

Music from
Argentina
For Guitar and Bandoneon

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

Enea Leone *guitar* · Roberto Bongianino *bandoneon*



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Agustín Fernandez (b. 1958)		Pedro Laurenz		Astor Piazzolla		Franco Piersanti (b. 1950)	
1. El Pollo Ricardo	2'51	8. Como dos extraños	2'53	15. Decarisimo	2'56	22. Tenderness	3'21
Javier Cugat Cobain (b. 1961)		Aníbal Troilo (1914-1975)		Hector Stamponi		Javier Cugat Cobain	
2. Mi refugio	2'49	9. Che bandoneon – <i>bandoneon solo</i>	2'42	16. Flor de lino	3'29	23. Mi refugio – <i>bandoneon solo</i>	3'14
Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)		Astor Piazzolla		Anselmo Aieta (1896-1964)		Cátulo González Castillo (1906-1975) & Sebastián Piana (1903-1994)	
3. Adiós nonino	4'58	10. Nightclub 1960	5'46	17. Corralera	1'57	24. Silbando	3'23
4. Bordel 1900	3'43	Luis Bacalov (b. 1933)		Astor Piazzolla		Carlos Gardel (1890-1935)	
Enrico Maria Francini (1916-1978) & Hector Stamponi (1916-1997)		11. Il postino	6'04	18. Milonga del Angel	5'22	25. Soledad	3'01
5. Pedacito de cielo	3'16	Ángel Villoldo (1861-1919)		19. Muerte del Angel	3'07	Astor Piazzolla	
Pedro Laurenz (1902-1972)		12. El Choclo	2'05	20. Chiquilin de bachín – <i>guitar solo</i>	3'43	26. Oblivion	3'31
6. Milonga de mis amores	3'07	Astor Piazzolla		César Strosccio		27. Libertango	3'28
Astor Piazzolla		13. Cafè 1930	6'39	21. La senegalesa	3'38		
7. Triunfal – <i>guitar solo</i>	3'22	Aníbal Troilo					
		14. La trampera	2'19				

Enea Leone *guitar* · Roberto Bongianino *bandoneon*

The origins of the Tango are not entirely clear. Although aficionados of the dance have argued in favour of various theories, the total lack of actual recordings regarding its true genesis means that we will never know for sure. The Tango began with people whose lives do not feature in books or recordings because they were marginalised by poverty from mainline society.

The first tangible traces of '*tangos*' in Buenos Aires date back to the last decades of the 19th century, and we would probably not equate the Tango we now have in mind with the music made by the individual pianists and the first groups consisting of flute, violin and guitar who played in brothels and cabarets.

Between 1860 and 1925, the immigrants who had settled in Argentina to seek their fortune contributed to the development of this music, giving life to forms of varied derivation such as the Cuban habanera, the milonga (a type of folk dance), the African candombe and Italian songs. More of these immigrants came originally from Italy than from any other country, and the first musicians were Italian, which explains the lyrical element in the Tango: its aura of melancholy and yearning.

Emblematic of the Tango is the bandoneon, an instrument that was brought to Buenos Aires at the beginning of the twentieth century by German immigrants, possibly sailors. Although it may have been invented in France, it was produced in Germany and served as an inexpensive alternative to the church organ, suitable for the poorest communities.

The bandoneon soon replaced the accordion, flute and clarinet, giving the Tango its definitive sound and shaping its development. In fact the instrument unquestionably changed the mood of the genre, investing it with potential for expressing deep, passionate feelings.

As a musical form the Tango owed a great deal to dance, for it was in this guise that it spread throughout the world. Argentina was once one of the richest countries in the world, and the scions of well-to-do Argentinian families often went to Europe to study, or indeed simply to travel. Some of these young men had spent happy hours in the brothels and other seedy dives of Buenos Aires, where they had learnt to dance the Tango. As soon as Parisian high society set eyes on the dance they were won

over by it, and in next to no time a feverish Tango mania swept through the whole of Europe. This had a rebound effect on Buenos Aires, where the elite had hitherto refused to have anything to do with the Tango, at least not in public. Thus the Tango spread from the shady corners of society to the drawing rooms of the rich. The trend was naturally accompanied by the formation of new orchestras, which in their turn contributed to the development of the Tango and its culmination in 1940. During the decade known as the Golden Age of the Tango, families from all levels of society took to the dance floors, filling the ballrooms and providing major orchestras with a decent living.

The new musical form can be divided into three sub-categories: the *Milonga*, the forerunner of the *Tango* that combined the Cuban habanera with the European polka; the *Tango*, which evolved from the milonga in the early years by absorbing various African musical styles and dance, and which featured syncopated rhythms, complex accentuation and staccato effects; and *Vals*, which derived from the European waltz and mazurka, and was embellished with the hemiolas, staccatos and accents of the Tango. Song texts and intensity of vocal expression can also be an important aspect of the genre, although the songs were often rearranged as instrumental pieces.

In 1950 a brilliant young bandoneon player called Astor Piazzolla left Buenos Aires for Paris, where he went to study classical composition with Nadia Boulanger. He had spent his childhood in New York, and as an adolescent had played in Anibal Troilo's orchestra before forming his own in 1946. Aware that he was unlikely to be successful if he stayed within the one genre, he mixed elements of the Tango with aspects of the jazz he had got to know in the United States and other ideas borrowed from the sphere of classical music, thereby creating what he called *Tango Nuevo*. Piazzolla's rhythms differed considerably from those familiar to dancers: to appreciate his music to the full, it was better to listen than to dance.

When the *Tango Nuevo* was first heard in Buenos Aires, it elicited indignation: this wasn't a real Tango, it was too far removed from tradition! But the combination of North American music and European elements created something that was accessible and appealing to people who had not grown up with the traditional Tango, with the

effect that Piazzolla's huge success in the rest of the world helped soften opinions back home. Many musicians began to follow his example, forging their own furrows within a path that he had already established. And the developments continue to this day.

With their instruments, the guitar and the bandoneon, Enea Leone and Roberto Bongianino retrace the various stages in the evolution of the genre in this album: the milonga (*Milonga de mis amores, Corralera, La trampera*), the tango (*El Chocio, El Pollo Ricardo, Mi refugio, Silbando*), the vals (*Pedacito de cielo, Flor de lino*). Moreover, they also dedicate a number of tracks to works by Astor Piazzolla, some of them close to the original score (*Histoire du Tango*, a suite written for guitar and flute), and others in new arrangements. The recording also comprises solo pieces played by the two musicians, as well as an Italian homage to the world of the Tango: two compositions that feature in films much loved in Italy (*Il postino* and the TV serial *Il commissario Montalbano*). On listening to the whole recording, the two musicians' delight in melody comes to the fore, which is entirely true to form, since this is precisely what those early Italians contributed to the genre.

In their endeavour Leone and Bongianino were inspired by South American duos such as Troilo-Grela, Montes-Arias, Mosalini-Bogeholz and Satorre-Ramirez. The music in this album is the result of meticulous transcriptions made by Roberto Bongianino from the recordings of these duos and of arrangements of original scores that he re-adapted for guitar and bandoneon.

Translation by Kate Singleton

Le origini del Tango risultano oscure. Diverse sono le teorie promulgate da appassionati sostenitori, tuttavia, non esistendo registrazioni, ad oggi non è possibile conoscere la realtà della sua genesi. Il Tango è nato infatti da vite che non si ricordano sui libri e nemmeno sui dischi, vite di povertà e di emarginazione.

Le prime tracce evidenti di 'tangos' in Buenos Aires risalgono agli ultimi decenni del Diciannovesimo Secolo; forse non riconosceremo il Tango che ora abbiamo in mente se avessimo la possibilità di ascoltare i primi gruppi formati da flauto, violino e chitarra o i pianisti che da soli si esibivano nei bordelli e nei cabaret.

Tra il 1860 e il 1925, la popolazione di immigrati trasferiti in Argentina per tentare la fortuna contribuì allo sviluppo di questa musica, dando vita a una combinazione di forme quali l'habanera cubana, la milonga (un tipo di danza popolare), il candombe africano e le melodie italiane. Soprattutto gli italiani, il gruppo di immigrati più numeroso, e da cui provenivano i primi musicisti, diedero al tango l'apporto lirico che contraddistingue la sua aria malinconica e nostalgica.

Il bandoneon, lo strumento emblematico del Tango, giunse a Buenos Aires all'inizio del Ventesimo Secolo, portato da immigrati tedeschi, forse marinai. Inventato probabilmente in Germania o forse in Francia, veniva prodotto in Germania, come sostituto a buon mercato di un organo da chiesa suonato nelle comunità più povere.

Quasi immediatamente il bandoneon sostituì la fisarmonica, il flauto e il clarinetto, dando al Tango il suono definitivo e segnandone il destino: non vi è dubbio che il bandoneon abbia portato il Tango a una trasformazione d'animo radicale, diventando l'espressione di sentimenti profondi e appassionati.

La danza, da sempre una forza trainante nello sviluppo della musica Tango, ne segnò la diffusione nel mondo. I giovani di buona famiglia argentina (l'Argentina è stata uno dei paesi più ricchi del mondo) venivano inviati in Europa per studiare o giungevano per motivi di turismo. Alcuni di questi giovani avevano trascorso molte ore felici nei bordelli e in altri luoghi di malaffare a Buenos Aires, dove avevano imparato a ballare il Tango. La buona società a Parigi vide la danza per la prima volta e se ne innamorò; ben presto tutta l'Europa fu travolta da una *Tangomania* furiosa.

Di riflesso l'impatto a Buenos Aires fu ancora una volta profondo. Il Tango era stato qualcosa a cui l'élite fino a quel momento aveva scelto di non associarsi, in pubblico almeno: ora il Tango poteva muoversi dagli angoli delle strade ai salotti dei ricchi.

Si formarono quindi nuove orchestre, dando vita a una nuova fase di sviluppo del Tango fino al raggiungimento del suo splendore nel 1940. Nel decennio conosciuto come il "Golden Age" del Tango, famiglie provenienti da tutti i livelli della società argentina iniziarono a danzare, riempiendo le sale da ballo e permettendo alle più grandi orchestre di prosperare.

La nuova forma musicale può essere divisa in tre sottoclassi: *Milonga*, l'antenato del Tango, una sintesi di habanera da Cuba e polka dall'Europa; *Tango*, che si è evoluto dalla milonga dei primi anni con l'incorporazione di vari stili musicali africani e di danza, in una evoluzione caratterizzata da accenti più complicati, staccati e ritmi sincopati; *Vals*, derivato da valzer e mazurca europea e impreziosito da hemiolias, staccati e accenti nello stile del Tango. I testi sono anche un aspetto fondamentale di questa musica; le canzoni sono caratterizzate da intense esecuzioni vocali, ma vengono anche riproposte e rielaborate in forma strumentale.

Nel 1950 un giovane brillante bandoneonista chiamato Astor Piazzolla lasciò Buenos Aires per andare a Parigi per studiare composizione classica con Nadia Boulanger. Aveva trascorso la sua infanzia a New York, da adolescente aveva suonato nell'orchestra di Anibal Troilo, prima di formare la sua orchestra nel 1946. Si rese conto della difficoltà di avere il successo che voleva rimanendo all'interno della tradizione. Ispirandosi quindi ad elementi di Tango, ad elementi del jazz che aveva conosciuto negli Stati Uniti, e ad idee classiche, Piazzolla creò quello che lui chiama Tango Nuevo. Piazzolla rese i ritmi molto diversi da quello che i ballerini si aspettavano: la sua musica andava ascoltata più che ballata.

Quando il Tango Nuevo venne sentito le prime volte a Buenos Aires generò indignazione: si diceva che fosse lontano dalla tradizione, non era Tango! Ma l'incrocio della musica del Nord America e dei moduli europei creò qualcosa di accessibile e attraente per le persone non cresciute con la tradizione di Tango, con

l'effetto che il grande successo di Piazzolla nel resto del mondo ammorbidì l'opinione a casa. Molti musicisti infatti iniziarono a seguire l'esempio di Piazzolla, reputandolo seducente e accattivante e inoltrandosi nella strada da lui aperta; gli sviluppi continuano ancora oggi.

Enea Leone e Roberto Bongianino ripercorrono con i loro strumenti, chitarra e bandoneon, le tappe evolutive di questa storia musicale. Nel cd sono proposti esempi delle varie forme incontrate: la milonga (*Milonga de mis amores*, *Corralera*, *La trampera*), il tango (*El Choclo*, *El Pollo Ricardo*, *Mi refugio*, *Silbando*), il vals (*Pedacito de cielo*, *Flor de lino*). Ampio spazio viene poi dedicato a composizioni di Astor Piazzolla: i brani sono proposti alcuni vicini alla partitura originale (*Histoire du Tango*, suite nata per chitarra e flauto), altri in arrangiamento originale. Brani conosciuti in tutto il mondo nella loro esecuzione vocale vengono qui proposti in forma strumentale (*Soledad*, *Como dos extraneos*). Seguono poi alcuni brani suonati in solo dai due musicisti e un omaggio del tutto italiano al mondo del Tango: due brani che hanno accompagnato le immagini di due produzioni cinematografiche molto amate in Italia (*Il postino* ed *Il commissario Montalbano*). Ad un ascolto completo di questo lavoro si rende evidente l'attrazione che i due musicisti italiani hanno provato per ciò che in origine altri italiani come loro hanno donato al tango: la melodia.

In questa ricerca Leone e Bongianino si sono ispirati a duo di musicisti sudamericani quali Troilo-Grela, Montes-Arias, Mosalini-Bogeholz, Satorre-Ramirez. Infine, la musica interpretata in questo cd è frutto di un meticoloso lavoro di trascrizione fatto da Roberto Bongianino a partire dalle registrazioni di questi duo o di arrangiamento da partiture originali riadattate per chitarra e bandoneon.



Enea Leone was born in Milan and started to study the guitar when he was still very young under the guidance of his father. He then studied with Lena Kokkaliari, Ruggero Chiesa and Paolo Cherici, obtaining a first class Diploma at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatoire in Milan.

He also attended advanced classes held by Emanuele Segre and Alirio Diaz, and was awarded a grant to study with Oscar Ghiglia at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, where he obtained Diplomas of Merit. After this he also obtained the “Solistendiplom” at the Musik-Akademie in Basle, also with Oscar Ghiglia.

From an early age Leone made a name for himself in national and international music competitions, including Stresa, Franz Schubert, Mondovì, Lodi, Gargnano, Pittaluga in Alessandria and the Torneo Internazionale di Musica TIM, where he came first.

In his busy concert schedule in Italy and abroad he performs as a soloist and with chamber ensembles and orchestras.

Since 2000 he has been working closely with the Associazione Musicale Harmonia Music School at Gessate, near Milan, where he is artistic director and holds an annual master classes. He also teaches advanced courses at various important festivals.

He has recorded numerous albums and DVDs for M.A.P., Carisch, Armelin-Zanibon, Stradivarius and Brilliant, some of which are first ever recordings. These releases have always met with widespread critical acclaim. He has also edited a number of works from the classical and romantic repertoires for Armelin-Zanibon.

At present he teaches the guitar at the Darfo Boario Terme branch of the Luca Marenzio Conservatoire in Brescia, and is official endorser of Aquila Corde Armoniche.

Roberto Bongianino was born in 1973 and started learning the accordion at the age of 5. When he was only 10 he began his concert career as a soloist, endorsing an Italian company that produced accordions. He was soon one of the regular award-winners in national competitions, as well as finding work in dance orchestras throughout Italy. Since he was in his teens, Bongianino has always had a passion for blues, jazz, rock and folk music, and indeed for improvisation. A true eclectic, he has pursued his varied musical interests in his studies, in live experience and in recording studios, each element contributing to the creation of his own identity as a musician. He not only plays the accordion, even in the sphere of blues and rock, but also the electric guitar and bass, and in more recent years the bandoneon.

For over 30 years he has performed concerts in Italy and throughout Europe with different groups and ensembles: folk, blues, rock, jazz, tango, gospel, R&B, pop. He also works with various American and English blues, folk and rock musicians on their Italian tours. He has recorded several albums as co-leader, as well as playing as a guest musician with various other instrumentalists.

He is currently a member of the Paolo Bonfanti Band, working with the acclaimed Italian blues and root-rock guitarist in important Italian and European blues festivals, and of the Animalunga jazz trio. Moreover, he has formed a folk-jazz duo with the guitarist Maurizio Verna.

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