

years old. Since then he played with a number of tango groups among them the first female bandoneonist Francisca Paqueta Bernardo and also with the Enrique Pollet quartet ending with the Roberto Firpo Orchestra and in 1927 was a member of Pedro Maffia's orchestra as pianist. In 1934, when Pedro Laurenz formed his own orchestra, Pugliesi was on the piano and starting to write his first arrangements, for example, *La Beba*. He formed his own group and was the leader, pianist and arranger. They appeared in Radio Nuevo Mundo gaining immense popularity; for the orchestra had a strong rhythmic beat most appropriate for dancers. In the 40s, he recorded several instrumental pieces written by himself, kind of avant-gardé repertoire, one of them, was *La Yumba*, tango, which is a *neologism* sort of an onomatopoeia imitation of the step to mark in the Pugliese orchestra and not an African word as it was first thought. It was written in 1943 by his composer who recorded it on the Odeón label in 1945 and 1952. There is another interpretation by Francini-Pontier.

MALENA, *Tango*
LUCIO DEMARE (1906-1974)
HOMERO MANZI (1907-1951)

Demare lived all his life in Buenos Aires and as a boy settled in the Abasto's neighbourhood – the heart of town – but moved to Colegiales at five years of age. He did not play games, but played the piano instead. He had a very strict teacher, Mr Scaramuzza, who told him the secrets of playing well and at 6 years old was hired at a local cinema, playing from 2.00pm until midnight and earned forty pesos per month. His teacher in tango was Enrique Di Cicco and Canaro took him to Paris in 1926. Demare was then 19 years old and spent two years with him and premiered two of his tangos *Mañanitas de Montmartre* and *Dandy*. Afterwards, in 1938, formed his own orchestra with singers Juan Carlos Miranda and Raul Berón, which was most popular for ten years for having his own style and a good repertoire. He also tried the film industry to help his brother Lucio who was a Director. They did *Dos amigos and one love*, *Chingolo*, (with Luis Sandrini), *El viejo hucha* and *La guerra gaucha*. Later he dissolved the orchestra and went to play in several venues. Demare wrote the music of *Malena*, tango, in a very short time. Manzi had given him the lyrics ten days before and was due to meet him and wanted to have at least the beginning of the tango so, he went to a bar called *El Grand Guindado* and sat and wrote it in one go from beginning to end. The verses of *Malena*, said that she sings tango like no-one else, and into every verse she puts her heart, her voice has the weed's perfume... *Malena* feels the pain of bandoneón.

SELECTION OF MILONGAS

The selection includes two famous milongas: *Francia* by Octavio Barbero, and *Linda*, by Roberto Rufino and Alejandro Romay.

EL AMANCECER, *Tango*
ROBERTO FIRPO (1884-1969)

Once the tango came back from Paris it began to be accepted by decent people who took great pleasure in listening to the tango rhythms, therefore, it was necessary to set limits to avoid the lower classes intrusion; but under the law of Saénz Peña in 1904, Alfredo Palacios, socialist, was democratically elected. This showed a sign of flexibility and the arrival of a permissive society; the *belle époque* was at an end and democratisation was on its way, in this ambience the cabarets were created similar to the Parisian ones, the dance floor was now a vaulted ballroom, luxuriously

illuminated and decorated following European fashion. One of the most famous was the Armenonville, *the Armenón* to its customers. In order to attract clientele in 1913, they decided to call for an open competition to choose permanent musicians to play tangos. It was won by Roberto Firpo, pianist, to the disappointment of the other contenders, who out of sheer spite, stabbed Firpo; one of Tano Genaro's guitarists was responsible for it. However, this incident helped to recognize the piano as a leading instrument. The phase of the brothel was opened and it was the beginning of the "typical orchestra." Now that Firpo had a job he decided to form a trio with Tito Rocatagliatta, violin and Eduardo Arola, bandoneón. They were so successful that Max Gluksmann, producer, hired them for recording with the Odeón-Nacional. This was due to the way Firpo played the piano: he adorned the melody; with the right hand he executed the accompaniment, whilst with the left one brought from the low part of the piano keys, an octave chromatic scale, which when descending to the treble imitated the characteristic strum of the guitar in a very personal style. He was doing well, and in 1914, added a second violin and a flute to balance the heavy sound of the piano when playing old guard tangos, and next a double bass, played by Leopoldo Thompson. Firpo's playing allowed the piano to go up within the limits of decency; his sextet will originate his "typical orchestra", a name used for the first time by Canaro in the Carnaval of 1917 in Rosario. We have to add that in the 40s came the formation of eleven musicians. Now tango is accepted by society and its orchestra leaders, composers and singers have left behind their marginal status, and in their place of work, they not only premiered their music but also wore their suits for the first time, they dressed impeccably; that is the case of Firpo, Canaro, Fresedo and De Caro orchestras, not only that, they also were educated which facilitated them to hobnob with the ruling classes. The lyrics also changed. Firpo's tangos were of a romantic kind in which stand out: *El apronte*, *El solitario*, *Fuegos artificiales* and, of course, *El amanecer*, tango, which is one of the most successful pieces he wrote in 1912. It was recorded by de Basso in 1961 and by Pugliesi in 1964 whilst Di Sarli recorded it three times.

MILONGA SENTIMENTAL
SEBASTIAN PIANA (1903-1994)

Kindly see information given in the first part of the programme. *Milonga Sentimental* was premiered by a quartet formed by the actresses Rosita Contreras, and Pepita Cantero and by the actors García Ramos y Casaravilla during the presentation of the revista named *El sueño del peludo*. Later it was part of the repertoire of Pedro Maffia who made it popular but it was Carlos Gardel who recorded it when he was in the last period of his life in Argentina in 1933.

OJOS NEGROS, *Tango*
VICENTE GRECO (1888-1924)

Vicente Greco, bandoneón player and composer, was born in Buenos Aires and had eight brothers and sisters most of them musicians. He started his musical career by singing and playing guitar when he was just five years old. By chance he came across a concertina and trained himself, quite casually; within a month he was playing the Waldteufel's waltz but the person who introduced him into the secret of bandoneón playing was Sebastián Ramos Mejía (El Pardo) who suggested to his parents they buy him a real bandoneón. Friends and relatives contributed some funds and the boy got a bandoneón on his 14th birthday – the most sought after present. He mastered it very soon and was ready to face an audience. He played at the San Pedro, San Nicolás, Baradero, and

Rosario where he met interesting musicians like Prudencio Aragón, Ernesto Zambonini, Lorenzo "El Negro," Juan Borguessi and many more, all of them professional musicians from whom Vicente learned to perfect his playing. He did not know much about writing his music on paper, but with the help of fellow musicians managed to compose tangos that made him famous: *El pibe*, *El morochita*, *El perverso*, *Ki-Ki*, *Tiene la palabra*, *Rodríguez Peña*, *La viruta* and *El flete* (the three last ones reached top ranks). It is said that there was a moment of inspiration by Prudencio Aragón, pianist and with his permission Vicente Greco composed this immortal tango *Ojos negros* (Black eyes), which was premiered at a Café in La Boca; the lyrics are also by Greco. Afterwards, Troilo recorded it three times as well as Salgán and Di Sarli in 1945.

EL CHOCLO, *Tango*
ANGEL VILLOLDO (1861-1919)

He was an influential figure who gave tango music this special rhythm – so much of the River Plate sound. He was a man with no fear for tackling any available job: typographer, circus clown, horserider, and a prolific composer. His subjects for writing music were love affairs of people from bottom of society, he wrote his lyrics with no shame at all, mainly ridiculing society. He sung accompanied by guitar and harmonica and entertained audiences in very poor cafés. Around 1889, he published his *Cantos Criollos* and thereafter *Argentine popular songs*. He was the author of a method to learn guitar with symbols called "Method America." He fulfilled the requirement of the times and went to Paris for a series of recordings; hired by Gath and Chaves which helped to enhance Argentine music in Europe. One of the most important tangos was *El Choclo* (The Maize) he also wrote the lyrics, and the first stanza says: "... from a seed the plant is born which later gives us sweet corn, this is why my singing voice says I am a humble person and since I am not somebody else, but no more than a tango singer, I whisper with overjoy, it has surpassed the very best!" *El Choclo* was known since 1905 and was premiered one evening at *El Americano Restaurant*, located at Cangallo and Carabelas of Buenos Aires. It was played by Luis Roncallo, pianist and was recorded later by the following orchestras: D'Agostino, Canaro, Troilo Fresedo, Piazzolla, Salgán, Sexteto Tango and many others.

LA CUMPARSITA, *Tango*
GERARDO MATOS RODRIGUEZ (1897-1948)

Matos-Rodríguez studied in Montevideo and wrote a little march for his circle of friends called *La Comparsa* and later on, Roberto Firpo, who was working at *La Giralda Cafe* in the capital city of Uruguay, was shown the partition, and decided to amend it by including some scores of his own tango *La gaucha Manuela* and played it at the Café Iglesias in Buenos Aires; it was an instant success. Moreover, around 1924, Pascual Contursi and Enrique Maroni wrote the lyrics to the music, for it was due to be sung in the play *Un programa de Cabaret* at the Apolo Theatre. And from then on has become a classical tango of all times. Today, *La Cumparsita* is like a hymn of *rioplatense* music with over one hundred recordings around the world including two by Carlos Gardel. Matos Rodríguez continued writing and produced *la Mocosita*, *iChe Pupusa oi!*, *Botija Linda*, *San Telmo*, *Adiós Argentina*, *La Milonga Azul* and many more.

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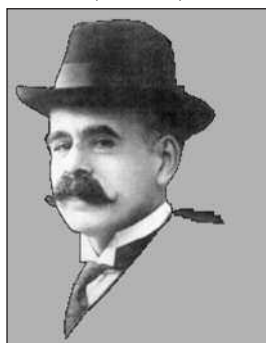
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