



## **BOOM PAM**

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Essay Recordings

At first glance this Israeli quartet seems to be hoeing a familiar row, presenting a sweet set of Balkan/Jewish/Mediterranean melodies played at frantic speeds on trebly surf-guitars, a situation that seems to invite distressing postmodern pastiche. Happily, the two guitarists are seriously fleet-fingered and share a telepathic connection that allows them not only to soar through the pieces but to dig deep enough into the material to augment it with some thoughtful, proggy improv. And the fact that the bass chair's being filled by a very talented tuba player cheerfully elevates the music into a whole new realm of feeling. His organic, precise blowing, whether he's chugging fearlessly behind the guitars with a warm carnivalesque flatulence, or taking the lead, as he does on the majestic, waddling "Wejl," has a way of keeping the rest of the band on the ground, while paradoxically giving them plenty of space to fly.

—JOHN KUHLMAN