
Music

**Shai Maestro Trio: Shai Maestro
Trio – review**
(Laborie)

John Fordham

Israeli-born pianist Shai Maestro is familiar to UK audiences through his often thrilling work with bassist/composer Avishai Cohen. He's now confirming that promise in his own group, with sometime Lee Konitz drummer Ziv Ravitz and Peruvian bassist Jorge Roeder, on an all-original repertoire except for the wistfully dignified traditional song Kalimankou Denkou. Cohen's swaying, romantically intense and cinematic music is immediately evoked in the alternately rippling and thunderous Confession, while the jaunty Brave Ones sounds like a country-rock ballad (but develops with a catchily EST-like balance of freedom and certainty), and the meditative Painting is a reverie under which arco bass murmurs and intensifying cymbal splashes steadily swell. Maestro's classical touch retains an expressive delicacy whatever the mood. Occasionally he restricts himself to fragmentary phrases inserted into remorseless drum-hooks and Roeder's luxurious basslines, and The Flying Shepherd is a childlike dance that develops as a rhythm-stretching game. The Avishai Cohen dedication One for AC could have come straight out of the repertoire of this gifted young pianist's famous mentor. Maestro's solo career is going to be one to watch.

