

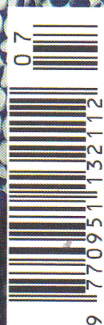
# fROOTS

Local Music From Out There



## devon sproule

20 years of world music • ismael iõ  
benjamin escoriza • rachel unthank  
storytelling • neil sparkes • mavis staples  
odemba OK jazz • 17 hippies • watersons





# MARY McCASLIN

**Better Late Than Never** Mary McCaslin  
Music MMM100

According to Mary's liner notes the initial *Better Late Than Never* sessions took place during 2004 and this album was finally released in the States late last year. It features a handful of McCaslin originals, some co-written, her arrangement of the traditional *California Joe*, plus half a dozen covers.

Mary's *Acres Of Houses*, inspired by a recent visit to Vermont, compares the current landscape of 'little boxes' with the rural countryside that existed in 1973 when she recorded her second solo album *Way Out West* in North Ferrisburg. The late Walter Hyatt, born c.1949, was raised in Spartanburg, South Carolina, a town that has long been a magnet for folk/ country musicians according to Peter Cooper's book *Hub City Music Makers – One Southern Town's Popular Music Legacy* (1997). Travelling home after a gig, the duo Robin and Linda Williams passed Hyatt's birthplace on the May 1996 night that the ValuJet DC-9, on which Walter was a passenger, crashed in the Florida Everglades. While Hyatt perished, countless acquaintances have kept his music and memory alive, and Mary's song is based on the tale that the Williams related to her.

Career long, Mary has displayed a penchant for covering pop and soul songs, particularly those penned during the 1960s. In the process she imbued them with her unique acoustic folk/ country style. In that vein, towards the close of this collection you'll find Neil Young's *Losing End* from his 1969 second solo outing *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere*. A cover of the early career Jackson Browne composition *You've Forgotten*, a song he's never recorded, is followed by the late Hoyt Axton's anti-war tune *To Some Cool Blue-Iced Shore*, that Mary covered on *Goodnight Everybody* (1969) and *Rain – The Lost*

*Album* (1999, recorded 1967/68). Axton's song was penned when the Vietnam War was at its height, and four decades on this new reading is Mary's response to America's recent military adventures. McCaslin has also covered a couple of pre-WWII 'American Songbook' tunes, namely *Unchained Melody* and *Bei Mir Bist Du Schön* (To Me You Are Beautiful), and adds a new closing verse to the Civil War-themed *Sabres And Guns* composed by her first husband, the late Jim Ringer.

A new Mary McCaslin album is always a true listening pleasure.

[www.marymccaslin.com](http://www.marymccaslin.com)

*Arthur Wood*

👤 **Sally Spring *Mockingbird*** (Sniffinpup Records) California-born, North Carolina-bred 1970s' veteran folkie self-releases, fourth (?) solo album featuring a mix of original songs and covers. Guest contributors include Gene Parsons, Tift Merritt and Caitlin Cary.