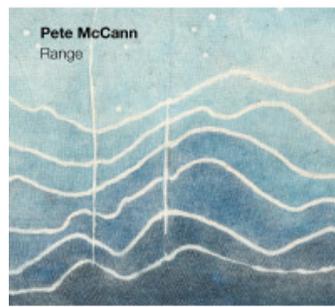
Pete McCann: Range (2015)

By

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This is the fifth album as leader by NYC-based guitarist Pete McCann and demonstrates just what heights the jazz guitar is capable of reaching when placed in the hands of an expert who understands the meaning of balance and finesse. Opening with the breezy "Kenny," a paen to the late Kenny Wheeler (with whom Pete McCann had performed), the guitarist lays down flurries of rapid-fire notes, with notable solo appearances here by Henry Hey on piano and John O'Gallagher on alto saxophone. The guitar on "Seventh Jar" has more electric bite, with McCann's solo straddling the typical rapid note progression and vibrant tone of two of his great heroes John McLaughlin and Allan Holdsworth, but he achieves this without sounding derivative.

The fast-paced "Realm" again has the guitarist laying down a fleet-footed solo, adorned by the lightning runs which sound facile, but most emphatically are not. "To The Mountains" steps into dream-like Bill Frisell territory with limpid echo-infused melody lines on guitar and a sonorous double bass solo from Matt Clohesy. "Mustard," somewhat at odds with the majority of the other tracks involves Zappa-esque bluesy rock chords with some fiery organ driven by Henry Hey and a muscular guitar solo, which in this context leans towards a Jeff Beck approach.

"Dyad Changes" is an angular fast-paced number with solos from Henry Hey (here on Rhodes), John O'Gallagher, Mark Ferber and naturally, McCann himself. Opening

with acoustic guitar and piano, "Numinous" describes cautious, quiet, melodically serpentine sonic explorations, less typical but no less intriguing than the other pieces on the album.

"Bridge Scandal" returns to the jazz rock paradigm carved out by heroes Holdsworth and McLaughlin, replete with a fluid alto solo and some convincing overdriven fusion guitar work. "Rumble" is a less frenetic but foot-tappingly brisk Bebop-esque outing with Latin overtones. The gentle closing tune, "Mine Is Yours" is more reflective and sees both Matt Clohesy and Pete McCann turn in elegant solos on double bass and acoustic guitar respectively.

McCann's versatility proves that he is capable of both composing and playing in a range of styles, from languid sensitivity to raw full-on power. The album, for which McCann also took on production duties and whose title seems singularly appropriate, is an object lesson in chiaroscuro invention, naturally inviting frequent replays.

Track Listing: Kenny; Seventh Jar; Realm; To The Mountains; Mustard; Dyad Changes; Numinous; Bridge Scandal; Rumble; Mine Is Yours.

Personnel: Pete McCann : electric guitar, acoustic guitar; John O'Gallagher: alto saxophone; Henry Hey: piano, Rhodes, organ; Matt Clohesy: double bass, electric bass; Mark Ferber: drums.

Record Label: Whirlwind Recordings Ltd