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John Pizzarelli
Knowing You

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Knowing You

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★★★½

While jazz is not nearly as susceptible to the often disposable notoriety of its musical cousins in the pop mainstream, it's still a genre that is far from being immune to the wild swings of fad and fashion. Ultimately that's the only reasonable explanation for the fact that it's taken so long for guitarist and vocalist John Pizzarelli to receive the wider recognition he deserves. With his latest album, *Knowing You*, titled by Pizzarelli as a tribute to the collaborators and songwriters the New Jersey native has known over his 25-year career, it should also serve as a call for those who have yet had the pleasure to know him.

From the rapid-fire guitar/scat vocal work on the disc's opener, "Coffee, Black," to his delicate rendering of the Beach Boys' "God Only Knows" that rivals the original in terms of its heartfelt sincerity, Pizzarelli knows how to capture the essence of mood without overplaying his repertoire of musical gestures. Add in his sublime take on Gershwin's "How Long Has This Been Going On?" and a tightly swinging run through "Ain't That A Kick In The Head?" and there's little doubt that Pizzarelli is in control of his craft. As the tide of talented and stylish young crooners has ebbed and flowed over the past few decades, Pizzarelli remains one of the few among his contemporaries to consistently represent the high water mark for interpreters of the American jazz standard. —John Kreicbergs

Knowing You: Coffee, Black; New Sun In The Sky; Ain't That A Kick In The Head?; The Shadow Of Your Smile; Pick Yourself Up; Knowing You; God Only Knows; Quality Time; Eastwood Lane; I Just Found Out About Love; Say It (Over And Over Again); That Face; How Long Has This Been Going On?; The First Hint Of Autumn; If It's The Last Thing I Do. (55:26)

Personnel: John Pizzarelli, guitar, vocals; Ray Kennedy, piano; Martin Pizzarelli, bass; Harry Allen, tenor saxophone; Larry Goldings, organ; Cesar Mariano, piano; Jessica Molaskey, vocals; Tony Monte, piano; Ken Peplowski, clarinet; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Tony Tedesco, drums.

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