

Phronesis Walking Dark review, MOJO **** 2012

Fourth album by the most vital piano trio since EST.

When technical prowess, compositional dexterity and telepathic interplay in contemporary jazz ensembles is almost a given, what is it that sets Phronesis apart? It may be that for all the intricacy of the music - the cross-rhythms, the harmonic colours and dynamic textures - there's an immediacy, a clarity of intent and execution that mainlines their music into the imagination of the listener. Though the majority of Walking Dark continues to feature the compositional vision of Danish leader and bass player Jasper Høiby, British pianist Ivo Neame and Swedish drummer Anton Eger contribute three tunes each and the result is Phronesis music that is richer, deeper and more wonderful, if that were possible.

Highlights include Neame's pastoral beauty 'Passing Clouds', Eger's liquid 13/4 extravaganza 'Democracy' and the convoluted pointillism of Høiby's 'Lipwash Part 11'.

Chris Ingham