

kassaba

CD Review

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Plain Dealer Music Critic

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“Zones”

The imaginative quartet of classically trained Cleveland musicians paints Greg Slawson’s original jazz compositions with the exotic colors of global percussion instruments. Pianists Slawson and Candice Lee, saxophonist Mark Boich and bassist Eric Hosemann double on drums, shakers, cymbals, sticks and bells from African, Latin, Middle Eastern and pre-Columbian cultures. The inventive music contrasts fresh melodies and clever counterpoint with rhythmic passagework and percussion cadenzas. The titles tell the story: “Gomanis” surges on a driving beat. “Plainsong” thins to a translucent texture. “Zones of Mystery” travels through a fascinating landscape of instrumental timbres. For live performances, the musicians carefully choreograph their quick moves from one percussion instrument to another. On their debut disc, they give a tantalizing taste of a performance style that probably should be seen, as well as heard.