

JAZZ

Miles Davis live; the Anglo-US *Impossible Gentlemen*; an extraordinary *Smithsonian* jazz collection; plus minimalism from *Pascal Schumacher*



THE IMPOSSIBLE GENTLEMEN

Gwilym Simcock (piano), Mike Walker (guitar), Steve Swallow (bass), Adam Nussbaum (drums)

Basho SRCD 36-2 63:29 mins

BBC Music Direct £12.99

Packing more into eight tracks than many could manage in that number of albums, this seemingly improbable Anglo-American group (which in general can work well, as Big Air fans will tell you) doesn't so much raise the bar as remind us where the bar should have been in the first place. The quartet's UK tour this June will be persuading its audiences to buy this release already, so allow me to commend this CD to everyone else; it's simply outstanding, offering a set of modern originals, mostly by Walker and Simcock. These back up all the usual box ticking – virtuosity, imagination, originality etc – with the realisation that what's needed is a high degree of constantly refreshed musical content rather than the over-worrying of too few ideas. In sonic terms I'd have let a bit more air into the mix during the busier passages, but the album's no less outstanding for that. *Roger Thomas*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★

RECORDING ★★★★★