



Pure Pleasure CTI 6011
Kenny Burrell: God Bless The Child
Format: 1LP 33rpm / gatefold sleeve

Manufacturer: Pure Pleasure
Original label: CTI
Release date: 24.04.2015

Kenny Burrell's guitar artistry is well-documented in his years with Oscar Peterson and on his first dates as a leader on the Blue Note label, but "God Bless The Child", his only date for CTI in 1971, is an underheard masterpiece in his catalogue. Burrell's band for the set includes bassist Ron Carter, percussionist Ray Barretto, Richard Wyands on piano, flutist Hubert Laws, trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, and drummer Billy Cobham. CTI's house arranger, Don Sebesky, assembled and conducted the strings in a manner that stands strangely and beautifully apart from his other work on the label. Sebesky understood Burrell's understated approach to playing guitar. Burrell didn't belong with the fusioners, but he could groove better than any of them. Sebesky built a moody, atmospheric soundscape behind him, one that was as impressionistic as it was illuminating of a player who could dig in and chop it up -- as he does on his own composition "Love Is the Answer" and "Do What You Gotta Do" -- and stroke it smooth and mellow as on the title track, the truly sublime "Be Yourself", and Thad Jones' "A Child Is Born". This is Burrell at his level best as a player to be sure, but also as a composer and as a bandleader. Magnificent.

Recording: April & May 1971 at Rudy Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, USA
Production: Creed Taylor "God Bless The Child" - Kenny Burrell (g); Freddie Hubbard (tp); Hubert Laws (fl); Hugh Lawson, Richard Wyands (p); Ron Carter (b); Billie Cobham (dr); Ray Barretto, Airto Moreira (perc); a.o.