

Desde el Alma

Tango, the national treasure of Argentina, has become an international phenomenon. Today one can find tango clubs and enthusiastic dancers –*tangueros* in every major city. One can hear tango in concerts, on television commercials, in movies, or can be puzzled by the mid 20th century recordings of Secaattin Tanyeli, a Turkish tango composer! How can the music and dance of one culture be so passionately embraced all around the world?

The answer may lay in the origins of tango. A large number of diverse cultures influenced its evolution, which started towards the end of the 19th century. As a musical form it can be divided into three sub-classes: *Milonga*, a synthesis of *habanera* from Cuba and *polka* from Europe, is in fact the ancestor of tango. *Tango* evolved from the early milonga with the incorporation of various African musical and dance styles such as *candombe*. As a result, it embodied more complicated accents, staccatos and syncopated rhythms. *Vals*, although derived from European *waltz* and *mazurka*, is embellished with hemiolas, staccatos and accents in the style of tango. Lyrics are also a part of most classical and early tangos; it is equally common to perform them instrumentally or with voice.

This album contains some of the most beloved tangos not only in Argentina but also in tango dance circles throughout the world. Although they have been composed between 1910 and 1965, their interpretation has evolved over decades parallel to the evolution of tango orchestras. *Gallo Ciego* (*Blind Rooster*), named after a children's game of the 1910's, was originally composed by the tango pioneer *Agustín Bardi*. Decades later it became a favorite of the pianist, conductor and composer *Osvaldo Pugliese*. He added an introduction, various instrumental solos, and contrapuntal passages to the original, making his version even more popular. He similarly modernized the interpretation of *Desde El Alma* (*From the Soul*), a beautiful vals from the 1910's, and *La Mariposa* (*The Butterfly*), a tango from the 1920's, becoming one of the mavericks of the modern tango and eventually influencing the styles of *Horacio Salgán* and *Astor Piazzolla*. In 1968, some of Pugliese's musicians created *Sexteto Tango*, an offshoot of his legacy and an immensely successful tango group. One of them, *Emilio Balcarce*, composed *La Bordona*, which refers to the bass string, perfectly fitting the guitar with the bass melody appearing throughout the tango. Pianist, bandoneonist and composer *Julián Plaza* was another member of both orchestras. His works such as *Payadora* (a female folk-singer from the pampas) reflect the modern influences he inherited from Pugliese. Salgán's *A Fuego Lento* (*At Low Fire*) is a landmark example of this modernization trend. A four-note figure with chromatic intervals is ingeniously used as a backbone of the main melody, later forming an elaborate counterpoint with its own inversion. Both written in 1965, *Milonga del Angel* (*The Milonga of the Angel*) and *Verano Porteño* (summer in the port city i.e. Buenos Aires) are classic works of Piazzolla foreshadowing the beginning of his *New Tango* movement.

The other pieces in the album and their interpretation reflect the older tradition with *La Cumparsita* being undoubtedly the most famous tango. Ironically it was first intended to be a march for a university student association in Uruguay where its composer *Gerardo Matos Rodríguez* was born. *Azabache* by violinist *Enrique Francini* is reminiscent of the roots of tango and the early African influence of *candombe*; it is customarily performed with percussion, in contrast to traditional classical tango. *Nostalgias*, which has an exceptionally beautiful melodic line, is one of the most popular tangos of *Juan Carlos Cobián*, who was from the generation of *Rosita Melo* (*Desde El Alma*) and *Pedro Maffia* (*La Mariposa*). *Corazón de Oro* (*Heart of Gold*), is a vals from the late 1920's; its composer *Francisco Canaro*, had significant influence in the early development of the tango orchestra just like the pioneer *Agustín Bardi* (*Gallo Ciego*). Although written in 1956 *La Ultima Curda* (*The Last Drunkenness*) does not sound modern. Instead it is a soulful reflection of the turbulent life of its composer *Anibal Troilo*, one of the most beloved and admired bandoneon masters. In *Malena* the music of *Lucio Demare* and the lyrics of *Homero Manzi* describe the soul of the tango and its philosophy in the persona of Malena, a woman singer of the period: the bandoneon, feminine elegance, masculine strength, fantasy, nightlife, passion and love...

Cem Duruöz

“More than a very good guitarist; also a good arranger and a particularly fine communicator with his audience.” wrote New York Concert Review –one of the many accolades that guitarist *Cem Duruöz* has received from critics.

Mr. Duruöz’ recent concert appearances include his *Carnegie Hall Debut Recital* at the Weill Recital Hall in New York, performances as a soloist with the *Antalya Symphony Orchestra* in Turkey and recitals at the *ICPNA Guitar Festival* in Peru, the *Eskişehir Music* and *Istanbul Guitar Festivals* in Turkey, and *La Guitarra California Festival* in the USA. During the 2004-2005 season he will perform Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* with the *Presidential Symphony Orchestra* in Turkey. He will also perform in recitals and conduct master-classes in Bolivia, Spain and the USA.

Being interested in early music, Mr. Duruöz (www.duruoz.com) transcribed and recorded some of the gamba music by French baroque composer *Marin Marais* in his first solo CD “*Pièces de Viole*”, which received critical acclaim in international magazines such as *American Record Guide*, *Fanfare*, *Classics Today*, *Classical Guitar* and *BBC Music* (Centaur CRC 2498, www.piecesdeviole.com). On the other hand, being a contemporary music enthusiast, he commissioned new works from emerging composers and recorded them in his second CD “*Contemporary Music for Guitar*” (Centaur CRC 2563), along with masterpieces of the guitar repertoire by *Walton* and *Davidovsky*.

Turkish born guitarist Cem Duruöz, (or “Gem” as pronounced in his native tongue) began his training with *Safa Gürbüz* and continued with *Ahmet Kanneci*. He won the first prize in the Turkish National Guitar Competition at the age of seventeen. After moving to the United States he completed his graduate guitar studies at The Juilliard School with *Sharon Isbin*. He performed in Japan, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Greece, and throughout Turkey and the USA. As an enthusiastic educator, Cem Duruöz has been conducting master-classes throughout the world and teaching guitar performance at Wesleyan University in the USA.