

kassaba

Unique. Innovative. Dynamic. **Kassaba** introduces an intriguing approach to live performance with piano, saxophones, bass and 25 percussion instruments. With distinct choreography, the quartet creates the effect of a drummer by frequently shifting positions to different instruments as they perform their original compositions that resonate with jazz, classical and international music influences. Kassaba transcends the traditional notion of an ensemble with music that is both improvised spontaneity and composed precision. Recent performance venues include Penn State Erie, Pacchia Cafe in Dayton, The Rex jazz club in Toronto, Canada, the University of Akron, Kavehaz in New York City; the Upper Arlington Labor Day Arts Festival (Columbus, Ohio); the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts; Walsh University in Canton; Nighttown, Cain Park, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in Cleveland. Kassaba also recently opened for African musician Daby Touré, who toured with Peter Gabriel, at the Beachland Ballroom in Cleveland. Kassaba is on the Ohio Arts Council's Performing Arts on Tour roster.

Pianist and composer **Greg Slawson** is from Cleveland, Ohio. His compositions led to the formation of this unique ensemble that combines elements of classical, jazz, hip-hop and international music. Greg was a double-major in music and psychology as an undergraduate at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. At the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM), he earned a Master of Music degree in piano performance. He was a finalist in ASCAP's Morton Gould Young Composers Competition and won a prize in the IBLA Grand Prize - European International Composers Competition. In 2000, the Dayton Jazz Orchestra commissioned Greg's work "Archipelago," a concerto for piano and jazz orchestra, which he premiered with the ensemble. He also wrote "Prelude e Danza" for Anita Pontremoli and Arnold Steinhardt, first violinist of the Guarneri String Quartet, for the world premiere at CIM. Kassaba is the culmination of Greg's diverse musical experiences.

Originally from Edmonton, Alberta, **Candice Lee** obtained her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees in piano performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music. She has participated in programs at the Banff Centre, the Gnessin School of Music in Moscow, the Aspen Music Festival and Pianofest in the Hamptons. Her teachers have included Dr. Ernesto Lejano, Paul Schenly, Herbert Stessin and Sergei Babayan. Among her awards, Candice has won prizes in the Missouri Southern International Piano Competition, Corpus Christi Young Artists' Competition and the IBLA Grand Prize – European International Competition for Pianists. She has performed recitals and with orchestras in Canada, the United States and Russia. Candice's ideas led to the formation and evolution of Kassaba. She and Greg alternate piano and percussion duties in the group.

Bassist **Chris Vance**, from Buffalo, New York, received his Bachelor of Music in bass performance from SUNY at Buffalo where he studied with Roger Macchiaroli. He also received a Bachelor of Arts in theory from the same institution. Chris worked with Lawrence Angell at the Cleveland Institute of Music where he completed the Master of Music program. He currently studies with Scott Haigh, assistant principal bassist of the Cleveland Orchestra. Former orchestra positions include the Bermuda Philharmonic and the Buffalo Opera Company Orchestra. The music of Kassaba showcases Chris bowing, plucking and hitting the bass in a percussive manner when he is not playing rhythmic instruments. He also plays jazz, rock and blues engagements with various groups in Northeast Ohio.

Mark Boich has played various musical styles from jazz to fusion and rock. In Kassaba, he plays alto, tenor and soprano saxophones along with percussion. He is a graduate of the Berklee College of Music in Boston where he received his Bachelor of Music in performance and jazz composition. Mark has studied with George Garzone, Kenny Garrett and Joe Lovano. A native of Cleveland, he plays regularly around Northeast Ohio.

piano shekere saxophones frame drum bass vibratone cabasa ocean drum claves spring drum shakers agogo
djembe wood block finger cymbals one shots bongos small djembe doumbek malaysian maraca talking drum