

Review from ENSAMBLE 96's EP (2021) from the music magazine "Sonidos Ocultos" (<https://www.sonidosocultos.com/discos/ensamble-96-ensamble-96-ep-2021/>)

Beyond the motivation that the composer has when it comes to giving birth to his creation, the listener has the freedom to generate his own interpretation of the work he hears. After saying that, the ability of certain bands to create unique mental scenes typical of a captive surrealistic dream fiction is surprising. That triggers the first release of Ensemble96, a Chilean band that expands the limits of so-called fusion music.

"... Jaco Pastorius, Astor Piazzolla, Tilo Gozalez and Bob Marley get together to have sake on a clean Buenos Aires beach, wrapped in ruanas and ponchos in the middle of summer. They look happy and the aura of majesty invades the entire coastline while they are making music. Some even say that Bach himself was on the scene, watching from afar...". Thus would begin a script of a work whose soundtrack was composed by Ensemble 96. That is the level of mixing that this debut encompasses, a sum of factors that engages the pulse of Latin American fusion. The Ensemble 96 EP is made up of four songs where genres such as tango, reggae, jazz merge, even a nod to circus music could appear.

The EP begins with «Aviador». A whirlwind of emotions with some chromatic lines well conducted by a restless, playful and precise bass that accompanies that beautiful bandoneon tone. An alto sax is also added to develop tensions and harmonic resolutions to the full of the work, whose rhythmic element does not have a primary role, but a very important one, subtly tie the accents of the melodic lines and weave a space where the bass can make your rubatos playfully.

«(Al bandoneonista) Angelo Cherry» is the second track on the album. Flirt with the rhythm of reggae, also mixing harmonic features of tango. It feels calmer than the previous song, tranquility that is used to highlight the play of the alto sax and the fusion of the timbre with the bandoneon. A piano appears as the only harmonic instrument, but with the role of complement to the melody that adds more color to the large number of tones of the band. A progressive tango, that's the third song of the Ensemble 96 Ep. A beautiful

contrapuntal network that resolves in a section that plays with being an instrumental chorus. The bass and the alto sax have a peaceful conversation that paints a dream of a bohemian porteña, accompanied by the pulse of the drums, always ready to remember that reality is always measured.

The fourth and last theme of the Ep is called «Arañas». Spiders (arañas) are exercises that bassists occupy when it comes to exercising their fingers. Its name comes from the walking-like movement of an arachnid that makes its hand across the tuning fork when practicing. It seems that all Ensamble 96 agreed to accompany this type of exercise with all the sound elements of the band, resulting in a very smooth night funk with a basic but very useful rhythm. The electric bass takes the attention of the spotlight, except in the final minute where it shares its role with an alto sax and where the bass takes on a distortion that highlights the timbre of the metallic instrument.

It is not bad to invent a new concept to define styles, so Latin American “surreal” fusion music (MFSL) could be a tag that fully encapsulates the music of Ensamble 96. Even so, the concept would fall short to define the influences of the notable debut of the band, which generates positive feelings and begins to harbor great musical expectations for his next work and, why not ?, for everything that the future holds.