

Tell My Sister, by Kate & Anna McGarrigle

reviewed by [Steve Thorngate](#) in the [October 18, 2011](#) issue

In Review



Tell My Sister

by Kate & Anna McGarrigle
Nonesuch

The McGarrigle sisters (Kate died of sarcoma last year) were more successful in their native Canada than in the States, but they were deeply admired by those who covered their songs: Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt, Maria Muldaur, Kate's son Rufus Wainwright.

This three-disc collection features remastered versions of the sisters' 1976 self-titled debut album and its follow-up, *Dancer with Bruised Knees*; the third disc is a collection of unreleased material. The songs are folk-rooted but broadly adventurous; often playfully funny, they are rarely ironic or biting. The anglophone Quebecois duo worked mostly in English but occasionally in French; they sing beautifully in both languages. And their perfectly blended sibling harmony—sometimes country-close, sometimes with one up high and one down low—is gently lovely at any volume.

Listen to "Talk to Me of Mendocino":