

Branford Marsalis Quartet: The Secret Between the Shadow and the Soul review - intuitive classic jazz

★★★★☆

(Okeh)

There aren't many things in and around music that Branford Marsalis hasn't done. He's performed saxophone concertos with symphony orchestras, led the band on America's favourite late-night TV show, toured with Sting, and made albums with everyone from Harry Connick Jr to the Grateful Dead. But the thing he has held closest and nurtured for the past 30-odd years is his quartet. He finds the classic jazz format of saxophone, piano, bass and drums an endless source of inspiration and, over the years, the quartet has developed a kind of group mind. "I couldn't create this music with people I didn't know," [Marsalis says](#).

In fact, only one of these seven numbers is his composition, a piece that moves from quiet contemplation to wild animation and back again. There are two each by bassist Eric Revis and pianist Joey Calderazzo, plus a couple borrowed from Andrew Hill and Keith Jarrett. They all seem to bear a kind of family resemblance. Although the form is quite free, each instrumental voice is clearly defined and purposeful. Marsalis and Calderazzo play together with exceptional delicacy and the technique all round is quite stunning.

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