



Deep exploration of sound is still ongoing - interview with Paula Shocron

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In what state is an argentinian jazz?

Paula Shocron: In my opinion Jazz here in Argentina means a wide range of music, from strict traditional jazz to completely experimental and underground music. There are lots of people playing creative music here, (I consider myself part of it), but most of the time they are not considered as jazz musicians (by media or other traditional jazz musicians). They move in small venues and even house concerts. On the other hand there's a school of more "intellectual" jazz, which goes from very early jazz to contemporary, you can find them in almost all the jazz festivals here. Our situation is completely different, we are always moving, traveling, trying to create new spaces to play, cooperating with other musicians of the world...

What big names from Buenos Aires should we have in mind except yours?

PS: There are many musicians who are very important here, but sometimes they were or are neglected. Luis Conde and Fabiana Galante, Jorge Espinal (from Perú, but Argentina resident), Leonel Kaplan, Pablo Díaz, Marcelo Von Schultz, Cecilia Quinteros are some of these names among others.

You are a classically educated pianist. Could you tell me about your education and how did it happen that you decide to play creative jazz music?

PS: I was trained as classical pianist (from the age of 5) , and then I studied composition at Rosario University. I always improvised as part of my education. I think jazz was the first step to free music. After being playing it for so long, I realized that I couldn't be as free as I needed. That was the moment I started to open to other disciplines, as dance, theatre, etc, and I also started a deep exploration of sound, which is still ongoing.

Why did you decide to make your own label Nendo Dango Records and how did it happen?

PS: It was a matter of necessity. 2015 was a special year, Pablo (Díaz), Miguel (Crozzoli) and me were recording a lot of improvised music at that time, and we didn't find labels interested in releasing our recordings. We just thought the best idea was to have our own platform. That's how it happened, we created NDR, and we are very happy :)

I've read that you are performing in duo with drummer Pablo Diaz since 2015. Is it true?

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"...there is no work for jazz musicians - it's not a job. It's an art." - Rafał Sarnecki talks with Smalls Jazz Club's owner Spike Wilner

PS: Yes, it is! Pablo and me are a couple since 2009, we always were involved in projects together, our duo, SLD Trio (with Germán Lamonega on bass), and some trios with other musicians (as William Parker, Christophe Gallio, Ras Moshe, Kristin Norderval, etc), and of course with Guillermo Gregorio. We work as a team, touring together, training together. Actually, this year we will be doing a residence in order to go deeply into our performing piece called “Algo en un Espacio Vacío”, (dance-music-performance work) at Cultural Centre “Ernesto Sábato” in October-November.

Is the Guillermo Gregorio na inspiration for you? What do you think about him?

PS: Pablo and me met Guillermo by chance, in a house concert in Brooklyn, NY in 2015. I didn't know anything about him but his name. (This is what I'm talking about when I said before that some big names are neglected here in Argentina).

We had very interesting conversation, and we listened to each other, then Pablo and I started to think about offering to record with us. The next year we met him again, had coffees, went to his place and he showed us all his works. I realized that he is not just a great clarinet player but also an exceptional composer! I was particularly amazed with his incredible graphic music. We didn't talk about recording yet, but we became musical friends. We finally recorded one year later, in 2017.

For me it is really important to play with such a great musician as Guillermo, It is also important that he is an Argentinian musician from other generation. I'm really happy we have found each other.

You've released an album for polish label Fundacja Sluchaj. Together with Pablo Diaz and Guillermo Gregorio. How did it happen and when?

PS: We made that recording on 2017, and we came back to Argentina to continuing the process. We mixed and mastered here with Pablo at Studio Libres in Buenos Aires. At the same time, Maciej Karlowski contacted me because SLD Trio had released “Tensegridad” at hatOLOY, he really liked that music. That's how I started to have some conversation by email. One day It occurred to me to ask him about releasing the music with Guillermo and Pablo. He listened and he accepted. It took one more year to finish it, finally, it was released in June this year.

And there is another album which will be released by the same label...

PS: Yes! The third recording of SLD Trio will be released by Sluchaj, It is really important for us to have found this label, which catalogue is amazing! Next year Sluchaj will release my first work in duo format with a singer, Constanza Pellicci, from Córdoba, Argentina.

Do you like performing solo? I've listened to your album "See See Rider". It's very mellow and calm.

PS: I do like performing solo. See See Rider is a standard jazz recording. It was released during my most “traditional stage”. My last work in solo is, for me, more interesting, “Los Vínculos” is a very personal work which links classical music with improvisation, it is like a conversation between me in the past and me in the present. In that recording I recorded my own practices of “Goldberg Variations” of J.S. Bach, I composed the sound landscape, (more like concrete music), I wrote the texts, and finally I recorded the improvisations...Here's the link if you want to listen: <https://nendodango.bandcamp.com/album/los-v-nculos>

What are your plans for near future? Are you coming to Poland?

PS: I will be playing at Guelph Jazz Festival in September, (with Pablo and Guillermo) and going to NY to make some artistic activities. We are expecting to come back to Europe next year, I would like to go to Poland of course. I hope there's some opportunity soon.

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