



Chris Dingman *Waking Dreams*

BETWEEN WORLDS MUSIC 001

★★★★

Over the last few years New York vibist Chris Dingman has been turning heads through his precise, highly empathetic and high-level contributions to music by the mathematic saxophonist Steve Lehman and the seeking percussionist Harrison Eisenstadt, among others. So it's a little surprising that on first blush his debut recording as a bandleader clings so close to jazz orthodoxy. His suite-like *Waking Dreams* (complete with a prelude, interlude and epilogue, the last of which includes some sleepily intoned metaphysical poetry) is flush with sanguine balladry and rhythmically complex post-bop. The leader rarely asserts himself as a soloist, allowing the mercurial trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire and moody pianist Fabian Almazan to do much of the heavy lifting.

Yet, if the listener digs a little deeper, there's no missing the work's impressive grace, ambition and sophistication. Even on the slowest-moving pieces here, drummer Justin Brown brings a tightly wound tension to the proceedings, while Dingman orchestrates vast oceans of lush harmony, letting his instrument resonate at length in billowing waves of sound that hang heavily in the air, especially when he bows his vibraphone. Akinmusire and saxophonist Loren Stillman deftly cut through the dense sonic fog like a piercing light. Dingman's individual compositions aren't especially memorable, but as concise bundles of group interplay, they are minor marvels, and there's a cumulative power to experiencing them all together. With this recording the multifaceted depth of Dingman becomes clearer, making his next move even more exciting. —Peter Margasak

Waking Dreams: Prelude; Vijayanagara; Jet Lag; Manhattan Bridge; Indian Hill; Waking Dreams; Interlude; Same Coin; Shift In The Wind; Reflection; Clear The Rain; Nocturnal; Zaneta; Epilogue; Stillness. (74:31)

Personnel: Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Loren Stillman, saxophones; Fabian Almazan, piano; Joe Sanders, bass; Justin Brown, drums; Chris Dingman, vibraphone; Ryan Ferreira, guitar (3); Erica Von Kleist, flute (8, 12); Mark Small, bass clarinet (8).

Ordering info: betweenworldsmusic.com