

Erich Kunzel & Cincinnati Pops Orchestra - Got Swing! (2003)

Written by bluesever

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01. *String Of Pearls* (3:39)
02. *Stompin' At The Savoy* (2:48)
03. *Choo Choo Ch'Boogie (with The Manhattan Transfer)* (2:39)
04. *Straighten Up And Fly Right (with John Pizzarelli)* (4:49)
05. *Sugar (That Sugar Baby O'Mine) (with The Manhattan Transfer)* (3:44)
06. *Skyliner (with The Manhattan Transfer)* (3:18)
07. *Blues In The Night* (9:50)
08. *Avalon (with John Pizzarelli)* (5:13)
09. *It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)* (3:56)
10. *Clouds, Adapted From 'Nuages' (with The Manhattan Transfer)* (7:05)
11. *Jumpin' At The Woodside* (6:42)
12. *Flying Home* (3:59)
13. *I'll Be Seeing You (with Janis Siegel)* (3:47)
14. *Sweet Georgia Brown* (3:24)

Scott Belck Soloist, Trumpet Cheryl Bentyne Soloist, Vocals Cincinnati Pops Orchestra
Rhythm Section Vince DiMartino Trumpet Yaron Gershovsky Celeste, Director, Keyboards,
Musical Director, Piano Richie Goods Bass Antonio Hart Sax (Alto), Soloist Steve Hass
Drums, Percussion Rich Jensen Soloist, Vibraphone Richard Jensen Vibraphone The
Manhattan Transfer Vocal Ensemble Paul Patterson Violin John Pizzarelli Guitar, Vocals
Jim Pugh Soloist, Trombone Michael Sharfe Bass Janis Siegel Vocals Julie Spangler Piano
Rick Van Matre Clarinet, Sax (Tenor), Soloist Marc Wolfley Drums Erich Kunzel Conductor

This is a good, solid pops recording; a disc that's fun to hear. It's not necessarily for hardcore jazzheads or swing dancers, but might be just the thing to introduce some of these classic tunes to folks who think they don't like jazz. Most of these tracks don't swing hard, but there are a few that even a dedicated dancer would want to try out.

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Some real standards of the original swing era are presented here, hot and sweet. "Swingin' at the Savoy" (this referring to the great Savoy Ballroom of Harlem), "Straighten Up and Fly Right," "Avalon," "It Don't Mean a Thing," "I'll Be Seeing You," and "Flying Home" (Lionel Hampton's most famous creation) are just a few examples. Many of these songs have great stories behind their creation or earliest recordings. If you don't love swing already, they'll start you on your way.

A few have been arranged until their original character is somewhat obscured ("Blues in the Night" now sounds like something from a Rodgers & Hammerstein musical); but the mix is excellent, and the musicians even better, whether the prevailing sound is pops-oriented or swinging.

John Pizzarelli gives particularly standout performances on guitar and vocally. His clever manipulations of music and words mark some of the really swinging tracks. "Avalon" is a great hot take. Pizzarelli, son of jazz guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli, is in good company. Other guest artists include the vocalise group the Manhattan Transfer in various guises, from the ensemble to solo voice and rhythm section.

Got Swing! is an excellent example of why pops orchestras continue to flourish (they're just fun) and it's liable to make the listener want to go out one night and see Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops live. ---Eileen Donis-Forster, Rovi

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