

Nicki Parrott — Fly Me To The Moon (2009)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen*
02. *I Love The Way You're Breakin' My Heart*
03. *Do It Again*
04. *Fly Me To The Moon*
05. *La Vie En Rose*
06. *Waltzing Matilda*
07. *I Never Had A Chance*
08. *Evil Gal Blues*
09. *For All We Know*
10. *Charade*
11. *I Never Dreamed You'd Leave In Summer*
12. *Them There Eyes*
13. *Two For The Road*

Nicki Parrott – bass, vocals John Di Martino – piano Mark Sganga – guitar Lisa Parrott – baritone, soprano saxophone Harry Allen – tenor saxophone Billy Drummond - drums

Stan Getz characterized the challenge that tenor saxophonists face as singing perfectly on an imperfect instrument. Harry Allen takes up Getz' challenge with a beautiful instrumental voice that harkens back to the wonderfully vocal playing of the master himself. While Allen has been a prolific leader over the past two decades he lends his resonant horn to two sessions that show the continued vibrancy of the mainstream. Bassist/vocalist Nicki Parrott's *Fly Me to the Moon* places this first-call bassist in the context of a world- class band for a wonderful trip through a standards-based program that takes more than a few interesting turns. Parrott and Allen then join drummer Eddie Metz Jr. for *Bridging the Gap*, a swinging session that while likewise steeped in standards, veers off the straight-ahead bending into pop, rock and blues.

Nicki Parrott's bass playing is elegant yet contains a depth of expression that can both break

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your heart and increase your blood pressure. This, her second session as a leader for the Japanese Venus label, showcases her cool vocals and emotive bass alongside Allen's exquisite horn, pianist John di Martino's inventive improvising, sister Lisa Parrott's hot baritone and soprano sax playing, drummer Billy Drummond's easy swinging beats and guitar stylings of Mark Sganga. Allen's mellow horn is a delight and the perfect counterpoint to Nicki's vocals on ballads like "I Love the Way You're Breakin' My Heart" and "Do It Again". Perhaps more intriguing though are the band's performances of the non-traditional. These include their jazz/pop treatment of Stevie Wonder's "I Never Dreamed You'd Leave in Summer," a starkly beautiful "La Vie En Rose" and a tribute to the sisters' Australian birthplace with the coolest "Waltzing Matilda" on record. ---Elliott Simon, allaboutjazz.com

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