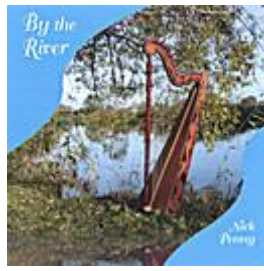


Mp3 Nick Penny - By The River



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Beautiful, relaxing music for harp and acoustic guitar 14 MP3 Songs NEW AGE: Meditation, NEW AGE: Environmental Details: I live in the heart of the English countryside, in rural Northamptonshire. My music is inspired by long walks along the river and in the woods, by birdsong, trees, and the changing seasons. By the River took two years to write and record. It's inspired by the gentle landscape of the Nene Valley, from spring bluebells to a blue sky soaring over winter's first snowfall. Review by Bill Binkelman for New Age Reporter: By the River is one of the loveliest and most relaxing acoustic albums I've heard this year. Nick Penny is an excellent harpist (which I knew from the last recording of his I reviewed) and I was pleasantly surprised that he's also quite adept on acoustic guitar as well, since this album features him playing both instruments. The fourteen duets on this CD unwind at a leisurely pace regardless of the actual tempo of any individual song. The album truly earns its title, By the River, as I can't imagine music which more perfectly evokes the essence of sitting under a tree, willing away the hours on the banks of a river, taking in the sounds of nature and soaking in the simple beauty of the environment. Some tracks are light and lively, such as the opening Bluebells or the gently playful Wrens in the willow. Others are more introspective or plaintive, e.g. the slow-paced Mist on the meadow, or the soft yet somber First Snow. Other selections go in opposite directions than their titles might suggest, e.g. Safe Haven which instead of being a typical new age number is laced with mystery and a subtle shadow, featuring harp and guitar deftly trading the solo spotlight. All is still is a romantic but slightly sad tune with harp on the lead and played at a deliberate measured cadence. Lillies has a slight Spanish flavor owing to the manner in which Penny plays his acoustic guitar, but even here the emphasis is on the gentle flowing melody and not on flamenco-ish fiery pyrotechnics. Livelier than most tracks, The Harp tree still maintains a slight edginess, with a hint of Irish influence. Surprisingly, it's one of the few times where I detected a noticeable

Irish characteristic. Penny concludes the album with Blackbird at dusk, and introduces nature sounds with the music for the first time (any guesses what the sounds are?). Its a wonderful closing number, soft as a sunset yet with a smidgen of gentle melancholy, balanced out by the lilting song of the bluebird itself in the background. I wont deny my huge favorable bias toward harp music, especially the type exemplified by this CD (which I would classify as a blend of folk harp with acoustic new age). It stands to reason, then, that I positively love By the River. I could listen to it many times over. It sounds just as good in the background as it does via direct listening and Nick Penny plays with an uncommon grace throughout the entire recording. He even gives brief liner notes about each tracks inspiration or influence. Yes, folks, here is another rare perfect recording. I cant think of a single way to improve it one whit. For lovers of gentle and beautiful acoustic instrumental music (but which can vary from subtly spirited and playful to serene and soothing), I give it my highest recommendation. Bill Binkelman New Age Reporter

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