

SLD Trio - Review of Tensegridad - By Andy Hamilton - The Wire Magazine

Katrina Dixon

**Paula Shocron/Germán Lamonega/
Pablo Díaz**

Tensegridad

hatOLOGY CD/DL

Christoph Erb/Jim Baker/Frank Rosaly
...don't buy him a parrot...

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Improvising pianist, composer and educator Paula Shocron's recordings include *Homenaje* (2009), dedicated to jazz master Andrew Hill. Since 2014, the cooperative trio SLD – founded with Germán Lamonega (bass) and Pablo Díaz (drums) – have made three trips to New York, playing with musicians including Cooper-Moore and William Parker. *Tensegridad*, recorded in Buenos Aires, is the trio's second disc. The title is the Spanish translation of systems theorist Buckminster Fuller's concept of tensegrity – a combination of 'tensional' and 'integrity'. Tension structures include traditional tents and suspension bridges; those combining tensioned cables and compression struts are tensegrity structures. For Shocron, the concept explains how the trio functions: "We're connected in an essential way, we work like three separate musicians and like a unity at the same time".

The sense of tension and compression in this remarkable album reflects the centrality of dance and movement in Shocron's work – connections neglected by those who see music as the most abstract of the arts. There's a majestic, commanding quality to these highly individual and varied performances, which are groove-based or groove-related. The pianist is forceful and inventive, and the group's improvisations are trenchantly-argued. The programme is a strong one, with vivid originals and expansive free improvisations. There's an ecstatic interpretation of Mal Waldron's "Snake Out" that ratchets up the intensity before subsiding into gentle lyricism, and an elegiac version of Charles Tolliver's "Truth";

"Connie" is a moving tribute to Connie Crothers, the New York based pianist who died in 2016.

A less imperious approach is found in the trio of Swiss saxophonist and bass clarinetist Christoph Erb with two Chicagoans, pianist Jim Baker and drummer Frank Rosaly. Their disc *...don't buy him a parrot...* documents the players' second encounter as a trio, live in Chicago in 2014, which produced some intensive free improv. "(Parrot, Figuring...)" involves lyrical and increasingly energetic interplay of tenor sax and piano, with Rosaly coaxing intriguing timbres from the drumkit; "For Canaries, Career Opportunities In Mining Industry" features Erb on plangent bass clarinet. But while Paula Shocron's SLD play as if their lives depended on it, the thoughtful work of Erb/Baker/Rosaly takes time to make an impact.

Andy Hamilton