

## Phronesis 'Alive' review, MOJO 2010 \*\*\*\*

Third album from startling piano-bass-drums powerhouse aggregation.

On a jazz scene where post-EST egghead piano trios seem to represent both jazz's cutting edge (Curios) and commercial potential (Neil Cowley), Alive pushes Phronesis straight to the top of both classes. Led by Danish bassist/composer Jasper Høiby and joined by Ivo Neame (piano) and Mark Guiliana (drums), Phronesis combine carefully structured passages of refined ensemble coherence with intensely inventive improv and interplay. Høiby fashions his pieces so the lines between freedom and form are beautifully blurred, the music flows as a tumultuous organic whole - everything belongs, nothing is forced. Høiby anchors the maelstrom with rumbling, hypnotic bass figures as Neame and Guiliana chatter and clatter with finesse and imagination. Not always a comfortable listen, but Phronesis have an energy and chemistry that makes them a compelling, exciting, oddly cleansing experience.

Chris Ingham