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You can't always tell a book by its cover, or so the old saying goes. So when an album arrives with the title *Contradictions* it really is hard to know what to expect. In fact, what we have is a genre shifting album that seamlessly introduces an intoxicating blend of late night jazz, smooth blues, catchy funk, easy rock, and gentle groove driven pop.

Contradictions is the debut album from Washington DC band Side FX. Led by sultry singer Kim Cameron and her guitarist partner Chris Nikpora, who adds swathes of colour with some impressive breaks, this is an album that is all but impossible to nail in the category department.

Listen several times and the real *Contradictions* begin to emerge. It's deceptively upbeat, easy going summery feel, shifts through to a late night vibe with reflective lyrics. "What you see is not always what you get" says singer Kim Cameron, as this immaculately blended album unfolds.

The atmosphere is eclectic and yet, as a contradiction, hangs together effortlessly. Many of the songs carry 'hidden meanings' of observations along life's often rocky road. They include songs of romance and love, through to disillusioned troops, and on to the feelings of a woman who feels trapped. within her life.

Radio-friendly songs, dance floor tempos, and catchy hooks abound as the album unfolds. Kim possesses a voice that can cover all of these twists and turns, and every charged emotion with conviction. She sounds warm and sultry one moment, powerful, soulful, or vibrant the next. Underpinning all this is Side FX's ability to write killer radio friendly hooks, and deliver them with some excellent musicianship.

Contradictions is rooted in the classic pop-rock vibe of the seventies but they give it a twist by introducing extra elements, or should I say Side FX, into the mix. The first two tracks, "Scattered" and "My Hero", confirm how smoothly these transitions blend together.

The reflective yet up-tempo "Scattered" is set within a dreamy melancholy that is coloured nicely by seventies synth, driving bass, and the addition of Davie Yarborough's luscious sax.

"My Hero", takes a step in a different direction with it's funk vibe set high atop a reggae flavoured beat. Airplay friendly, like the majority of their material, it is lifted by Kim's vocal as she responds to the spotlight and shows her presence and range.

This is further highlighted by her memorable delivery on "Come A Little Closer". It is a track that is given extra depth by Nickpora's smooth guitar and Kim's positive energy, very reminiscent of Chrissie Hynde.

The album produces a set that you simply cannot second guess. "Her Escape" is an intoxicating blend of jazz over blues and again Yarborough's seductive sax adds waves of atmosphere. This is no clumsy meshing of genres, this is carefully blended like an intricate far eastern recipe, where each delicate flavour enhances the other.

"I Want To Hear" opens with flowing guitar over another killer chorus. This invaded my head after just one play, arriving unannounced the following day and refusing to shift from my mind. Such is the power of a well written hook. Side FX tap into that well time and again.

"Won't Break Down" rocks gently towards the reflective "Life's Mystery" a track enhanced by Joe Michaels violin. The fresh sounding "The Way You Look At Me", and the infectious "Never Forget" close an album that possesses hidden depth, obvious style, and is as cool as the autumn breeze.

Side FX can be found by following this link to their [MySpace page](#) or their [own website](#).