

Downtown Music Gallery

[JOHN McNEIL](#)

[This Way Out](#)

Label: Omnitone 15204 **Country:** USA

Format: CD **Category:** STOCK **Price:** \$15.00

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Description:

Featuring John on trumpet, Gorka Benitez on tenor sax, Ms. Giulia Valle on bass and Joe Smith on drums. Although John McNeil has been playing professionally for some 35 years, I caught him for the first time during the 'Trumpet Festival Month' at Tonic in August. Turns out that he has worked with Horace Silver, Slide Hampton, Gerry Mulligan and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band and has some nine discs out on Steeplechase. This is John's debut for Omnitone and it was recorded in Barcelona, Spain with two fine Spanish players and organized by John's friend, Joe Smith. "Mi Tio" launches things off into a quick and spinning sort-of flamenco groove with ebullient solos from the trumpet and tenor, both have rich, warm tones. "A la Orilla" does have a tango-like groove, with some lovely horn harmonies and exquisite, melancholy solos. Gorka wrote "Picasso View", which is a quirky piece where the horns play odd, bouncing lines together mostly unaccompanied. I dig the joyous Art Blakey style rhythm of the drums on "My Taxi", although the horns lay back and play refreshing, elegant solos. McNeil often sounds like he is playing flugelhorn, his tone is a pure and constantly enchanting. Gorka also a rich, warm tone, not too distant from Atlantic period Trane or Dexter Gordon. Solid writing and strong playing from all.Â