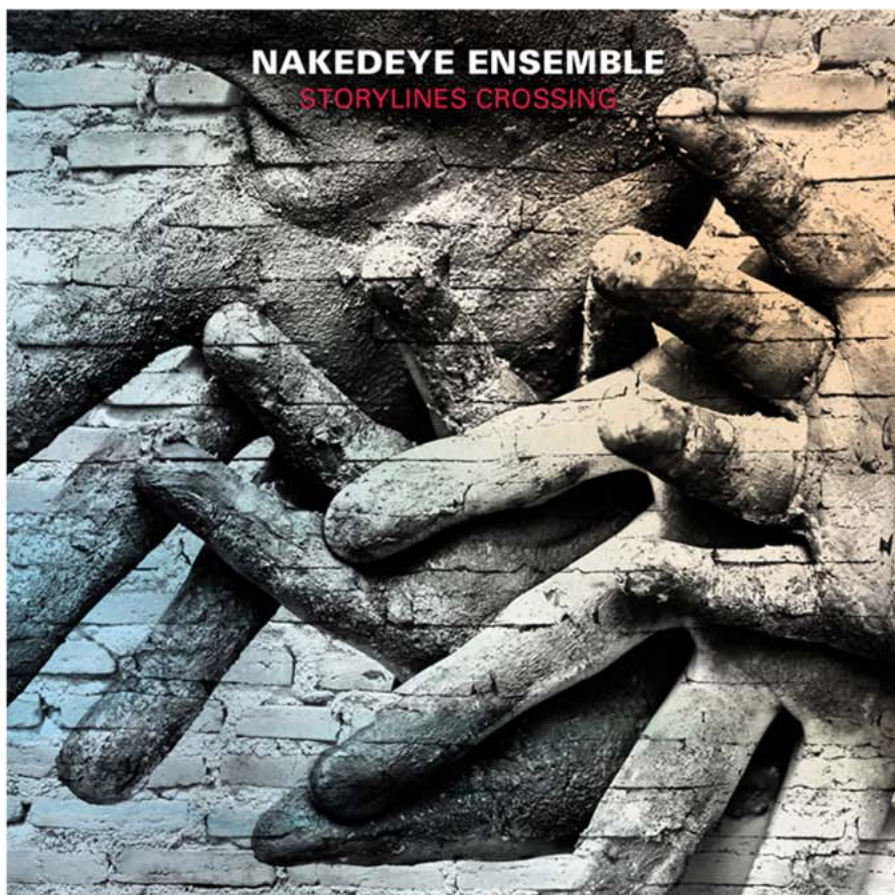


CD review: NakedEye Ensemble, 'Storylines Crossing'

By Joshua Kosman | June 6, 2018



NakedEye Ensemble New music

If you tossed an electric blues band and a contemporary music ensemble into the blender and turned it to high, you might end up with something like NakedEye, the Lancaster, Pa., octet led by pianist Ju-Ping Song. The music on the group's exciting debut release is a stylistic melange, full of gritty energy and wonderful stylistic feints. From the opening strains of Jonathan Russell's "Sextet," which grafts Baroque variation technique onto a jazzy bass groove, through the tape-and-instrument collage of Randall Woolf's "Punching the Clock," the pieces seem to dart in several directions at once without ever losing a sense of coherence. There are also pieces by Rusty Banks (a deliciously ambitious recasting of the electric guitar), Zack Browning and Richard Belcastro, but for some reason nothing by women. "Coming Together," Frederic Rzewski's proto-minimalist classic from 1971, winds up the slate in Belcastro's strange and revelatory arrangement. — Joshua Kosman