



ECHO PAINTING
PEGGY LEE

Incantation (5:20)	PEGGY LEE ECHO PAINTING
Out On a Limb (4:27)	Brad Turner trumpet & flugelhorn
A Strange Visit (3:45)	Jon Bentley soprano & tenor saxophone
Nice Collection (3:44)	John Paton tenor saxophone
Snappy (5:10)	Roderick Murray trombone
Painting Echoes (5:21)	Meredith Bates violin
Foreground (2:11)	Peggy Lee cello
The Hidden Piece (1:48)	Cole Schmidt electric & acoustic guitar
Hymn (6:02)	Bradshaw Pack pedal steel guitar
WB Intro (2:37)	James Meger electric & acoustic bass
Weather Building (3:30)	Dylan van der Schyff drums, percussion &
End Piece (1:40)	Yamaha RX-15 drum machine
The Unfaithful Servant* (4:43)	Robin Holcomb voice*

Recorded & mixed in 24 bits/96K · Total time: 50:38 songlines.com
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All compositions by Peggy Lee (SOCAN) except tracks 7 (Bates, Lee, Schmidt, Meger, SOCAN), 10 (Meger, van der Schyff, SOCAN) and 13, words and music by Robbie Robertson, Canaan Music Inc / Fourth Floor Music Inc (ASCAP)

Produced by Dylan van der Schyff and Peggy Lee

Executive producer: Tony Reif

Recorded April 16 & 17, 2017 by Sheldon Zaharko, assisted by Dominick Civiero & Annie Kennedy at The Warehouse Studio, Vancouver, BC

Robin Holcomb's vocal recorded by Wayne Horvitz at Other Room Music

Mixed by Dylan van der Schyff at Zio Uovo and Chris Gestrin at Public Alley 421

Mastered by Chris Gestrin at Public Alley 421

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Front cover photo: Bruce van der Schyff

Band photos: Myriam Casper

Design and layout: Robin Mitchell Cranfield







SINCE EMERGING on Vancouver's creative-music scene more than 25 years ago, Peggy Lee has quietly carved out a formidable international career. But to understand Peggy's art you really need to know how she does things at home. Mid-career, and at the height of her powers, Lee's preoccupation with the Vancouver music community — with imagining and re-imagining how the players on this scene fit together — continues to deepen with every new record she makes. That's one of the reasons why *Echo Painting*, her seventh album as a leader and her first on Songlines, is such a notable event.

Spurred by a commission for the 2016 Vancouver International Jazz Festival, Lee assembled a new 10-piece ensemble, despite already leading a pair of octets (Peggy Lee Band, Film in Music) and participating in two co-operative trios (Waxwing, Handmade Blade). She now envisioned another configuration: a combination that mirrored her earliest activity on the West Coast (most memorably perhaps at the long-demolished Glass Slipper) and her more recent musical relationships.



Lee tapped three longtime colleagues (trumpeter Brad Turner, saxophonist Jon Bentley, drummer Dylan van der Schyff); one of the city's first-call trombonists (Rod Murray); a new-music composer (Bradshaw Pack), here making his recording debut on pedal steel guitar; and four estimable, emerging musicians (violinist Meredith Bates, saxophonist John Paton, guitarist Cole Schmidt, bassist James Meger) who have, over the past few years, played with Peggy at a string of small artist-run spaces, from Merge to the China Cloud to the Gold Saucer Studio.

Then she set to work. For Lee, that meant writing for *these* musicians, for this arrangement of voices. As a composer, she may notate line and motion, but she's also fastidious about freedom — about creating spaces for improvisers. That's why *Echo Painting* rewards repeated listening: with its intricate network of groupings and colours, predetermined and impromptu forms, this grand, 50-minute performance comes without seams, a design hard-won in rehearsal, built, as it largely was, in real time, through hours of playing together.





As a cellist, Lee has long considered how strings and horns intersect, how they sit side by side. On *Echo Painting* she goes further into string culture — mining the textures between players (between, say, violin and cello) or in less travelled combinations. (The beauty, and the promise, of melding pedal steel and trumpet never left her after hearing Pack and Turner together at a benefit concert in late 2015.) “Foreground” is an obvious place to start — Bates, Schmidt, Meger, and Lee in two minutes of open mayhem — but “Incantation,” a gorgeous, pining feature for Bentley’s tenor (and the album’s opener) is also a declaration of string intent: a wash of delicate, rubato layers, a string preface, one shade upon the next, before the full ensemble enters.

Echo Painting may begin with an incantation, and continue later with a hymn — if Peggy Lee (the composer) has a signature it might just be this track, No. 9 — but to me this record is often rooted in a pure, earthy North American vernacular. Singers have long figured into Peggy’s musical life. She’s cultivated serious, lasting collaborations with Julie McGeer and Veda Hille (in Vancouver) and Mary Margaret O’Hara (in Toronto). Since the 2009 PuSh International Performing Arts Festival, Peggy and Robin Holcomb have periodically worked in duo; these are among the great unreleased performances of Lee’s career. Here, Holcomb comes in at the end, singing the Band’s “Unfaithful Servant,” and magically refashions things — sending us back to the beginning, to listen again, a memory of the coda now with us along the way.

Greg Buium
Vancouver, January 2018

