



Bucky Pizzarelli
Flashes: A Lifetime In Words And Music

ARBORS 19306

★★★★½

A saddening reality of the art of jazz moving into its second century of existence is the loss of the living links to its rich past. While no one should be rushing off to enshrine guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli for posterity's sake, his approach to his material and his instrument warrants the considered study of those seeking to understand the talent and gifts of a true master. For that reason alone he deserves the austere treatment he receives on *Flashes: A Lifetime In Words And Music*.

A collection of 22 cuts, many culled from deep within some of the less traversed chapters

of the Great American Songbook, *Flashes* features Pizzarelli completely solo and unencumbered by the potential obscurement of a backing ensemble. Instead, he's free to explore the harmonic depths of selections like "Willow Weep For Me" and "The Shadow Of Your Smile" as well as selections from Henry Mancini, Richard Rodgers and Bix Beiderbecke with a sense of flowing freedom. As a virtuoso of the 7-string guitar, an instrument that allows for the added color of a bass voice in the hands of a player proficient enough to handle it, Pizzarelli's interpretations never fail to find a level of innovative complexity and simple beauty.

Though there's little doubt that Pizzarelli's career and the associates he's had in the past are a part of his legacy, the introductory anecdotes before many of the tracks begin to wear thin in places. For example, before "Why Shouldn't I?" Pizzarelli says, "After hearing Frank Sinatra's recording of this song, 'Why Shouldn't I' record it?" While such playful quips are forgivable, the real voice of this elder statesman rings true as soon as he puts finger to fret. —*John Kreicbergs*

Flashes: A Lifetime In Words And Music. This Nearly Was Mine; You Are Too Beautiful; Twilight Time; Mockingbird; Willow Weep For Me; Mancini Medley: Breakfast At Tiffany's/ Dreamsville/Mr. Lucky/Moon River; In The Dark; Flashes; Out Of This World; Sleepin' Bee; Last Night When We Were Young; Why Shouldn't I?; The Shadow Of Your Smile; Pennies From Heaven; Down Memory Lane; Sail Away; Yesterdays/Yesterday; Land Of The Loon; Lonesome Lake; More Than You Know; Second Movement From Guitar Concerto In D. (69:08)

Personnel: Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar.

Ordering Info: www.arborsrecords.com