



JOE LOCKE/GEOFFREY KEEZER GROUP

Signing MOTEMA

Veteran vibraphonist Joe Locke and pianist Geoffrey Keezer are joined by drummer Terreon Gully and bassist Mike Pope for Locke's debut recording for Motema.

This studio session follows the band's successful touring behind their 2006 recording *Live in Seattle* and Locke had intended to record another project with this band. This is it.

Although they hadn't played together in a long time, these musicians display tight unity and inventiveness on the disc's eight tunes, a mix of originals and standards. Locke contributes four originals to the fare and Keezer two tunes. Locke's title tune leads off the set with fusiony flavor infused by Pope's electric bass and Gully's punched-up drumming. "Darth Alexis," an intense, time-shifting tune composed by Keezer perhaps best demonstrates the synergy among the players. Inspired by a friend's hilltop retreat, Locke's original, "Her Sanctuary," is a lovely piece that features one of Locke's best solos and his ballad "This Is Just To Say," inspired by a William Carlos Williams poem, nicely caps off the session.

John Coltrane's melodious "Naima" is given refreshing treatment with this instrumentation and Gully playing acoustic bass. One of my favorites is their version of Imogen Heap's "Hide and Seek," a waltzing ballad with a lovely melody arranged by Keezer and enhanced by Keezer's soft, churchy improvisations on (I'm guessing) an omnisphere.

I love this album for its vitality, imagination and pure pleasing sounds!

Nancy Ann Lee

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