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Sarah L. Cosano

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TRANSCRIBING ASTOR PIAZZOLLA'S WORKS TO MAXIMIZE STYLISTIC FIDELITY: AN EXAMINATION OF THREE SAXOPHONE QUARTETS WITH A NEW TRANSCRIPTION

By

Sarah L. Cosano

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TRANSCRIBING ASTOR PIAZZOLLA'S WORKS TO MAXIMIZE STYLISTIC FIDELITY: AN EXAMINATION OF THREE SAXOPHONE QUARTETS WITH A NEW TRANSCRIPTION

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University of Nebraska, 2019

Advisor: Paul Haar

Astor Piazzolla is recognized as a pivotal figure who drew tango music onto an international stage. His output of written compositions and recordings provide a reference for studying tango. Though Piazzolla adapted a collection of flute etudes in 1988, he did not write specifically for saxophone during his lifetime. Saxophonists must instead rely on transcriptions of his music. Today, tango is a widely performed idiom for saxophone quartet.

Because of its tessitura, timbral variety, and flexibility, the saxophone is uniquely suited to perform tango music. This instrument has an expansive range when altissimo is included. Its written range spans from the B-flat below middle C, to F above the staff. Adding altissimo extends this an octave higher, for a total of three and a half octaves. The saxophone can mimic aspects of the voice, percussion, brass, and strings. Because of this, it can replicate key elements from the bandoneon, which is an important instrument in tango. Though saxophone can be warm and expressive, it is capable of creating percussive effects, virtuosic lines, and glissandi. All of these techniques are prevalent in the music of Piazzolla and the style he created, *nuevo tango.*

In the academic setting, music majors are taught history, theory, and common practices of the Western classical tradition. Similarly, studying the traditions of tango will lead to stylistically accurate performances of Piazzolla's music on the saxophone. This dissertation explores three works that have been arranged and published for the saxophone quartet: *Libertango, Four for Tango,* and *Histoire du Tango.* Each chapter provides historical background, structural and harmonic analysis, and performance suggestions based upon the original recordings or scores. The final chapter demonstrates how the bandoneon lends itself to the saxophone, with a quartet arrangement of Piazzolla's composition, *Lo Que Vendrá*, created by the author. By studying Piazzolla's music in this context, saxophonists can apply the tango style when performing his works. They also will gain an awareness of the resources currently available, which will help in the process of creating new arrangements.

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DEDICATION

This project never would have come to fruition without my husband, Alberto. His love, patience, and support gave me momentum to push through to the other side. I am eternally grateful to my parents, who have always been an endless source of encouragement and prayers. Finally, I would like to thank my committee members: Dr. Haar, Dr. Bailey, Tom Larson, and Dr. Batelaan who guided me with their unique talents and experience.

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CHAPTER 1

HISTORY OF SAXOPHONE QUARTET

The saxophone is an instrument that has woven itself into the fabric of many genres of music. This includes such diverse categories as jazz, commercial music, military bands, musical theater, and orchestra. Though tango has influences as far reaching as the Spanish *habanera,* the Congolese *candombe*, and the Argentine *milonga*,[1] its stylistic requirements are within reach for the modern saxophonist because of the instrument's role in many different types of music. This makes it possible for performers and arrangers to adopt music that may not have originally been written for the saxophone.

The first one hundred years were vital to the success of the saxophone, and key personnel helped disseminate knowledge of its capabilities. By the early 20th century, performers had already selected this instrument as their chosen voice. Saxophone quartets in particular highlighted the musical versatility, as well as homogenous capabilities, of this instrument. The establishment of saxophone quartets as a standard ensemble format can be attributed to four primary factors in the instrument's development. This includes creation by Adolphe Sax, adoption by military bands, promotion by Marcel Mule, and participation in early American popular music. Each phase helped to garner recognition among the general public, while also introducing the instrument to new and different styles of music.

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[1] The *milonga*'s roots can be traced back to the Río de la Plata region. This is a region formed around an estuary between Argentina and Uruguay. Two cities in that area, Buenos Aires and Montevideo, both had an influence on this music.
Robert Farris Thompson, *Tango: The Art History of Love* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2005), 173.

Adolphe Sax

The early years in the saxophone's development contained key moments that helped chart its course in history. Adolphe Sax was born on November 6, 1814 in Dinant, Belgium. His father was appointed Instrument Maker to the Court of the Netherlands,[2] and Adolphe learned tools of the trade, crafting instruments from an early age.[3] When he turned 27, Adolphe submitted a proposal to present a collection of clarinets and saxophones that he had made at the 1841 Brussels Exhibition. Though his saxophone prototype was damaged by a competitor, a jury unanimously recommended the Premier Gold Medal for his clarinet design. During final deliberations, the General Commission overruled this suggestion and awarded him silver, as the panel deemed him too young to receive the top honor.[4] Despite this disappointment, Sax's skills drew notice during the exhibition and Lieutenant General Comte Théodore du Rumigny, an aide to the king of France, invited him to relocate to Paris.[5]

A change of location turned out to be a wise choice for Sax's career. He was living in the proximity of Paris' most successful musicians, including Hector Berlioz, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Gaetano Donizetti, Jacques Halévy, and Jean-Georges Kastner.[6] Hector Berlioz was particularly supportive of Sax's creations, stating that "M. Sax—whose labours will first occupy our attention—has brought to perfection (as I have already remarked here and there in the course of this work) several ancient instruments

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[2] Thomas Liley, "Invention and Development," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone,* ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.
Plugge, "The History of the Saxophone Ensemble: A Study of the Development of the Saxophone Quartet into a Concert Genre" (DMA diss., Northwestern University, 2003), 2.
[3] Liley, 1-2.
[4] Liley, 3.
Fred L. Hemke, "The Early History of the Saxophone," (DMA diss, University of Wisconsin, 1975), 16.
[5] Hemke, 16-17.
[6] Plugge, 3.

[…] His principal merit, however, is the creation of a new family, complete since a few years only; —that of the instruments with a single reed, with a clarinet mouth-piece, and in brass. These are the SAXOPHONES."[7] Berlioz also helped advertise a public concert and demonstration of new instruments presented by the inventor. Following this concert, Mr. Sax was able to obtain funding for Adolphe Sax Musical Instrument Factory, a storefront located at No.10 Rue Saint Georges in Paris.[8]

Sax was an indefatigable promotor of his instruments. To garner public support for his creations, he delved into various aspects of the music business. In 1850, Adolphe Sax began commissioning composers to write works for the saxophone. Eight years later, he had established a publishing house under the name Chez Adolphe Sax.[9] This business acted as a central hub for new saxophone music, existing for the next twenty years. Sax did not stop with retail; he also built a concert hall adjacent to his shop. This venue's primary purpose was to feature his instruments in performances by professional artists. In March of 1856, the following review appeared in the *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*,

> The concert given by Mr. Wuille in the Mayor's hall displayed all of the talent of the skillful clarinetist […] With the variations on Pré-aux-Clercs, Mr. Wuille introduced a new instrument of Sax, the alto saxophone, which was heard for the first time in Strasbourg in public. This instrument belongs to a large family of brass instruments invented by Mr. Sax, and in particular to the quartet of saxophones, which includes besides the alto which is the instrument in question here, the soprano, baritone, and bass. Joined in a quartet, these congenial instruments should produce a harmonious effect and we hope to be able to hear them together someday. Taken individually and as a solo instrument, the saxophone appears to take part of its value from that of the performer: Mr. Wuille handled it superbly and draws from it an excellent recital. He received, after the excerpt that

[7] Hector Berlioz, "New Instruments," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 9, no. 212 (1860): 345.
[8] Liley, 4.
[9] Plugge, 16.

> he played, much applause, which addressed itself at least as much to the artist as well as to his instrument.[10]

As his store, performance venue, and publishing house grew in recognition, Adolphe Sax was able to institute a saxophone class at the Conservatoire de Paris[11] on June 7, 1857. The primary purpose of this curriculum was to assume responsibilities for military musician training after the Gymnase de musique militaire was suppressed.[12] Soon thereafter, French conservatories offered courses in saxophone, and interest quickly spread to the neighboring countries of Switzerland, Spain, Belgium, and Italy.[13] Sax's own class at the Conservatoire de Paris lasted until 1870, when the Franco-Prussian war diverted financial resources for wartime needs.[14]

Though it is inspiring to read about the saxophone's growing successes, the visionary craftsman also encountered difficulties following the creation of his invention. The date of saxophone's first creation was 1838, but its patent request was submitted June 28, 1846.[15] According to Thomas Liley in the *Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone,* "The series of lawsuits and appeals [following the patent of the saxophone] in 1846 would consume Sax's physical and financial resources throughout the remainder of his life."[16]

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[10] Quoted in Plugge, 5.
[11] Full name: Conservatoire national supérieur de musique et de danse de Paris. Also known in English as the Paris Conservatory.
[12] This was an instructional program developed for French military musicians. Further description is included in the "Military Bands" section of this chapter.
Ibid, 5.
[13] This includes Lille, Geneva, and "other regional French conservatories."
Ibid, 4.
[14] Liley, 8.
[15] Ibid, 6.
[16] Ibid, 7.

In his final years, Adolphe Sax struggled with the remnants of many legal battles. In 1877, the inventor declared bankruptcy for the second time and his collection of 467 instruments was sold throughout Brussels and Paris. Fortunately, many of them have been retrieved and are now on display in area museums. In an 'Appeal to the Public,' Sax submitted a plea in the journal *La Musique des famillies,* attempting to regain unfulfilled restitution from the L'Association générale des ouvriers en instruments de musique,[17] with whom he had won a patent infringement case in 1854. This request was ignored by the courts, but Sax was donated a modest pension by fellow musicians that sustained him until his passing.[18] Though the journey was not easy, time eventually proved the validity of Sax's work. Performers are indebted to the personal sacrifices that he made, because Sax helped to establish the saxophone's place in the Western music tradition.

Military Bands

One important factor missing thus far in the discussion of Adolphe Sax's efforts was a moment that changed the trajectory of the saxophone's acceptance. By the mid-1800s, the French government had become dissatisfied with its military band format. They feared that it was not adequately communicating France's patriotism and military capability. On February 25, 1845, a commission headed by General de Rumigny met to discuss the state of French military ensembles, searching for a more effective means to display their prowess.[19]

[17] United Association of Instrument Makers. This is described in Liley's article as a consortium of rival instrument makers who formed to challenge Adolphe Sax's early patent claims.
Liley, 5-6.
[18] Ibid, 10.
[19] Ibid, 5.

Following this meeting, leaders of the commission agreed to host a competition where two ensembles would compete in a public performance. The resident *Gynmnase de musique militaire* adjusted some elements of the current French military organization, but otherwise focused on perfecting the traditional military band ensemble format. The second group was led by M. Fessy, a civilian. Mr. Fessy's band, featuring instruments designed by Adolphe Sax, was declared the winner.[20] On the ninth of August 1845, a report was submitted to the Minister of War requiring that all future ensembles include the saxhorn as well as two types of saxophone to replace ophicleides.[21]

This competition was an impetus that became the turning point for the saxophone's success. A directive to include saxophone in all French military ensembles delivered a guaranteed market to Adolphe Sax. Sax moved to patent his creation that year, invoking jealousy with instrument makers who were blocked from this new revenue stream.[22] As the saxophone grew in popularity, a need for instructors also grew. Establishment of the Gymnase de musique militaire, a school for military recruit training, gave stability to the saxophone market. In addition, Adolphe Sax's post at the Conservatoire de Paris provided additional support for the instrument's existence.

As Louis Pasteur once famously said, "In the fields of observation, chance favors only the mind which is prepared."[23] Just before the military competition took place, Sax

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[20] The saxhorn was a valved bugle instrument. It was designed take the place of miscellaneous brass instruments such as the euphonium, cornet, and flugelhorn.
Encyclopaedia Brittanica, "Saxhorn," https://www.britannica.com/art/saxhorn (accessed March 27, 2018).
[21] "The other band, directed by M. Fessy demonstrated fully Sax's comprehensive reforms and his instruments—the saxophone and, especially, the saxhorn […] the government had declared a near monopoly mandating the use of his instruments." Liley, 5.
"After the Champ de Mars contest of April 1845, Sax changed Eb piccolo to Db piccolo and significantly exchanged the two Bb ophicleides for two unspecified saxophones." Hemke, 198.
[22] Liley, 6.
[23] R.M. Pearce, "Chance and the Prepared Mind," *Science* 35, no. 912 (1912): 941-56. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1638153 (accessed March 27, 2018).

had completed designs for a comprehensive span of voices in the saxophone family. This sonic spectrum mimicked the natural human voice with designations including soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone. Mixed saxophone ensembles, and later quartets, were soon formed by military students under Sax's guidance at the Conservatoire de Paris.[24] This variety inspired composers to write music for different combinations of saxophones, and some of these pieces are still performed today.

The earliest published work containing multiple saxophones can be found in Jean-Georges Kastner's *Complete and Systematic Method for Saxophone,* which appeared in 1844. This method book was compiled at the request of the French ministry to expedite the process of saxophone training in the regional bands. Two original compositions exist in the *Complete and Systematic Method for Saxophone.* One of these pieces, *Grand Sextuor,* contained parts for a mixed saxophone ensemble with two sopranos in C, one alto in F, two bass saxophones in C, and one contrabass in F. Instrumentation also could be substituted with soprano in B-flat, alto in E-flat, bass in B-flat, and contrabass in E-flat.[25] Before quartets became an established format, saxophone ensemble instrumentation varied. Group personnel was dependent on resources, instrument development, and the skill level of performers. Within these parameters, Kastner's work highlights the breadth and depth of Sax's creation.

Kastner's first text for saxophone created a precedent for composers who followed. Other works were written at the request of Adolphe Sax during his tenure at the

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[24] Plugge, 14.

[25] Though the score lists these instruments, historical record suggests that some of Sax's instruments, such as the C soprano, were never completed.
Andrew Justin Allen, "The Symphonious Saxophone: A History of the Large Saxophone Ensemble with a Quantitative Analysis of Its Original Literature," (DMA diss., University of South Carolina, 2013), 14-15.

Paris Conservatory. Dr. Scott Plugge in his dissertation, *The History of the Saxophone Ensemble: A Study of the Development of the Saxophone Quartet into a Concert Genre*, has compiled a chronological list of saxophone ensemble works[26] composed before 1928. His document contains 23 compositions written by the following composers: Jean-Georges Kastner, Jean-Baptiste Singelée, Jerome Savari, Léon Kreutzer, Emile Jonas, Jules Alfred Cressonnois, Jean Huré, Oscar Comettant, Jean-Baptiste Victor Mohr, Armand Limnander de Niewenhove, Raymond Moulaert, Caryl Florio, Gustave Bumcke, Jean Cras, Lucien Haudebert, Antonio Ricci-Signorini, and Adolphe-Valentin Sellenick. A majority of these early compositions for saxophone were printed through Adolphe's publishing company. Arrangements also surfaced, including a Bach chorale written for six saxophones that appears in *Nouveau traité d'instrumentation* by François-Auguste Gevaert.[27] In 1923, Marcel Mule won a position in La musique de la Garde républicaine and during his 13 year tenure in the band, arranged numerous works for saxophone quartet.[28] According to Dr. Plugge, "it is clear that Adolphe Sax's influence obtained the greatest results in developing a canon of original repertoire for the saxophone ensemble during the period he served as the instructor of saxophone at the Conservatoire de Paris."[29]

Early records also show that many of these saxophone works were performed in live concerts. In 1858, a group of saxophonists performed in a double quartet conducted by a composer and friend of Adolphe Sax, Jean-Baptiste Singelée. This event followed a

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[26] To be included in this list, each of these works must be written for four or more saxophones.
[27] Allen, 19.
[28] Thomas Dreyer-Beers, "Influential Soloists," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1998): 43.
[29] Plugge, 8-9.

jury examination for the inaugural saxophone class at the Conservatoire de Paris.[30] Five years later, Sax also arranged a Beethoven composition for seven saxophones that was performed at the school.[31] As performers presented professionally written music to the public, audiences became comfortable with the saxophone as a viable concert medium.

The Conservatoire de Paris wasn't the only venue where saxophone ensembles were located. Because of the Garde républicaine's outreach mission, this instrument was also introduced to other countries. A notable moment was in 1872, when the Guard band (in which there were six saxophonists) brought its group to the shores of the United States for an invited performance at Patrick Gilmore's International Peace Jubilee.[32] These French musicians performed to much acclaim and before long, American military bands also adopted the saxophone into their roster. By 1911, Italy had already added three saxophones to La banda cittadina of Cremona: the soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, and tenor saxophone. Spain also employed a total of eight saxophones, including two soprano saxophones, two alto saxophones, two tenor saxophones, and two bass saxophones.[33]

The main party responsible for instrumentation changes in American bands was Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore. After organizing the International Peace Jubilee, he was offered a conductor position with the United States' Twenty-second Regiment Band.[34] This ensemble soon became a premier musical ambassador for the United States. On 11 July 1878, *The New York Times* extolled the ensemble with the headline, "Foreign Tour

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[30] This would be the first documented performance of Sax's instruments in a group setting, as it was the inaugural saxophone class at the Conservatoire de Paris.
Allen, 19.
[31] Allen, 19.
[32] Ibid, 20.
[33] Plugge, 62.
[34] Ibid, 63.

of Gilmore's Band, Musical Conquest of Great Britain in Six Weeks—Sixty-Five Engagements Before Two Hundred Thousand People." The authors declared, "In a musical point of view, their success and triumph have been beyond all anticipation […] their merits and proficiency have agreeably surprised all who have heard them."[35]

Gilmore's international success with the Twenty-second Regiment Band piqued American interest towards the saxophone. Though musician staffing depended on the financial arrangements of each tour, an early roster from 1874 accounts for a saxophone quartet with Franz Wallrabe on soprano, Edward A. Lefebre on alto saxophone, Henry Steckelberg on tenor saxophone, and William F. Schultz on baritone saxophone.

The inclusion of saxophones was noticed by audience members, and its appearance was documented in the press. Newspaper articles chronicle the group's performances, including a concert with five saxophones in 1880 and another with a sextet in 1889.[36] At the St. Louis Exposition, *The New York Times* counted ten saxophones in Gilmore's "Famous One Hundred Men" band. The article was printed just before Mr. Gilmore passed away, and it enumerates one of the largest recorded formats for a saxophone section.[37] Below is a picture showing an early saxophone quintet from Gilmore's band, with musicians listed from left to right: M. Davidson, E. A. Lefebre, E. Schaap, F. W. Schultze, and T. F. Shannon.

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[35] Correspondence of the Boston Journal, *The New York Times*, 11 July 1878.
[36] Plugge, 69.
[37] Ibid, 70.

Figure 1.1: Gilmore's saxophone section, 1889.[38]

No matter the size, the saxophone section frequently drew notice, and a shrewd Gilmore was quick to capitalize on this attention. Not only did he program works with the talented Edward A. Lefebre as a soloist, but the conductor also featured the band's saxophone quartet in concerts. This group branded themselves The New York Saxophone Quartette Club, and announcements about their performances were printed both in *The New York Times* and live music programs.[39] The New York Saxophone Quartette Club appeared in such venues as the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1874, Gilmore's Concert Garden in 1877, and the St. Louis Exposition in 1885.[40] These performances were important, because "[Gilmore's] decision to feature the New York Saxophone Quartette Club represents the earliest significant evidence of professional saxophone quartet activity in a concert genre in the United States."[41]

Another name in the United States military tradition also was pivotal to saxophone quartet development: John Philip Sousa. In 1880 Sousa took the baton to lead

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[38] Zach Stern, "Forwaaaaaard, March!" University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library, http://wayback.archive-it.org/5871/20180205205128/http://moore.music.umich.edu/chinablog/?q=node/62 (accessed April 2, 2018).
[39] Plugge, 89.
[40] Ibid, 71.
[41] Ibid, 72.

the United States Marine Band, a position that he held for twelve years.[42] In 1884, he employed an alto, tenor, and baritone saxophonist. Seven years later, he also added soprano saxophone to this band.[43] Over a span of 50 years (twelve in the Marine band and 39 as a civilian leader), Sousa featured the saxophone section both in a chamber format and as soloists.[44] When Gilmore passed away, many of his players moved to Sousa's band. The United States Marine Band also took over engagements that were the responsibility of the Twenty-second Regiment band, including the St. Louis Exposition, the World's Fair, and some extended world tours.[45]

On July 30, 1892, Sousa left the military to lead a civilian concert ensemble under the advice of David Blakely, Gilmore's previous tour manager. The civilian ensemble magnified Sousa's successes, and his new group was able to book tours across the United States, Canada, and Europe.[46] In the same way that Gilmore's instrumentation varied, Sousa's saxophone section also vacillated between trios and quintets. The photo below was taken during a European tour in 1905, with saxophonists listed from left to right: Rudolph Becker, Fred Paul, Samuel Schaich, William F. Schensley, and Jean A. B. Moeremans. A later printed schedule also included the personnel Ben Vereecken, A. A. Knecht, and M.B. Howard.

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[42] Colonel Jason K Fettig, "John Philip Sousa," The Presidents Own United States Marine Band, http://www.marineband.marines.mil/About/Our-History/John-Philip-Sousa (accessed April 1, 2018).
[43] Plugge, 73.
[44] Fetting.
[45] Plugge, 76. Both bands completed European tours during their tenure. Argentina's demographic makeup has many European immigrants, especially Italian, German, and Spanish. This immigration helped to bring the saxophone to South America during the early years of the instrument's development.
[46] Plugge, 77.

Figure 1.2: Photo of Sousa's saxophone section in 1905.[47]

Over his lifetime, Sousa was able to maintain a roster of professional level performers, and his saxophone section was no exception. From 1901 to 1907, he often featured the band's saxophone quartet in concerts. A program from September 20, 1906 lists William F. Schensley (alto saxophone), Albert Knecht (tenor saxophone), Samuel Schaich (alto saxophone), and Rudolph Becker (baritone saxophone) as the saxophone personnel. In this concert, they performed transcriptions of Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto*.[48] This ensemble toured under name the American Saxophone Quartette, and they found great success performing for live audiences. They were even able to gig outside of Sousa's band, embarking on tours as a self-contained show when the Sousa band was between seasons. A promotional brochure for the American Saxophone Quartette states,

> This company presents one of the most effective musical combinations now before the public. The members are all masters of their respective instruments. They are artists of international reputation and are the only saxophone quartette in this country. Their programs are of high class,

[47] Plugge, 80.
[48] The tenor saxophonist Ferdinand Paul substituted for Albert Knecht 1901-1905. Albert Knecht rejoined for the final two years.

> consisting of operatic and popular selections, which they render in a perfect manner. This attraction is a genuine novelty of the highest standard of excellence.[49]

The brochure pictured below demonstrates the extent of their busy touring schedule.

American saxophone quartette Concert Co.

Tour

ROUTE

Oct.	11	Stewartstown	Pa.
Oct.	12	Millerstown	Pa.
Oct.	14	Newport	Pa.
Oct.	15	Mechanicsburg	Pa.
Oct.	16	Glen Rock	Pa.
Oct.	17	Renova	Pa.
Oct.	18	Towanda	Pa.
Oct.	19	Warriors Mark	Pa.
Oct.	21	Jersey Shore	Pa.
Oct.	22	Allentown	Pa.
Oct.	23	Slatington	Pa.
Oct.	24	Lebanon	Pa.
Oct.	25	Waynesburg	Pa.
Oct.	26	Mt. Pleasant	Pa.
Oct.	28	Pitcairn	Pa.
Oct.	29	Sunbury	Pa.
Oct.	30	Lock Haven	Pa.
Oct.	31	Hanover	Pa.
Nov.	1	Delta	Pa.
Nov.	2	Spring Forge	Pa.
Nov.	4	High Point	N.C.
Nov.	5	High Point	N.C.
Nov.	6	Gadsden	Ala.
Nov.	7	Gadsden	Ala.
Nov.	8	A & M College	Miss.
Nov.	9	A & M College	Miss.
Nov.	11	Vicksburg	Miss.
Nov.	12	Shreveport	La.
Nov.	13	Shreveport	La.
Nov.	14	Lake Charles	La.
Nov.	15	Lake Charles	La.
Nov.	16	Huntsville	Texas
Nov.	18	Temple	Texas
Nov.	19	Jacksboro	Texas
Nov.	20	Jacksboro	Texas
Nov.	21	Frederick	Okla.
Nov.	22	Frederick	Okla.
Nov.	23	Fort Smith	Ark.
Nov.	26	Covington	Tenn.
Nov.	27	Covington	Tenn.
Nov.	28	Maryville	Tenn.

Figure 1.3: American Saxophone Quartette tour schedule.[50]

[49] Rudolph Becker Collection, United States Marine Band Library, Washington D.C., iii.

[50] *American Saxophone Quartette*, brochure, Rudolph Becker Collection, United States Marine Band Library, Washington D.C.

Repertoire for the American Saxophone Quartette was primarily transcriptions of classical works with composers like Wagner, Saint-Saëns, Verdi, and Rossini. Sometimes this group would also collaborate with other instrumentalists, inviting a soprano vocalist or a harpist to share the stage with them.[51] In the sample program below, one will notice how instrumentation varied throughout the concert. The American Saxophone Quartette's music was often presented as a variety show, with solo works, duets, quartets, and (in this case) a guest appearance by a harpist.

Saxophone Quartet – *Pilgrams' Chorus* Wagner
From *Tannhauser*
(Imitating the great pipe organ at Westminster Abbey.)
Harp Solo-Grand *Fantasie* Original Cortese
Signor Francesco Cortese
Saxophone Solo-*Souvenir de Bohemian Girl* Balfe
Mr. Wm. F. Schensley
Soprano Solo- Aria from *Samson and Delila* Saint Saens
Miss Helen Winslow
Saxophone Duet-*Non e Ver* with variations Mattei
Messrs. Schensley and Paul
Selection-*Rigoletto* Verdi
Soprano Solo-*For All Eternity* Mascheroni
With clarinet Obligato
Miss Helen Winslow and Mr. Wm. F. Schensley
Bass Saxophone Solo-*The Light House Bell* Petrie
Mr. R. Becker
Selection-*Il Trovatore* Verdi
Quartet and Harpist
Inflammatus from *Stabat Mater* Rossini
Entire Company

AVAILABLE FOR CHAUTAUQUAS
Exclusive Management
LABADIE LECTURE AND AMUSEMENT BUREAU

Figure 1.4: Sample program, American Saxophone Quartette concert.[52]

During the time of the quartet's success, Sousa's larger ensemble was also experiencing enthusiastic audiences. This influx of support allowed him to employ more

[51] Ibid.
[52] "The Saxaphone *[sic]* Concerts," *Talent XIV,* no. 4 (October 1903): 2.

musicians in the later years of his tenure. Photographs of his band during the years 1925-26 have eight saxophonists, including Stephens, Goodrich, Heney, Bronson, Weir, Madden, Conklin, and Monroe. This manifested as three altos, three tenors, one baritone, and one bass saxophonist.[53] Though eight saxophones made an appearance in a 1923 concert, the saxophone octette was officially featured from 1925 onward. They commonly performed arrangements of operettas and musical pieces such as "Indian Love Call," "Why Did I Kiss that Girl," "I Want to be Happy," and "No, No Nannette."[54] Local papers buzzed about the saxophone section, with mentions like "The saxophone octette cut its usual capers. It jazzed the familiar Paderewski Minuet very skillfully, showing that most good music can be jazzed merely by changing the time."[55]

Figure 1.5: Sousa's saxophone octette in the 1920s.[56]

[53] Allen, 24.
[54] Plugge, 85.
[55] Quoted in Plugge, 87.
[56] Bierley, 178.

Though the octette was a larger group than what is typically used in performance today, it demonstrates an important change in the evolution of the saxophone. While Gilmore's American Saxophone Quartette relied on transcriptions of well-known classical works, the Sousa octette explored a different emphasis. They instead borrowed from musical theater and popular songs of that period. This approach hinted at what would soon be an important element in the saxophone tradition: jazz. Meanwhile, Marcel Mule was raising the standard of saxophone quartet performance through his military service, and later with his instruction at the Conservatoire de Paris.

Marcel Mule

Born in 1901, Mule was part of a second generation of saxophonists who followed Adolphe Sax and his contemporaries. Mule had studied both violin and piano in his early years, and this created a foundation that informed his playing for the rest of his life.[57] By the time Mule was a teenager, saxophones were accepted in ensembles across the world. Unlike Adolphe Sax's crusade to validate the instrument's existence, Mule was able to focus on its development as a serious contender in the classical genre. Marcel Mule is credited with standardizing saxophone quartet instrumentation as SATB,[58] raising the expected ability level of players, and inspiring composers to write classical repertoire that was worthy of the concert hall.[59]

Mule's professional career began in 1923 when he won a position as saxophonist in La musique de la Garde républicaine military band. Mule served in this ensemble for

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[57] Thomas Dreyer-Beers, "Influential Soloists," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1998): 43.
[58] Soprano, alto, tenor, baritone
[59] Plugge, 192.

thirteen years and he was a featured soloist during his tenure there.[60] Five years later, he and Georges Chauvet formed Le quatuor de la musique de la Garde républicaine, with Marcel Mule on soprano saxophone, René Chaligné on alto saxophone, Hippolyte Poimboeuf on tenor saxophone, and Georges Chauvet on baritone saxophone.[61] This instrumentation was unique from other ensembles because they used a soprano on the lead part instead of the more typical AATB[62] used in Lefebre's Wonder Quartet and the American Saxophone Quartette.[63]

The first performance of the quartet was in La Rochelle on December 2, 1928. They performed transcriptions copied by Chauvet,[64] including Rimsky-Korsakov's *Le vol du bourdon*,[65] *Three Pieces* by I. Albéniz, *Le petit négre* by Debussy, and W.A. Mozart's *Ave Verum.*[66] Marcel Mule also transcribed *Sévilla*, from Isaac Albéniz's *Suite Española* (1886-89).[67] Over the next few years, the group underwent personnel changes until its membership solidified in 1936. The name of this ensemble also changed a few times. It morphed from Le quatuor de la musique de la Garde républicaine to Quatuor de saxophones de Paris. Eventually they settled on Quatuor Marcel Mule, which became their permanent moniker.[68]

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[60] Dreyer-Beers, 43.

[61] Richard Ingham, "The Saxophone Quartet," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1998): 65.

[62] Alto, Alto, Tenor, Baritone

[63] Plugge, 179.

[64] Claude Delangle, "Interview with the Legendary Marcel Mule on the History of Saxophone Vibrato," trans. by Huguette Brassine, *International Association for the Development of the Saxophone* (November 1994), 9.

[65] Known in English as *Flight of the Bumble Bee.*

[66] Plugge, 180.

[67] Jesse G. Deane, "A Comparative Study of Selected Saxophone Quartet Repertoire from the Mule, Rascher and Apollo Saxophone Quartets between 1928 and 1995," Honours Thesis (Edith Cowan University, 2011), Research Online 5 (accessed September 9, 2018), 5.

[68] Delangle, 9.

In the early years, Marcel Mule described having difficulty with the group's repertoire choices, "when we dared to play a quartet of Mozart, for example the 'dissonances quartet' it was rather crazy but we had so little to play. And we were judged through that! Afterwards we obtained some repertoire but we had more success playing Mozart […] it was no fun. But we managed."[69] The ensemble's response was to forge alliances with composers who could write professional level saxophone quartet music. This helped the saxophonists to earn the esteem of their colleagues. Between the years 1937 and 1950, many recognized composers were inspired to write original music for the Quatuor Marcel Mule. The best-known compositions from this period include: Eugene Bozza's *Andante et Scherzo* and *Nuages*, Claude Pascal's *Quatuor*, Alfred Desenclos' *Quatuor,* Alexander Glazunov's *Quatuor, Op. 109*, Jean Rivier's *Grave et Presto,* Jeanine Rueff's *Concert en Quatuor,* and Florent Schmitt's *Quatuor, Op. 102.*[70] Many of these saxophone quartet pieces remain relevant today.

Especially important to this list was the Glazunov *Quatuor, Op. 109,* written in 1932. It was one of the earliest works written for a saxophone quartet by an established classical composer. The publishing company Boosey & Hawkes describes it on their website. "The first movement is characterized by melodic arcs reminiscent of Dvořák, Wagner, and Brahms; the second movement, a canzona variée, refers expressly to Schumann and Chopin, while the dynamic and fresh rondo finale with its lyric middle

[69] Ibid, 9.
[70] Ingham, 66.

section refers to forms of Bach."[71] Glazunov's quartet is a tour de force that displays the technical capabilities of the saxophone through a classical concert setting.

Marcel Mules' actions had a lasting effect on saxophone performance standards, leading to further engagement from composers. His student and successor at the Conservatoire de Paris, Daniel Deffayet, formed a group in 1953 with saxophonists Jacques Maffei,[72] Jacques Terry, and Jean Ledieu. Just as Quatuor Marcel Mule had done, the Quatuor de saxophones Daniel Deffayet commissioned serious works by Damase, Feld, and Dubois. In 1979, the Quatuor de saxophones Fourmeau, was established under the direction of Jean-Yves Fourmeau, reinforcing the importance of the French tradition in saxophone quartet development.[73]

By the mid-1950s, Marcel Mule's influence also expanded to other countries. Important groups formed in the United States, including the New York Saxophone Quartet (1959), Chicago Quartet (1968), Harvey Pittel Quartet, and Prism Quartet (1984). Sigurd Rascher's quartet (1969) commissioned new pieces by American composers such as Samuel Adler and Walter Hartley. In Britain, the Krein Quartet (1941) and the London Saxophone Quartet (1969) also staked their claim to the classical concert genre.[74]

Some of these groups continue to perform with younger players substituted in place of their founders. New ensembles also continue to be added as players come of age. Advanced saxophone quartets often germinate within the country's top university music programs. In this setting, students sharpen their skills by participating in national and

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[71] Boosey & Hawkes, "Glazunov, Alexander: Saxophone Quartet in Bb major op. 109 - 4 saxophones (SATB) (study score)" http://www.boosey.com/shop/prod/Glazunov-Alexander-Saxophone-Quartet-in-Bb-major-op-109-4-saxophones-SATBar-study-score/2141978 (accessed May 19, 2018).
[72] Maffei was replaced in 1956 with Henri-René Pollin.
[73] Ingham, 67.
[74] Ibid, 67-68.

international competitions such as the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition and the Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh competition.

The Fischoff competition is one of the premier chamber music competitions in the United States, hosting 6,800 musicians since its founding. This includes 125 ensemble contestants from 22 different nationalities annually.[75] In their previous winner archive, multiple saxophone quartets have taken top honors from 1987 to 2016. This includes MSU Grad Sax Quartet (1988), Black Swamp (1991), Catalyst (1998), Lithium (2000), Ninth Circle (2001), Arizona State (2003), Blue Square (2005), H2 (2007), Red Line (2009), Angeles (2010), and Mirasol (2015).[76] Similarly, the Concert Artists Guild chamber music competition, founded in 1951, has awarded saxophone quartets their top prize. Winners of this competition are provided with a recital date at Carnegie Hall, concert tour booking, and marketing aimed towards a permanent career. Some winners of this competition include the Amstel Saxophone Quartet (2006) and the New Century Saxophone Quartet (1992).[77]

Whether one identifies as a university professor, student, hobbyist, or working professional, the existence of the saxophone quartet owes a great deal to Marcel Mule's early promotion. Richard Ingham states in the *Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone* that, "the importance of establishing a repertoire can be seen by the example and quality of the Mule Quartet library. It is really due to the strength of what has become known as the classical French repertoire that the saxophone quartet as an ensemble was able to

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[75] Fischoff National Chamber Music Association, "Our Mission: Inspiring Lives Through Breathtaking Performances," http://www.fischoff.org/about/history-mission-vision (accessed April 13, 2018).
[76] Ibid, "Competition Winners," http://www.fischoff.org/competition/competition-winners (accessed April 13, 2018).
[77] Concert Artists Guild, "Past Competition Winners," *Concert Artists Guild: To Discover, Nurture, and Promote Young Musicians,* http://www.concertartists.org/competition-winners (accessed April 13, 2018).

develop during the twentieth century."[78] Integration of saxophone quartets into concert repertoire was an important building block in the instrument's history.

Early Popular Music

In the first decade of the new century, a demand for popular music was growing in the United States. Ragtime, blues, and other forms of vernacular music were all predecessors to jazz, and these styles influenced the evolution of the saxophone quartet. Saxophone bands of varying numbers toured around the United States, working to appease what seemed to be an insatiable market. Some texts refer to this time as the "saxophone craze."[79] One of the first known groups to appear in this arena was the Musical Spillers, an African-American sextet that performed light classical and early popular music compositions.[80] Unfortunately, their success was impeded by segregation, despite their accomplishments as a professional act. This prevented them from ever obtaining a recording contract.[81]

At the same time, the Five Brown Brothers[82] was growing in stature. The Five Brown Brothers was a group founded by professional musicians who worked for Ringling and Bros. circus. In 1911 they left the troupe to perform live concerts and make recordings, including projects for the major label Columbia in 1916-1917. This ensemble of two altos, tenor, baritone, and bass saxophone released recorded material to much

[78] Ingham, 70.
[79] Allen, 21.
[80] This group won the admiration of Scott Joplin, and he dedicated his composition, *Pine Apple Rag,* to them. The dedication reads, "Respectfully dedicated to the Five Musical Spillers."
Scott Joplin, *Pine Apple Rag* (New York: Seminary Music Co, 1908), 1.
Allen, 21.
[81] Cottrell, 145.
[82] The first iteration of the group had five members, it grew to six members soon after.

acclaim.[83] Capitalizing on their success, they added a tenor player, changed their name to the Six Brown Brothers, and recorded tracks with the larger ensemble. The Six Brown Brothers became one of the most sought-after pop acts of that period, earning up to $1000 a week.[84] They continued performing until their disbanding in 1934.[85]

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, many venues hosted performers. It was a "time when a young saxophonist could dream of making his fortune as a member of a performing saxophone quartet or saxophone band."[86] Three of the most important halls for the travelling circuit were the Vaudeville, Chautauqua, and Lyceum venues. In Merriam-Webster, vaudeville can be defined either as "a light often comic theatrical piece frequently combining pantomime, dialogue, dancing, and song" or "stage entertainment consisting of various acts (such as performing animals, comedians, or singers)."[87] This often included adult subject matter and off the wall tricks. The Six Brown Brothers dove into this genre, wearing attention grabbing clothing like clown costumes or Scottish attire. They even hired six attractive female saxophone players to join them for some of their tour dates.[88]

For musicians who weren't impressed by the shenanigans of the Vaudeville circuit, there were also family-friendly venues available. The Chautauqua circuit, based out of Chautauqua, New York, emphasized lectures and educational programs.[89]

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[83] Cottrell, 147.
[84] Michael Segell, *The Devil's Horn* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 65.
[85] Cottrell, 145-147.
[86] Hemke, 450.
[87] "Vaudeville" *Merriam-Webster.* https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vaudeville?utm_campaign=sd&utm_medium=serp&utm_source=jsonld (accessed April 2, 2018).
[88] Fred L. Hemke, "The Early History of the Saxophone," DMA diss. (University of Wisconsin, 1975), 448-449.
[89] Allen, 26.

According to their website, its mission expanded from being a vacation learning environment after its founding in 1874, to an event hub that currently[90] hosts over 100,000 visitors and 7,500 artists in residence during a nine-week season.[91] The Lyceum performance venues also had similar goals, and "at its peak, up to a million a people a week regularly attended talks in local venues, captivated by the words of visiting orators who spoke on an extensive range of topics."[92]

With professional musicians touring the country, amateurs also were inspired to establish groups in various towns across the United States. This included Dr. Wagner's Saxophone Band of Omaha, the Chicago Health Department Saxophone Band, Orpheus' Shrine Saxophone quartet, and the Zuriah Shrine Temple Octet.[93] On the west coast, the Southern California Saxophone Band gained a reputation of developing players into professionals, becoming a springboard towards full-time performance careers.[94] Amateur markets were invaluable to the instrument making industry, and advertising frequently emphasized the ease in which a saxophone could be learned.[95] One Conn company advertisement even claimed that, "Popularity, pleasure, a big income, all may be yours if you start now to cultivate your musical 'bump' with a Conn saxophone."[96] During the height of the saxophone craze, more than four thousand saxophones were produced and sold monthly, with prices ranging from $65 to 140.[97]

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[90] As of April, 2018.
[91] Chautauqua Institution, "Our History," The Chautauqua Institution Archives, http://chq.org/about-us/history (accessed April 7, 2018).
[92] Tom F. Wright, "The Cosmopolitan Lyceum: Lecture Culture and the Globe in Nineteenth-Century America," book description, University of Massachusetts Amherst Press, http://www.umass.edu/umpress/title/cosmopolitan-lyceum (accessed April 7, 2018).
[93] Hemke, 449-450.
[94] Allen, 27.
[95] Hemke, 451-452.
[96] Conn-Selmer, "There's a Big Place in Music for You," Advertisement, *The Etude* (March 1926): 235.
[97] Hemke, 452.

Before leaving the discussion of saxophone ensemble popularity in the 1920s, one final name is worthy of mention. Rudy Wiedoft was an adept performer who lead various groups at the height of his professional career. The Rudy Wiedoft sextet made at least three recordings[98] and numerous programs document his quartet recitals. This artist brought visibility to saxophone ensembles, with programming that included both technical facility and audience friendly arrangements. Though names like *Saxophobia*, *Valse Erica*, *Valse Marilyn*, *Valse Vanité*, and *Sax-o-phun*[99] may sound frivolous today, Wiedoft is credited with demonstrating the saxophone's capabilities to a wide demographic.

From a craftsman's workshop in Belgium to the Vaudeville circuit, the saxophone has followed a musically inclusive path. Early personal sacrifices of Adolphe Sax prevented the instrument from disappearing into obscurity. Inclusion of multiple voice types in Patrick Gilmore and John Philip Sousa's military bands made it possible for saxophone ensembles to develop. In France, Marcel Mule's partnership with composers gave legitimacy to the saxophone quartet in formal concert settings. Finally, America's "saxophone craze" created interest in early popular music ensembles. Each of these factors helped the saxophone to establish its place within multiple genres.

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[98] Allen, 25.
[99] Hemke, 456.

CHAPTER 2

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA BIOGRAPHY

Because it has been used in a variety of situations, the saxophone has demonstrated its versatility as a vessel for many genres of music. Saxophonists and composers have noticed this and adapted music from various sources to extend its repertoire. Transcribed pieces frequently appear in saxophone concert programs, and works like Robert Schumann's *Three Romances* and J.S. Bach's *Fugue in G Minor, BWV 578* remain an integral part of the standard repertoire. Saxophone arrangements of Astor Piazzolla's compositions have also grown in popularity during the twenty-first century.

In the same way that studying music history gives depth to classical performances, knowledge of Piazzolla's background will also help saxophonists to interpret the music that he wrote. Astor Piazzolla was a key figure in the development of *nuevo tango*,[100] or new tango, and he can be defined in many ways: as an Argentinian musician, a bandoneonist, a composer, a bandleader, and a controversial public figure. His music has gained worldwide recognition. This is not exclusive to tango, but a tango thread passes through most of the compositions that he is known for today.

Piazzolla's works have been performed around the world, from concert halls to night clubs, stadiums and outdoor festivals. He also was a bandoneon player who performed and recorded music in various combinations of his self-led groups. Many

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[100] Literally, new tango. This is a style of tango heavily influenced by Astor Piazzolla. *Nuevo tango* integrated jazz harmony, classical techniques, mixed meter, noise effects, and non-standard instrumentation. It also became a self-sustaining medium that no longer related closely to dance.

tangueros[101] did not take kindly to Piazzolla's success. Some even went so far as to label him a renegade responsible for the disintegration of tango music, an accusation that Piazzolla vehemently rebutted on more than one occasion. By studying Piazzolla's biography, one can better understand how he rose to worldwide recognition. This helps to accurately portray the spirit in which he wrote his works.

Argentinian

Defining Piazzolla solely as an Argentinian musician has some shortfalls because the majority of his developmental years were spent in New York City. At the same time, he was raised by immigrant parents who integrated Argentinian tradition into their personal life on a daily basis. Astor Piazzolla was born March 11, 1921 in Mar del Plata and four years later, his parents immigrated to New York in search of a better life. Upon arrival, the family settled in a mixed Italian-Jewish neighborhood with a prevalence of mafia and gang related crime. According to Piazzolla, "We lived on Eighth Street, which at that time was not the best place in Manhattan […] I grew up in that violent climate. That's why I became a fighter. Perhaps that also marked my music. That kind of stuff gets under your skin."[102]

Piazzolla's adolescent years were spent in the United States. He grew up speaking English, taking classical piano lessons, and participating in teenage mischief.[103] Though the family had adopted the United States as their home, his father always held memories

[101] A colloquial term for a person (commonly Argentinian) who performs and accepts the overall tango lifestyle as their own.
[102] Gorin, 30.
[103] Includes stealing a harmonica at Macy's department store, briefly running away from home, and dating different girls at the same time. Gorin 36-38.

of Argentina close to his heart. Tango music was frequently heard in the house, and Piazzolla's father purchased a bandoneon for young Astor when he was eight years old.[104] Piazzolla took one year of lessons on bandoneon with Andrés D'Aquila, but he also studied classical piano under the tutelage of Bela Wilda.[105] Piazzolla did have one notable tango experience when he was thirteen; he was introduced to the famous Argentinian tango musician Carlos Gardel[106] during the star's visit to New York. During Gardel's stay, Piazzolla helped translate and guide the singer around the city.[107] He was also recommended by Gardel for a short cameo in his feature film *El Día Que Me Quieras*.[108]

Astor Piazzolla was also exposed to other styles of music when he lived in the United States. In his biography, *Le Grand Tango*, Piazzolla notes that the 3+3+2 accents prevalent in most of his music, are "similar to those of the Jewish popular music I heard at weddings."[109] By the age of nine, he often frequented establishments in Harlem to watch Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington perform live.[110] These diverse musical experiences later influenced his writing and helped to give him "one of his lifelong loves, his love for jazz."[111]

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[104] Kacey Quin Link, "Culturally Identifying the Performance Practices of Astor Piazzolla's Second Quinteto" (master's thesis, University of Miami, 2009) Open Access Theses 194, http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_theses/194 (accessed February 25, 2018), 49.
[105] Jorge Pessinis and Carlos Kuri, "Astor Piazzolla: Chronology of a Revolution," translated by Francisco Luongo, Piazzolla.org: The Internet Home of Astor Piazzolla and his Tango Nuevo, http://www.piazzolla.org/biography/biography-english.html (accessed March 1, 2018).
[106] Carlos Gardel was a singer who lived from 1890-1935. He was one of the first internationally famous singers in this genre. With a stylish demeanor, Gardel produced emotional and moving interpretations in the *tango-canción* style. He also was an embodiment of the *compadrito,* a term used to describe a sharp-looking man whose exaggerated demeanor basks in attention.
[107] Azzi, 15.
[108] Gorin, 249.
[109] Azzi, 6.
[110] Ibid, 12.
[111] Ibid, 12.

Other than a brief one-year stint in Argentina, the Piazzolla family did not permanently relocate to South America until Astor was a teenager. At this point, he was not particularly interested in the bandoneon, or even tango, as his primary means of expression. All this was to change soon. Piazzolla describes a life changing experience in his memoir, “The definitive arrow-through-the-heart experience was still missing. I got that back in Mar del Plata […] I heard the Elvino Vardaro Sextet. I went crazy and said, ‘I want to do that.’ I sent a note to the maestro and he was kind enough to reply with an autographed photo […] I was on.” He began to attend concerts by tango orchestras, each with venerable bandoneon players at the helm. Some of the ensembles included musicians from a lineage of tango greats, including Pedro Laurenz, Pedro Maffia, and Aníbal Troilo.[112]

Bandoneonist

As 1940 neared,[113] Piazzolla left home to explore the thriving musical scene in Buenos Aires. He soon was performing on the bandstand of Aníbal Troilo, a bandleader whose interpretation of *tango danza,* or tango dance style, was known throughout Argentina.[114] Troilo, also known by the nickname Pichuco,[115] specialized in the

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[112] Gorin, 41.
[113] This was during World War II. Argentina had chosen to maintain neutrality until the final years of the war because the country was involved in its own internal conflict. Rival military governments were fighting for power (further discussion can be found in Chapter five, under Café 1930: History) Also complicating this issue was Argentina’s choice to harbor as many as 5,000 Nazis who fled Germany.
Christopher Klein, “How South America Became a Nazi Haven,” Under *History Studies*, Hisotry, https://www.history.com/news/how-south-america-became-a-nazi-haven (accessed March 16, 2019).
[114] Tango can be subdivided musically into different and styles depending on its chronological date*: tango criollo, tango danza, tango canción,* and Piazzolla’s *nuevo tango.*
[115] According to Diego Jemio in the article, “The Musical Key to Keeping Argentina Dancing the Tango,” “pichuco” translates to “crybaby.” This is the only source I know making this designation; Pichuco is generally known as an endearing nickname with no specific meaning.
Diego Jemio, “The Musical Key to Keeping Argentina Dancing the Tango,” BBC News: Business, https://www.bbc.com/news/business-29896409 (accessed October 26, 2018).

traditional style. His orchestra was known for crisp, well-rehearsed arrangements of standard tango tunes. Piazzolla describes his tenure in this orchestra from 1939 to 1944 as a "tango baptism." By the time Piazzolla left the orchestra, he had acquired a high level of bandoneon technique, at times drawing attention from the bandleader and eliciting jealousy from his colleagues.[116] Piazzolla's apprenticeship with Aníbal Troilo solidified the bandoneon as his primary musical voice for the rest of his life.

The year 1944 was a turning point for Piazzolla. Not only was he a favorite employee of Pichuco, but Piazzolla also wrote arrangements for the group. Astor Piazzolla could have remained in this position, building upon his talents as a sideman, but that was not his ultimate goal. He had become acutely aware of limitations that come from working on someone else's project. According to Piazzolla, "[Troilo] became the censor of my arrangements. I would write down two hundred notes and he would erase half of them."[117] Piazzolla wanted to write complex arrangements that reached beyond the limits of *tango danza.* The time had come for him to focus on his skills as a composer, setting aside the polished bandoneon technique that he'd acquired under the tutelage of Troilo.

Composer

Even though Piazzolla could have been a professional bandoneonist like Pedro Maffia, Juan Maglio, Pedro Laurenz, Ciriaco Ortiz, Aníbal Troilo, or Leopoldo Federico, he had an unquenchable desire to create music on his own terms. A year before his exodus from Troilo's group, Astor Piazzolla was introduced to a young composer by the

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[116] Gorin, 61.
[117] Ibid, 64.

name of Alberto Ginastera. Piazzolla studied with Ginastera for five years, and their relationship bore a large influence on his compositions.[118]

To the chagrin of his mentor, Piazzolla officially left Troilo's *orquesta tipica*[119] in 1943. By 1946, Astor Piazzolla was operating his own tango orchestra to cover daily expenses, while focusing his artistic energy towards classical composition studies. A life-changing moment happened in 1953. Piazzolla's teacher submitted a three-movement work of his, *Sinfonía Buenos Aires*, *Op. 15,* to the Fabian Sevitsky Prize competition. To his surprise, Piazzolla won 5,000 pesos[120] and a year of study sponsored by the French government.[121] To facilitate this move, Piazzolla and his wife Dedé left their children behind with family before embarking on a year-long stay in Paris.

Upon his arrival, the young composer began taking lessons from Nadia Boulanger. Boulanger at first declared Piazzolla's work to be well thought out, but lacking feeling. Eventually, she asked what type of music he performed in Argentina before he arrived in Paris. Piazzolla hesitantly admitted to a background in tango music. In Piazzolla's biography *Le Grand Tango: the Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla*, María Susana Azzi describes a turning point for him:

> [Boulanger] asked him what music he played in Argentina. Piazzolla reluctantly admitted it was the tango. "I love that music!" she exclaimed. "But you don't play the piano to perform tangos. What instrument do you play?" Once again Piazzolla could barely bring himself to tell her it was the bandoneon […] Finally Boulanger persuaded Piazzolla to play one of his tangos on the piano. He chose "Triunfal." At

[118] Azzi, 28.

[119] *Orquesta típica* means "typical orchestra." It refers to an ensemble of strings, piano and bandoneons that play tango music arrangements. The exact number of performers varies depending on the time period and bandleader.

[120] The equivalent of $250.

[121] Azzi, 49.

> the eighth bar she stopped him, took him by his hands, and told him firmly: "This is Piazzolla! Don't ever leave it!"[122]

This revelation was a turning point for the composer. Piazzolla realized that he could fuse traditional tango elements with classical techniques like complex harmony, mixed meter, and counterpoint. Additionally, he learned that his experience in bandoneon was not a handicap. Rather, it contributed directly to the unique sound of his compositions.

Bandleader

Lessons with Nadia Boulanger gave Astor Piazzolla confidence to integrate his background in his work. He became a multifaceted musician, writing music with specifications to the finest detail, performing bandoneon with fiery gusto, and leading groups in various formations. Piazzolla's first project after his return from France was the 1955 *Octeto Buenos Aires*.[123] In this ensemble, Piazzolla supplemented a common tango ensemble instrumentation, the *sexteto tipico*,[124] with two non-traditional instruments: cello and electric guitar. In liner notes to the album *Astor Piazzolla-Octeto Buenos Aires*, Gerry Mulligan's Octet was named as Piazzolla's inspiration to explore this instrumentation.[125] It was the first time that a major tango artist had experimented with adding these instruments.[126]

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[122] Ibid, 51.
[123] Link, 52.
[124] *Sexteto tipico* instrumentation contains two violins, two bandoneons, piano, and bass.
[125] The personnel on Gerry Mulligan's 1957 album, *The Gerry Mulligan Songbook,* included alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, guitar, violin, cello, bass, and drums. Scott Yanow, "Gerry Mulligan Songbook," under *Credits,* Allmusic, https://www.allmusic.com/album/songbook-mw0000180009/credits (accessed October 28, 2018).
[126] Link, 53.

In *Le Grand Tango: The Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla,* María Susana Azzi and Simon Collier point out that "the two great traditions on which Piazzolla drew for the creation of his sound-world as a composer were classical music and jazz." Piazzolla's first wife, Dedé, attested that Piazzolla had done personal score study of Prokofiev's *Love of Three Oranges*, Copland's *Appalachian Spring* and Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Sheherazade*. These primary influencers had already explored the sound of saxophone in their own works, with *Quiet City*,[127] *Romeo and Juliet,* and *Lieutenant Kijé* all being examples.[128]

Within the jazz idiom, Piazzolla was influenced by Stan Getz, Chet Baker, Gil Evans, Gerry Mulligan, Lennie Tristano, and George Shearing. He, "regularly rubbed shoulders with most of the greatest jazzmen of the time and was regarded by them as an honorary member of the tribe."[129] Gerry Mulligan and Stan Getz were both saxophonists that he respected and admired. Though not saxophonists themselves, Gil Evans and Lennie Tristano also regularly featured the saxophone in their writing.[130] The albums *Birth of the Cool* and *Crosscurrents*, which are both listed today in the Grammy Hall of Fame, attests to their interest in the saxophone.[131]

Octeto Buenos Aires was Piazzolla's first commitment to the *nuevo tango* style. In the liner notes to this album, he states, "The sole purpose of the Octeto Buenos Aires is to renovate popular tango, to maintain its essence, to introduce new rhythms, new harmonies, new melodies, new tone colors, and forms."[132] *Nuevo tango*, or new tango, is a term broadly defined by Piazzolla's compositional approach. Defining factors of *nuevo*

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[127] *Quiet City* is by Copland, and the other two are written by Prokofiev.
[128] Azzi, 151.
[129] Azzi, 151.
[130] Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, and Warne Marsh.
[131] Recording Academy Grammy Awards, "Grammy Hall of Fame," https://www.grammy.com/grammys/awards/hall-of-fame#b (accessed March 13, 2019).
[132] Translated by Link, 53.

are: noise effects[133] meant to complement standard musical gestures, non-traditional instruments, improvisation, polyphony, and extended harmony.[134] Though Piazzolla was initially excited about the group's possibilities, the *Octeto Buenos Aires'* success was short lived. Astor Piazzolla was restless. Just as his father had done before him, he moved to New York City in 1958 to immerse himself in a larger scene.[135]

After relocating his family to the United States, Piazzolla found work as a freelance musician. He accompanied singers, arranged works, and relied on musical royalties from the French Sociéte des auteurs, compositeurs et éditeurs de musique, or SACEM.[136] This period was difficult financially, and his family suffered the consequences of living on a modest stipend. Another event that added to Piazzolla's emotional duress was the sudden passing away of his father. This even inspired the composer to write one of his most poignant tunes, "Adiós Nonino," which has over 30 recordings by subsequent Piazzolla ensembles to date.[137]

After two years in New York, Piazzolla became weary and moved back to Argentina.[138] Though his time in the US was brief, he did not regret living in New York because it gave him "courage to point the boat in the right direction."[139] Emboldened by his experience, Piazzolla challenged norms of the tango tradition as soon as he arrived in Buenos Aires. This was met with resistance from the "old guard." Tango fans separated

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[133] This relates to using parts of the musical instrument in nonstandard ways, such as tapping with thumbs or scratching with the frog of the bow.
[134] Alejandro Marcelo Drago, "Instrumental Tango Idioms in the Symphonic Works and Orchestral Arrangements of Astor Piazzolla: Performance and Notational Problems: A Conductor's Perspective" (PhD diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2008), 24-27.
[135] Gorin, 75.
[136] Azzi, 66-73.
[137] Link, 54.
[138] Azzi, 77.
[139] Gorin, 75.

themselves into groups of *piazzollistas* and *anti-piazzollistas.* Piazzolla fueled this controversy with comments such as, "When the water doesn't run, it rottens. Tango doesn't run, it rottens. I have a great respect for the old tango, the primitive tango. But I must do it in my own way."[140] He was not afraid to challenge established boundaries of social decorum.

Despite, or possibly because of, controversy generated in his wake, Piazzolla was offered a spot on a radio show and a residency in The Jamaica Club on Calle San Martín.[141] This engagement enabled Piazzolla to form the first of his classic quintets: the *Quinteto Nuevo Tango.* The *Quinteto* brought together musicians selected specifically because of their musical ability. This included Elvino Vardaro (violin), Antonio Agri (violin) "Kicho" Díaz (bass), Horacio Malvicino (electric guitar), Oscar López Ruiz (electric guitar), and Jaime Gosis (piano). Piazzolla also collaborated with Argentinian singers and poets, working with famous personalities such as Jorge Luis Borges and Horacio Ferrer.[142]

Though stability became possible for Piazzolla after establishing residence in Argentina, changes were still brewing under the surface. The years 1966-1969 marked a dramatic period in his life. In 1966 he left Dedé, his wife of 24 years, to date an Argentinian folk[143] singer, Amelita Baltar. The relationship between Baltar and Piazzolla was tumultuous, and this impacted the composer's artistic endeavors. Around this time, the poet Horacio Ferrer and a tango singer by the name of Roberto Goyeneche

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[140] Azzi, 163.
[141] Ibid, 81.
[142] Link, 55-56.
[143] Argentine *folclore* music had strong government support during the Perón presidency. The song form of this genre is often asymmetrical, with hemiola-based rhythms (a mix of 3/4 and 6/8). *Folclore* is typically presented with a corresponding dance, and professional musicians continue to rely on it as their primary source of income.

collaborated with Piazzolla on a song entitled "Balada para un Loco." This song explored the craziness of life in surrealistic prose.[144] "Balada para un Loco" was a surprise hit, reaching beyond the typical tango idiom with abstract lyrics and 3/4 time. Also during his time with Baltar, Piazzolla composed and premiered *María de Buenos Aires*, an *operita*[145] that featured her. *María de Buenos Aires* was tepidly received, and this production extracted a large financial toll on Piazzolla. He never fully recovered his losses from this project.[146]

Piazzolla firmly refused to settle into predetermined formulas after his relocation to Argentina. Successful groups, such as the *Quinteto*, were discarded in favor of new ideas. In 1971, Piazzolla formed the *Conjunto 9* ensemble, adding instruments that were not typical for a traditional tango lineup. Instruments in this nonet included bandoneon, piano, electric guitar, two violins, viola, cello, and bass. He also included a percussionist, which was an unusual choice for tango ensembles.[147]

Piazzolla's writing for the nonet contained forms from the Western classical tradition, characteristic Piazzolla 3+3+2 rhythm, and rich orchestration. Though funding was sparse, the group managed to record a two-album project under the title *Música Popular Contemporánea de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires.*[148] Piazzolla reminisced on his time with *Conjunto 9*, "In 1978 I founded a new Quintet and for many reasons I finally had the feeling I was winning the war [...] the nonet had left my head full of music and I

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[144] Reinaldo Spitaletta, "An Atomic Bomb, Balada para un Loco," Under *The Chronicles,* Todo Tango, http://www.todotango.com/english/history/chronicle/453/An-atomic-bomb-Balada-para-un-loco (accessed March 8, 2018).
[145] Spanish for small opera.
[146] Link, 57.
[147] Ibid, 57.
[148] Link, 58.

could pour it into a quintet, in a more elaborate music."[149] Funding for *Conjunto 9* was provided by the city of Buenos Aires for two years. It was a group that Piazzolla wished could have lasted longer.

By the early 1970s, Piazzolla maintained a full schedule that included composing, recording, and performing. The multitude of musical projects undertaken in the 1960s finally took a tool on him, and he experienced a heart attack in 1973. Undeterred, he put together one of his most controversial ensembles in 1975. Inspired by progressive rock and fusion, Piazzolla took a daring leap in instrumentation by assembling an octet that included piano, bass, bandoneon, electric guitar, organ, percussion, flute/saxophone, and synthesizer.[150] The Electronic Octet had a rock aesthetic that relied more heavily on improvisation than any of his previous groups. Looking back, Piazzolla explains, "For me it is something of the past, something that I accept and acknowledge. I wrote influenced by Chick Corea even if it sounded like Piazzolla."[151] Also during this time, Piazzolla collaborated on a recording project with the American jazz saxophonist Gerry Mulligan. The result was a duo album for baritone saxophone and bandoneon called *Summit,* released in 1974.[152]

The following year became a musical turning point for Piazzolla. While doing an interview for a show, he met a woman who would later became his second wife: Laura Escalada.[153] Astor Piazzolla's son, Daniel, describes his father's musical influences as heavily affected by the women in his life.[154] In this sense, Laura was a stabilizing force.

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[149] Gorin, 138.
[150] Piazzolla's son Daniel was the performer on this instrument.
[151] Gorin, 147.
[152] Link, 58.
[153] Gorin, 120.
[154] Mike Dibb, *Astor Piazzolla: In Portrait*, DVD, directed by Mike Dibb and Tony Staveacre (London: Opus Arte, 2005).

Piazzolla's final ensemble, the second *Quinteto,* reflects both a change in his personal situation and the culmination of his musical accomplishments.

Astor Piazzolla formed the second *Quinteto* in 1978. This ensemble is often recognized as the pinnacle in his career as a bandleader. Though Piazzolla's groups had previously dabbled in different styles such as rock, jazz, and classical, the *Quinteto* leaned heavily on tango with acoustic instrumentation and traditional roles for each voice. Meanwhile, Piazzolla did not forget the paths that he had previously explored. He continued to draw upon his expertise as a classical musician, creating arrangements with complexity that transcended the limits of tango dance music.

The members of the *Quinteto* included Piazzolla on bandoneon, Fernando Suárez Paz on violin, Horacio Malvicino on electric guitar, Pablo Ziegler on piano, and Héctor Console on bass.[155] All of the instrumentalists except the guitarist had a background in classical music, and both chordal players were adept in the jazz style. These diverse backgrounds made it possible to carry out Piazzolla's eclectic writing with virtuosic precision.

This second *Quinteto* toured the world for eleven years in Europe, Japan, the United States, and Argentina. In 1988, Piazzolla underwent a quadruple bypass medical procedure and had to end the tenure of this group. Post-recovery, he formed one last ensemble with a sextet instrumentation. This group substituted cello for violin, and included another bandoneon, helping to alleviate the fatigue that arose from such demanding performances.[156] Though he regretted the choice of adding cello later, the

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[155] Link, 60.
[156] Link, 61.

sextet still performed to full concert halls. When Piazzolla disbanded his final group, he made the decision for personal reasons rather than from a lack of success.[157]

Controversial Figure

In his final years, Astor Piazzolla finally saw results from the career that he fought for. In his memoir, Piazzolla stated, "Now, if my music is more elaborate, if it is harder to listen to, they can blame it on one thing: I killed myself studying. I am who I am today because I knocked myself out against a wall a hundred times and a hundred times I got up."[158] This unrelenting commitment eventually paid off. By the end of his career, Astor Piazzolla's music had been performed from nightclubs to concert halls, theaters, and festivals.[159]

In 1990, Astor Piazzolla collapsed in the shower from a cerebral hemorrhage. His wife Laura arranged for him to be flown to Argentina on life support to spend his last days there. For twenty-three months Piazzolla vacillated between consciousness and coma, relying on the work of life support machines throughout. He died on the fourth of July at 11:15 pm.[160]

Astor Piazzolla was a formidable musician, composer, and bandleader whose personality constantly pushed him forward. He challenged the norms of musical style,

[157] Azzi, 268.
[158] Natalio Gorin, *Astor Piazzolla: A Memoir*, trans. Fernando González (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 2001), 40.
[159] A cross-section from the peak of Piazzolla's career shows the variety of establishments where his music was played. In 1982, a Russian cellist performed "Le Grand Tango" in New Orleans. Two years later, Piazzolla performed with the Italian singer Milva in Vienna. In 1986, he won the Cesar prize in Paris for his film score, *El Exilio de Gardel*. His opus of compositions alone has more than 1000 works cataloged. Jorge Pessinis, and Carlos Kuri, "Astor Piazzolla: Chronology of a Revolution," translated by Francisco Luongo, Piazzolla.org: The Internet Home of Astor Piazzolla and his Tango Nuevo, http://www.piazzolla.org/biography/biography-english.html (accessed March 6, 2018).
[160] Azzi, 279-281.

bridging the gap between genres that previously seemed irreconcilable. Piazzolla's willingness to integrate non-traditional instruments into the *nuevo tango* style opened the door for further expansion and experimentation. By challenging tango's boundaries, Piazzolla set tango music on a trajectory that would forever change its definition, establishing its place on the world stage.

CHAPTER 3

LIBERTANGO

By 1974, Piazzolla had acquired many different experiences working as a professional musician. From studying in Paris to performing with tango ensembles in Buenos Aires, his writing depicted an eclectic background that brought him success. Yet before he was able to reap the benefits, Piazzolla faced disappointing ticket sales for *María de Buenos Aires* (1968), disbanded the Nonet (1971), and survived a heart attack (1973). In his memoir, he stated, "When I recovered, I had to face reality. I had left behind a very creative period, but I was nearly ruined financially. I was past fifty, and I had to start over again."[161]

In 1973 the composer received a call from Aldo Pagani, an agent for Curci-Pagani music. Pagani wanted Piazzolla to relocate to Italy. One year later, a contract was signed by both parties with a three-year renewable clause. The terms of the deal included a split of 50:50 earnings on published compositions[162] and a 15 percent commission on performances organized by the agent. Piazzolla also received a $500 per month stipend and a small apartment in Rome to live in.[163] Throughout their collaboration, the two had a love-hate relationship. Even though Piazzolla caused him stress, Pagani never doubted his client's talent.[164] Astor Piazzolla did not renew the contract, but this agreement drew international recognition for the composer that remained well after its completion.

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[161] Gorin, 134.
[162] This was a standard amount for the European market and a better deal than Piazzolla had with previous agencies.
[163] Azzi, 167.
[164] Quoted in Azzi, 168.

Libertango was the title track for the only album produced through this partnership, and Piazzolla recorded it soon after his arrival to Milan. Pagani wanted to reach the radio broadcast market, so he requested songs that were three minutes or less per track. Piazzolla was not thrilled with the idea, but he went along with his agent's request.[165] He created playful tango portmanteau[166] titles for all but one track, including: *Libertango, Meditango, Undertango, Adiós Nonino, Volentango, Novitango, Amelitango,* and *Tristango*.[167]

Piazzolla departed from the nuanced approach of his earlier recordings with an unapologetic *nuevo tango* sound for this album. During the recording sessions, three different ensembles were used, including strings (violin, viola, and cello), keyboards (piano), electric guitar, electric bass, flutes (concert and alto), marimba, drum set, and bandoneon.[168] The title track was an immediate hit, with covers by international artists Guy Marchand, Julien Clerc, and Grace Jones also finding success.[169] *Libertango* was finished around the same time as a musical collaboration between Piazzolla and the jazz saxophonist Gerry Mulligan[170] that resulted in the album, *Summit*.[171] This timing suggests Piazzolla's interest was drawn to jazz, and analyzing *Libertango* as a popular song is the most effective way to understand the piece.

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[165] Azzi, 168.
[166] "A word or morpheme whose form and meaning are derived from a blending of two or more distinct forms (such as *smog* from *smoke* and *fog)*"
"Portmanteau," in Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/portmanteau (accessed October 30, 2018).
[167] Gorin, 232.
[168] Azzi, 169.
[169] Ibid, 168.
[170] Gerry Mulligan (1927-1996) was a noted baritone saxophonist and jazz composer.
Gerry Mulligan: His Life "Biography," Gerry Mulligan, http://www.gerrymulligan.com/gerry-mulligan-biography/ vision (accessed May 1, 2018).
[171] In *Summit*, Piazzolla's syncopated writing combines with Mulligan's baritone improvisation, rock instruments, and a string orchestra.

Form Analysis

The arrangement used in this dissertation was created for Sheet Music Plus press by Diego Marani.[172] Diego Marani is an Italian saxophonist who has created over 500 ensemble arrangements for this publisher, including saxophone quartet, clarinet quartet, brass quintet, and string quartet instrumentations. His arrangements usually include popular music from the classical, jazz, and pop genres.

Diego Marani's version of *Libertango*[173] differs slightly from Astor Piazzolla's original score. Some differences are stylistic, and can be adjusted without changing the framework of the piece. Examples of stylistic difference are articulation, dynamics, and rubato. Other differences are structural, relating specifically to Marani's arrangement. These would be difficult to change without re-writing the piece. Most noticeably, Diego Marani extends the form of *Libertango* to complete a third A section. He also transposes the key down a half step from A minor to G minor. This discussion will focus on stylistic aspects of Marani's arrangement that relate to Piazzolla's 1974 recording. This chapter also will highlight core aspects that both arrangements have in common. For the sake of clarity, all musical examples will be presented in concert key.

The overall form for Marani's arrangement of *Libertango* is AABA. An introduction and material that is similar to a coda[174] bookend the piece. The introduction

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[172]"SMP press is a "global community of independent composers, arrangers, and songwriters. Our independent musicians have created unique compositions and arrangements for the Sheet Music Plus community, many of which are not available anywhere else."
"About SMP press," in Sheet Music Plus: World's Largest Sheet Music Selection, https://www.sheetmusicplus.com/title/libertango-for-alto-saxophone-and-piano-digital-sheet-music/20716552 (accessed October 30, 2018).
[173] Astor Piazzolla, *Libertango*, score arranged by Diego Marani (Winona, MN: SMP press, 1974).
[174] This differs from the original in two ways. Piazzolla wrote the same structure, but the coda is 16 measures instead of nine. Also, instead of a short ending, the bass player improvises a solo as the track fades out.

is long, lasting 16 measures. There are two reasons why this was not labeled as an additional A section. *Libertango* was written for the radio market, and an AAABAA form is rare in the popular music genre. More importantly, there is no melody until measure 17.

In the introduction, the harmonic progression is based upon chromatic movement. A whole note melody, contrasting the driving rhythmic pulse, joins this progression at measure 17 to begin the A section. In measure 33, a countermelody compliments the first theme, establishing a second A section. The B section arrives in measure 49. Here Piazzolla introduces new melody and harmony for eight measures, then attaches a harmonic progression from the A section for the remaining eight measures. The final statement of the A section appears in measure 65. In measure 81, an unmarked coda leads to a crisp ending. This diverges from the studio fade that is found in the original recording. Figure 3.1 below charts each section with its corresponding measure numbers.

Section	Introduction	A	A	B	A	Coda
Measure	1-17	17-33	33-49	49-65	65-81	81-89
Tonal Center	G minor	G minor	G minor	C minor/B-flat major	G minor	G minor

Figure 3.1: *Libertango* form chart.

Harmonic Analysis

Libertango's harmonic structure blends two primary approaches that are borrowed from different traditions. The first is chromaticism, heard through a descending bass line. Though chromaticism exists in classical music, it is especially characteristic of

Piazzolla's style. The second is jazz influence, seen in the altered[175] ii-V7 progression. The introduction and A sections are built around chromatic motion, while the B section is based upon the ii-V7 progression with alterations. Both of these techniques combine to create the harmonic framework of the piece.

In Piazzolla's compositions, descending chromatic motion often dictates harmonic direction. Chromatic descent has appeared in pieces throughout the history of music, encompassing composers from the Baroque to the twentieth century. Tango also has claimed chromaticism, appropriating it for its own purposes. Since Piazzolla drew heavily from both the classical and tango music traditions, varying forms of chromatic descent can be found in the majority of his works.

The music theorists Alex Ross, author of *Listen to This*,[176] and Peter Williams, author of *The Chromatic Fourth: During Four Centuries of Music*,[177] both write about falling chromatic motion in their texts. Alex Ross describes it as a "common strand of musical DNA" that appears in works by composers such as Bach, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky.[178] He also unearths this melodic figure in 1960s popular music and Brazilian bossa nova. Ross coins this technique *basso lamento*, describing it as a falling

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[175] This references jazz harmony, where dominant chords are garnished with different variations of altered notes. There isn't a set formula, and some examples are: C7b13, C7b5b9, C7#9, and C7#5. In Mark Levine's text, *The Jazz Theory Book*, he explains the altered dominant chord in its most basic form by stating, "the C7alt chord is derived from the seventh mode of the Db melodic minor scale."
Mark Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book* (Petaluma, CA: SHER music, 1995), 70.
[176] Alex Ross, *Listen to This* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 22.
[177] Peter Williams, *The Chromatic Fourth: During Four Centuries of Music* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997).
[178] Alex Ross, "Chacona, Lamento, Walking Blues," Alex Ross, The Rest is Noise: Listen to This, embedded YouTube video, http://www.therestisnoise.com/listentothis (accessed May 21, 2018).

four note figure that mimics the sound of a human lament.[179] Though tonal versions exist, the chromatic version of *basso lamento* is the focus of this dissertation.

In his book, *The Chromatic Fourth: During Four Centuries of Music*, Peter Williams expounds on another variant, describing a six-note chromatic *figurae* that spans the interval of a fourth. This cell can exist in either direction, but downward motion is more common. The author includes over 200 examples from the earliest years of music history to support his claim.[180] According to Williams, Italian composers were especially fond of this technique and, "pulled the Chromatic 4th out of the drawer, as it were, whenever they wanted sad music."[181] Examples appear in the music of J.S. Bach, Albinoni, Mozart, Haydn, Monteverdi, amongst others.[182]

A third type of falling chromatic motion relates specifically to tango music. In this scenario, the bass descends in half steps, while the chordal structure above it maintains the same quality. One example of this is the progression of C dominant, B dominant, B-flat dominant to A dominant. The term "chromatic planing" best describes this technique. Figure 3.2 below demonstrates chromatic planing, with a sequence of diminished chords found in Piazzolla's composition, *Lo Que Vendrá.* This term is useful when *basso lamento* and Chromatic 4th do not completely delineate Piazzolla's harmonic choices.

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[179] Though *basso lamento* typically starts on the tonic and falls to the dominant in classical music, it can begin with other tones in folk music. Ross includes samples of Hungarian, Russian, and Romanian folk songs as well as an American blues to illustrate this.
Ibid, "Chacona, Lamento, Walking Blues."

[180] Williams, 2.

[181] Peter Williams, "Encounters with the Chromatic Fourth…or, More on Figurenlehre, 1," *The Musical Times 126,* no. 1707 (May 1985), 277.

[182] Ibid, 276-278.

Figure 3.2: Chromatic planing in *Lo Que Vendrá,* measures 35-37.[183]

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Piazzolla frequently applies chromaticism in *Libertango.* The first appearance of this is immediately noticeable in the alto saxophone part. Chromaticism, specifically the Chromatic 4th, lowers from the starting note of concert D to a concert A. Measures one to 15 of the alto saxophone part present this line within an arpeggiated figure. This also is the basis for the A theme. In the example below, one can see the lowest note in this line moving down by a minor second. Arpeggiated chords then fill in the texture around it.

Figure 3.3: Chromatic 4th motion in alto saxophone part, measures 1-15.

[183] Lead sheet created from a handwritten Piazzolla score.

Though in the example above the *figurae* appears first in the alto saxophone part, it serves an accompaniment role. This relationship is further proven when a descending chromatic line appears in the baritone part. In the beginning, the baritone saxophone maintains a pedal concert G, but by measure eight, it joins the alto's descending chromatic motion. This is demonstrated in Figure 3.4 below.

Figure 3.4: Descending baritone line in *Libertango.* Score reduction, measures 8-17.

Each A section in *Libertango* relies upon the Chromatic 4th, but an abrupt change appears in the first half of the B section. In measure 49 to 57 Piazzolla adds a new melody and chords based upon the ii-V7 progression.[184] Here he increases the piece's

[184] ii-V7 is used here as a general blueprint. In this example, Piazzolla uses both the minor ii-V7-i and major ii-V7-I progressions. Due to the jazz influence in this progression, it also has alterations that do not follow traditional classical harmony. One example is the Cmin7(b5) to F7 that then resolves to a major B-flat tonic.

harmonic complexity with flat ninth and 13th chordal extensions. In this section, Piazzolla draws inspiration from jazz harmony, narrowly avoiding what may otherwise have become a repetitive cycle of chromaticism. Figure 3.5 below demonstrates the jazz-inspired ii-V7 progression that appears in the B section of *Libertango*.

Figure 3.5: Jazz ii-V7 progression in *Libertango*. Score reduction, measure 49-57.[185]

In many types of music, the ii-V7 harmonic cell is used to create movement between key centers. Even though other genres also use altered progressions, the B section of *Libertango* relates specifically to the jazz idiom. There are three reasons to arrive to this conclusion. First, Piazzolla's personal interest was focused on jazz around this time. This is evidenced by *Summit*, an album that he released with jazz saxophonist Gerry Mulligan. Secondly, the chord changes of *Libertango* follow closely the form of vernacular music, with a repetitive AABA form and overall song length of three minutes

[185] In the saxophone arrangement, Marani writes a walking bass line in the baritone saxophone part. Piazzolla's original version does not do this. Rather, he maintains the same 3+3+2 ostinato throughout all sections. The chord root has been written to orient the reader with the changes in Figure 3.5, but this bass part is not an exact transcription from either score.

or less. Finally, the progression has alterations that are common to jazz. A half diminished seventh chord leading to a dominant seventh with flat ninth and flat 13th, repeating down one step, is common in many works from the jazz tradition.

In *Le Grand Tango: The Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla*, María Susana Azzi notes that Piazzolla was intrigued by the work of jazz artists. Some of the musicians he listened to were Oscar Peterson, Art Tatum, and Stan Kenton.[186] Their style strongly influenced Piazzolla's writing, affecting both his instrument choices and harmonic language. Both Peterson and Tatum frequently used altered progressions, and examples are included below to demonstrate their similarity to Piazzolla's *Libertango.*

The pianist Oscar Peterson, mentioned as an influence in the book *Le Grand Tango: The Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla*, frequently integrated extended harmony in both his melodic lines and harmonic choices. In his interpretation of Thad Jones' work *A Child is Born*, the altered ii-V7 appears multiple times, including measures 15 to 17 in the example below.[187]

Figure 3.6: Altered ii-V7 progression in jazz standard, *A Child is Born.*

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[186] Azzi, 47.
[187] Brent Edstrom, *The Very Best of Oscar Peterson,* transcription book (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2005), 7.

Another pianist from the jazz idiom, Art Tatum, also used alteration in his harmonic approach. Even in 1938, which included the earliest years of jazz development, Tatum recorded jazz standards with altered ii-V7 progressions. In his 1949 recordings for Capitol and Columbia records, his performances were "richly textured, rhythmically adventurous, and sophisticated harmonically."[188] Both dominant chord alterations and reharmonizations remain a central part of Art Tatum's harmonic language.

The second half of *Libertango's* B section is built upon a partial A theme. This pairing completes the 16 bar phrase. Diego Marani's arrangement of *Libertango* then adds an extra A section before grafting eight bars of borrowed thematic material for an outro. The piece ends in measure 89 with a gestural flourish in all four voices. *Libertango* includes the Chromatic 4th from the classical tradition, ii-V7 progressions from jazz, and popular music song forms. These influences combine to form a memorable song that references multiple genres.

Performance Considerations

Though repetition in *Libertango* allows room for personal interpretation, the original recording has some aspects that should be considered when performing Marani's arrangement. These suggestions are both rhythmic and timbral in nature, including drum set and guitar subdivision, bandoneon articulation, and the string-like quality of the melody. When saxophonists know the original instruments, they can maintain the energy that is present in the original recording. They can also make decisions about melodic lines, tonal quality, and notation adjustments that differ from the editor's version.

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[188] Jed Distler, *Jazz Masters: Art Tatum,* transcription book (New York: Amsco Publications, 1981), 7.

One conspicuous difference between Piazzolla's recording of *Libertango* and this saxophone quartet arrangement is an absence of audible rhythmic subdivision. In the original recording, a drummer subdivides the beat with sixteenth notes. These rhythms are played on closed cymbals throughout the piece. The drum set bass pedal also accents a 3+3+2[189] pattern, complimenting the electric bass player's part. In the original recording, a guitarist joins the two with strummed chords. Figure 3.7 below demonstrates the guitarist's subdivided part.

Figure 3.7: Guitar subdivision on original recording of *Libertango.*[190]

The absence of subdivision in the saxophone quartet arrangement leaves *Libertango* with a very different character from the original recording. For saxophone quartets performing this work, two adjustments can bring *Libertango* nearer to its original intention. One is to include a drum set[191] in a live performance, while the other is to add the missing rhythms to the accompaniment parts. If a drum set is used, the drummer

[189] Kacey Quin Link has coined this rhythmic combination as a *tresillo*, or "triplet" rhythm. This is discussed in depth in chapter four, including the roots of this composite rhythm in other genres.
Link, 38.
[190] Astor Piazzolla, *Libertango,* Trova 5053 (Milan, Italy: Carosello Records, 1994), CD.
[191] Though this is uncommon for saxophone quartets, professional touring groups have found success including percussion and/or drum set. This includes Dallas Brass and the United States Air Force Freedom Winds, Freedom Brass, and Spectrum Winds.
Dallas Brass, "Ensemble," *The Dallas Brass,* http://www.dallasbrass.com/ensemble (accessed April 29, 2018).
United States Air Force Band of Mid-America, *Air Force Bands,* http://www.music.af.mil/Bands (accessed May 3, 2018).

should directly transcribe the original part, using subdivided sixteenth notes on hi-hat, 3+3+2 rhythms in the bass pedal, and fills on the toms.

If adding drums is not possible, an alternate consideration would be to add subdivision to the internal voices of the saxophone quartet. Because saxophonists separate sixteenth notes with the tongue, playing all of the sixteenth rhythms may prove difficult. Instead, the accompaniment part could include a revised sixteenth note rhythm similar to the example below. Marani’s notation is also included below for reference.

Figure 3.8: Adapted sixteenth note rhythm for accompaniment voices.

Rather than having all saxophonists play this figure, each performer could have a separate role. One voice could play the rhythm in Figure 3.8 while another maintains the original accented part. A third voice could then play eighth notes. In Figure 3.9 below, these suggestions have been notated in the tenor and baritone parts. The added rhythms can be moved as needed, though baritone saxophone plays the role of electric bass and should continue some form of eighth note ostinato if possible.

Figure 3.9: Revised rhythms in *Libertango*.

In the example above, accented notes are important, but reinstating missing subdivisions will especially help bring *Libertango* closer to its original sound. Another way to include missing sixteenth notes would be to integrate a composite rhythm, or a hocket,[192] between parts. Figure 3.10 below replaces an otherwise sparse eighth note designation in measure one with combined sixteenth and eighth notes. If the group elects this option, accompaniment voices should search for moments when their lines can combine in this fashion. Both hockets and layered rhythms will add energy to this arrangement.

[192] A hocket is, "The device of alternating between parts, single notes, or groups of notes. The result is a more or less continuous flow with one voice resting while the other voice sounds." Encyclopaedia Brittanica, "Hocket," https://www.britannica.com/art/hocket (accessed April 29, 2018).

Figure 3.10: Hocket sixteenth note rhythm for accompaniment voices.

In addition to rhythmic adjustment, some knowledge of the bandoneon will also help performers to interpret *Libertango*. The bandoneon is originally from the concertina family, which includes the accordion. This instrument was invented by Heinrich Band in Germany around the year 1850.[193] Just as the saxophone produces sound through a wooden reed, the bandoneon relies on metal reeds inside the bellows. Bandoneon can be played either in a closing or opening movement, and a different set of fingerings is used for each direction.[194] The keyboard itself has a steep learning curve, as chords and scales are not placed linearly. Instead, the performer is required to become familiar with each note by its unique location.[195] The figure below demonstrates one example: the C major chord fingering when played in open position. Notice how the fingerings for this diatonic chord are spread across the keyboard of the bandoneon. This pattern does not repeat for any other chord, including the C major chord in closed position.

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[193] Javier García Mendez, *The Bandonion: A Tango History* (London, Ontario: Nightwood Editions, 1988), 36.
[194] Carlos Marcucci, and Félix Lípesker, *Método Moderno para Bandoneon,* score (Buenos Aires: EMBA, 1956).
[195] Kevin Carrel Footer, "Bellows of Love's Lament," Américas 55, no. 5 (September-October 2003): 17-23.

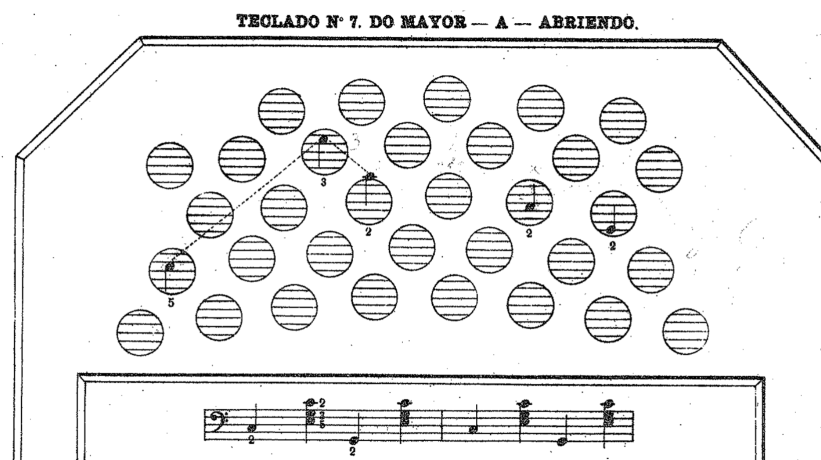

Figure 3.11: C major chord on bandoneon in open position.[196]

When the bellows opens or closes, not only does the fingering combination change, but also the sound. An open bellows produces a brighter sound, while a closing bellows sounds comparatively subdued and muted. Astor Piazzolla primarily relied on the brighter timbre of the open bellows, using the closing motion as a breath.[197] His approach to playing the bandoneon had never been attempted before, and he experimented with positions that bring maximum projection to the instrument. Figure 3.12 demonstrates classic position, tango position, and Piazzolla's preferred standing position.

[196] Pedro M. Maffia, *Método para Bandoneon: Primer Curso,* score (Buenos Aires: Ricordi Americana, n.d.), 60.
[197] Halfway through the following clip, Piazzolla is featured. This moment begins at minute 3:05. Benjamin Szvalb, "Libertango, Piazzolla live (1977)" YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPGuzDIjMIw (accessed March 14, 2019).

Figure 3.12: From left to right: traditional, tango, and Piazzolla playing positions.[198]

Though the saxophone can produce a warm, dark tone when needed, it also is capable of clarity and brightness. This makes it possible for the saxophone to replicate both the closed bellows and Piazzolla's open bellows. Jazz saxophonists especially have experience in the latter timbre; and this is an ideal precursor for playing *Libertango.*

Bandoneon articulation is another important factor to consider when performing Marani's *Libertango* arrangement. Most classical instruments have a resonating chamber with a natural decay, and performers emphasize the front end of the sound to create articulation. In contrast, articulation on bandoneon is based upon a different mechanism. The air is stopped completely by the bellows, creating a short and percussive articulation.[199] Tango music does not shy from this trait. Over the years, *Libertango* has been covered by many different ensemble types including string orchestras, brass

[198] Gabriela Mauriño, "A New Body for a New Tango: The Ergonomics of Bandoneon Performance in Astor Piazzolla's Music," *The Galpin Society Journal* 62 (April 2009), http://www.jstor.org/stable/20753637 (accessed May 1, 2018), 265-268.

ensembles, and electronic groups. String players can match short staccato by using their bow to articulate notes. Conversely, wind instrumentalists who perform *Libertango* must integrate a shorter articulation than what is typical in classical settings. The original recording favors a clipped approach, and softening this effect will lessen the impact of the line.

By drawing from jazz articulation concepts, saxophonists can more easily replicate the clipped articulation that is needed for *Libertango*. In jazz, short staccato is often referred to as “stop tongue” and it is notated with a vertical accent mark. To accomplish stop tongue, a saxophonist articulates the note, then returns the tongue to the reed. This abruptly stops both the air and vibration of the reed. When one says the words “tut” or “dut,” this effect naturally happens. The stop tongue articulation approach could be interpreted as a classical *staccatissimo,* but jazz lends itself more closely to this technique.

In Marani’s saxophone quartet arrangement, staccato notes are reliably marked to match the original recording; performers need only to commit to a shortened approach. Figure 3.13 displays the first four measures of Diego Marani’s transcription, including his staccato markings for each voice. Of these parts, the alto saxophone is especially pertinent because this line was originally written for bandoneon.

Figure 3.13: Staccato in first four measures of *Libertango*.[200]

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The final performance aspect to take into consideration with *Libertango* is the string-like nature of the main melody. In Piazzolla's 1974 recording, the melody begins on flute then moves to strings. It then floats over the rest of the parts below, contrasting the driving rhythm section and accented bandoneon lines. Though it is tempting to join the accented parts, resisting that urge is paramount. The cellist Yo-Yo Ma has performed *Libertango* with Piazzolla many times, and his recording can provide a good reference point.[201] Not only did the cellist receive direct feedback from Piazzolla on his interpretation, but he also collaborated with tango musicians Horacio Malvicino, Antonio Agri, Héctor Console, and Gerardo Gandini, all of whom worked closely with Piazzolla during their careers.[202]

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[200] Unlike previous excerpts that were created for this dissertation, this comes from the original score. Mr. Marani uses a transposing score instead of concert score.
[201] Yo-Yo Ma, "Libertango," *Piazzolla: Soul of the Tango,* mp3 (New York: Sony Classical, 1997) https://app.napster.com/artist/yo-yo-ma/album/piazzolla-soul-of-the-tango (accessed May, 3 2018). Reference recordings for each work are included in the bibliography "works referenced" section, including other recordings by this artist.
[202] Azzi, 283.

Libertango is a piece that has been performed in many different situations. Because Piazzolla intended it for radio airplay, it contains memorable melodic content and a driving rhythmic base. Throughout this composition, one can hear elements of both Piazzolla's personal style and jazz harmony. This includes descending chromatic lines, ii-V7 progressions with alterations, and an AAB song form that is adapted in Marani's arrangement to AABA.

Piazzolla's 1974 recording includes subdivided rhythms in the drums and guitar. To preserve the energy of the piece, rhythmic adjustments are worth exploring in a quartet setting. This could either be introduced with a drum set, or included in the accompanying parts. The original instrumentation also highlights the percussive nature of bandoneon articulation. Short articulation can be interpreted through the lens of jazz saxophone technique.

Libertango is an audience-friendly addition to the saxophone quartet repertoire that combines popular, jazz and tango music. This piece was originally created for Italian pop radio, and its adoption to other genres confirms its place in popular music. Noticeable jazz influence exists in both the B section's ii-V7 progression, and the piece's AAB form. In addition to jazz and popular music, Piazzolla's tango background also appears with featured bandoneon parts and 3+3+2 rhythms. *Libertango* is an accessible introduction to Piazzolla's writing. It also hints at the challenges that Piazzolla would bring to the tango establishment with his advocacy, and commitment to, *nuevo tango*.

CHAPTER 4

FOUR FOR TANGO

Ten years after recording *Libertango*, Astor Piazzolla's career had blossomed. In the 1970s he experienced a period of re-building from musical challenges, personal drama, and health problems. By the mid-1980s, worldwide recognition and consistent financial streams made it possible for Piazzolla to accomplish his goals. The second quintet that he formed in 1978 was touring the world with 17 to 18 concerts per month while also recording albums between trips.[203] At the same time, Piazzolla was writing music for side projects. This included stage shows, operitas, and musical ensembles of all sizes. By the late 1980s, "he won the greatest following among the world's music lovers [that] he was to enjoy in his own lifetime."[204]

Piazzolla's activity between 1985 and 1987 contains a sample of his busy schedule. In 1985, he recorded the album *Tango Zero Hour,* toured New York City with his second tango quintet, and saw performances of *Tango Argentino* (a stage show that included five of his compositions). In 1986, Piazzolla performed a feature set with jazz vibraphonist Gary Burton at the Montreux International Jazz Festival. The following year, he wrote and performed a double concerto for bandoneon and guitar, oversaw the first string quartet recording of *Four for Tango,* and revived and extended his operita, *María de Buenos Aires.*[205] From this timeline, one can see how variety piqued

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[203] Azzi, 248.
[204] Ibid, 247.
[205] Ibid, 242-254.

Piazzolla's interest at the height of his career. He had become comfortable in multiple genres and reached the pinnacle of his artistic abilities.

Four for Tango was conceived during this flurry of activity. In 1987, Piazzolla traveled to the US to record the *Concierto para Bandoneon* and perform with his quintet at Central Park.[206] While he was there, the composer was invited to a Kronos Quartet performance by their producer, Robert Hurwitz. Piazzolla was impressed with the quartet's repertoire selection and musicianship. He excitedly discussed collaboration with David Harrington, a founder of the group, and delivered a score for their review a few weeks later.[207] It was recorded on their album *Winter Was Hard* in November of the same year. [208]

The Kronos Quartet is a fitting ensemble to perform *Four for Tango.* Their career has encompassed over 60 recordings, 950 commissions, 40 awards (including the Avery Fisher Prize), and a Grammy for Best Chamber Music Performance. The group's mission places significant emphasis on both new music and collaboration with cross-genre artists. Some musicians they have worked with include jazz artists Maria Schneider and Charles Mingus, rock legends Jimmy Hendrix and David Bowie, and twentieth-century classical composers such as Terry Riley and George Crumb. This ensemble also seeks out artists from ethnic genres, having worked alongside Inuit throat singers, Romanian gypsy bands, and Chinese pipa virtuosos.[209] The Kronos Quartet has a history of testing the boundaries of traditional string quartet repertoire.

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[206] Azzi, 253.
[207] David Harrington, Kronos Quartet founding member, phone interview by author, O'Fallon IL, February 27, 2019.
[208] Ibid, 254.
[209] Kronos Quartet, "About Kronos," http://kronosquartet.org/about (accessed May 7, 2018).

Though both pieces were written by the same composer, *Four for Tango* has distinct differences from *Libertango.* The latter was intended for radio airplay, with a repetitive melody and popular music form. *Libertango* also relied on a mixed ensemble of electronic and acoustic instruments. In contrast, *Four for Tango* was a composition intended for the homogenous sound of a string quartet. This has similarities to a saxophone quartet, which itself consists of four voices within the same instrument family. *Four for Tango* draws heavily from the classical music tradition, with twentieth-century techniques frequently appearing throughout the piece. There is tango influence, but this piece rests most comfortably in the contemporary classical music genre.

Form Analysis

This arrangement of *Four for Tango* was created by Claude Voirpy for Henry Lemoine Editions, a French company that publishes saxophone repertoire pieces.[210] Unlike the *Libertango* transcription discussed earlier, Voirpy's transcription adheres closely to the original version with no major adjustments.[211] Piazzolla also took a different approach to organizing this piece. Instead of traditional structures, such as ABA form, *Four for Tango* relies upon three strands of musical DNA that intermix throughout the composition. These three strands consist of: melodic fragments, noise effects, and frantic sixteenths. A combination of these elements, usually in that order, determines the layout of this composition.

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[210] Astor Piazzolla, *Four for Tango: pour Quatuor de Saxophones*, score arranged by Claude Voirpy (Paris, France: Henry Lemoine, 1993).
[211] Including no key change.

The clearest demonstration of this formula exists in measure 51 to 63, shown in Figure 4.1 below.[212] As the section begins, a melodic theme appears in the baritone saxophone from measure 51 to 56. The soprano voice follows, extending the melody from measure 56 through 59. Soon, accompaniment figures punctuate beat four with a noise effect. By measure 59, the main melody is overtaken by sixteenth notes that cover up the soprano saxophone's sustained note. These sixteenth note figures, including the alto's sixteenth note line in measure 60, blend with noise effects before the piece embarks on the next melodic theme.

[212] The saxophone score for *Four for Tango* has been notated on a piano staff. The example below is taken from this score.

Figure 4.1: Melody, noise effects, and sixteenth note figures in measures 51-63.

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With these three textures in mind, the overall analysis becomes clear. Noise effects and sixteenth notes separate most sections, and thematic material develops

between these moments. In the beginning, melodies surface every eight measures. These melodies create A, B, C, D, and E themes. The A and B themes grow in stature as the work develops, expanding in length as well as scope. Both the first and second endings have a similar formula: each contains material borrowed from the E theme, followed by an A section.[213] The only change is the following material, as the first ending repeats back to measure nine, while the second ending carries *Four for Tango* to a conclusion.

Below is a chart that lists each theme and its corresponding measure numbers. This piece is essentially through composed, with a recurrence of the A and B themes providing the only repeated material. Patterns are the primary organizing factor. Between each theme, noise effects and frantic sixteenths separate and define each melodic area. Eventually, the piece dissolves into chaos with percussive figures and frantic sixteenths taking over the remaining melodic fragments.

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[213] In the first ending, measures 79-86 are marked as a B' theme, but it could also be labeled an F theme because of the new melody. This has been labeled as a B' theme because the overall melodic shape and bass motion has a similarity to measures 62-70.

Theme	Introduction	A	B	C	D	E
Measure	1-9	9-17	17-25	25-35	35-41	41-51
Tonal Center	C minor/pedal	A minor	E minor	D minor/pedal	E-flat minor	E minor/pedal

Theme	A expanded	B expanded	E/A (first ending)	B' (first ending)	C (first ending)
Measure	51-62	62-70	70-79	79-86	86-97
Tonal Center	A minor	E minor/pedal	E minor/pedal	F minor/pedal	F minor

Theme	A	B	C	D	E
Measure	9-17	17-25	25-35	35-41	41-51
Tonal Center	A minor	E minor	D minor/pedal	E-flat minor	E minor/pedal

Theme	A expanded	B expanded	E (second ending)	A (second ending)	Ending
Measure	51-62	62-70	159-169	169-175	175-186
Tonal Center	A minor	E minor/pedal	E minor/pedal	G minor	Chromatic

Figure 4.2 *Four for Tango* form chart with measure numbers.

Before leaving this analysis to explore the harmonic underpinnings of *Four for Tango*, one important factor should be mentioned about current recordings of this piece. The world premiere was performed by Kronos Quartet on their album *Winter Was Hard*, and this is a primary reference for later groups. Their version includes added effects that differ from the published score as well as an adjustment to the form of the piece. In Kronos' recording, *Four for Tango* is presented as a through-composed work, disregarding a first ending that repeats back to measure nine. David Harrington, the

founding member of the Kronos Quartet, explained in an phone interview that cancelling the repeat was a decision made under the guidance of Astor Piazzolla. The group never performed the piece any other way, and changes in the original manuscript may have been misplaced when the piece was published.[214]

From a theoretical standpoint, this decision changes the overall layout of the piece. Future performers of *Four for Tango* may want to consider playing the piece as written, because the first ending is very similar to the second. The publisher also numbers the last measure of the first ending as measure 97, while the first measure of the second ending is labeled as measure 159. This suggests that the composer expected a repeat. Both keeping, and disregarding, this written repeat has convincing precedent. It would be worthwhile to study both versions and make a decision based upon the group's convictions.

Harmonic Analysis

Even though three textural elements give structure to the piece, *Four for Tango* contains avant-garde aspects that complicate traditional harmonic analysis. Contrasting with *Libertango's* foundation of chromatic descending motion and jazz harmony, *Four for Tango* instead relies heavily on texture and effect. With closer perusal, a few factors rise to the surface of these gestures. The first two are harmonic: Piazzolla frequently uses the pitch class set {0,1,5},[215] and pedal tones. The third is a prevalent 3+3+2 rhythmic pattern. Rhythmic patterns will be discussed in this section because the 3+3+2

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214 Harrington, interview, February 27, 2019.
215 TSgt Jeremy Martin, United States Air Force Band staff composer/arranger, interview by author, Scott AFB IL, May 23, 2018.

subdivision appears frequently in Piazzolla's writing, and it has deep roots in tango's history.

In *Four for Tango*, various harmonic techniques are used. This includes chromatic planing, minor ninth chords, and some instances of bitonality. The most common though, is Piazzolla's use of pitch class sets and pedal tones. The pitch class set {0,1,5} appears during sixteenth note sections when Piazzolla is ending a melodic idea. Measure 14 is the earliest moment where this technique is used. It also can be found in measures 16, 35, 36, and 51. A variation that adds one note, {0,1,5,6} or {0,1,5,7}, also can be found in measures 17 and 23. Below is an example of the {0,1,5} pitch class set used in measure 16.

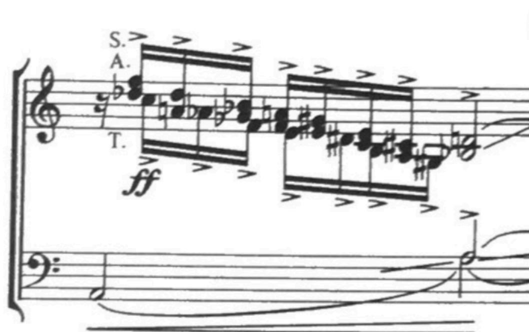

Figure 4.3: Pitch class set {0,1,5} in measure 16.

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Though this is similar to a major seventh chord, analyzing it with a tonal harmonic label is problematic because {0,1,5} doesn't remain for longer than a sixteenth note. Set {0,1,5} also appears in melodic ideas throughout the piece, such as the baritone saxophone part in measure 51. These moments do not resolve in the way that traditional harmonic progressions would. Instead, the collection of pitches is best understood as an intervallic cell that organizes sixteenth note sections.

Working alongside pitch class sets, pedal tones also help to establish the structural basis for the piece. Pedal tones combine in two different ways with the voices above them. The first is with minor chords, and the second is with chromatic motion. These chordal combinations usually follow each other in that order, expanding in complexity as the piece moves forward.

When *Four for Tango* begins, the introduction is presented over a C minor nine pedal that briefly gives way to descending chromatic motion two measures before the A theme arrives. Each A and B theme in measures nine and 17 relies on minor tonality (A and E minor, respectively). As the piece progresses, the harmonic parts become more involved. By the arrival of measure 25, theme C appears over a pedal D. Rather than remaining in the tonal areas that theme A and B occupied, theme C introduces descending chromatic motion in the upper voices.

In measure 51, the A theme returns and settles above an A minor pedal, followed again by the B theme in measure 62. Here, the role of the B theme changes. Instead of building on minor ninth chords as it had done previously, the B theme is built upon an E pedal with descending chromatic motion. In measure 79, a slight change happens when the bottom voice lifts slightly to an F pedal. This accommodates the melodic theme and descending chromatic motion in the upper parts. As the first ending tapers off, a line in the tenor voice lowers the pedal tone in half steps from measure 92 to the end of measure 97, establishing six measures of chromatic planing.[216]

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[216] Descending chromatic motion is discussed in further depth in Chapter three. This moment is serendipitous because it contains a descent that spans the distance of a fourth (Chromatic 4th), starts on the tonic (*basso lamento),* and maintains the same chordal harmony above it (chromatic planing).

After the first ending, *Four for Tango* repeats back to the A theme in measure nine. Minor ninth chords again take precedence until the second ending arrives in measure 159. At this point, the B theme leads to the ending with an E pedal. As the piece reaches its conclusion, another A theme presents the final statement over a G minor nine tonality. This brief moment of stability soon disappears, with sixteenth notes, noise effects, and chromatic intervals enveloping all parts.

The final building block of this composition is Piazzolla's choice of rhythm. Tango rhythmic influence has been traced by ethnomusicologists to a few musical genres. This includes the Cuban *habanera;* the Congolese *candombe*; and the *milonga* which hails from Argentina and Uruguay.[217] The *habanera* consists of a "Cuban dance in slow duple time,"[218] the *candombe* combines drums of various sizes to create complex polyrhythms,[219] and the *milonga* is a lively predecessor to the tango, usually performed in 2/4 time.[220] In his book, *Tango the Art History of Love*, Robert Farris Thompson also cites the Andalusian tango as an influence.[221]

Of these musical heritages, elements from each genre can be extracted to find the source for tango's 3+3+2 subdivision. In the layered rhythms of the *candombe*, hemiolas and cross rhythms weave between the different drums.[222] More obviously, the *habanera* and *milonga* both display a core rhythmic cell that appears in tango. Figure 4.4 below

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[217] Specifically, the Río de la Plata region. A complete footnote discussing this location can be found in chapter one.
Robert Farris Thompson, *Tango: The Art History of Love* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2005), 173.
[218] "Habanera," in Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/habanera (accessed May 23, 2018).
[219] "What is Candombe?" in Candombe, http://www.candombe.com/english.html (accessed May 23, 2018).
[220] Gabriela Mauriño, "Tango and Milonga: A Close Relationship," in Libertango, http://www.nytutoring.com/libertango/articles/Tango_Milonga.html (accessed May 23, 2018).
[221] Thompson, 55.
[222] Daniel Tatita Márquez, "Harlem Candombe-Radha Krsna-Frederick Douglass Academy," YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5d5ko8fL4E (accessed May 29, 2018).

demonstrates the dotted eighth, sixteenth, two eighth note rhythm that is often heard in both *milonga* and *habanera* music.

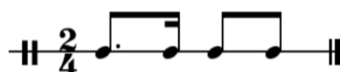

Figure 4.4: Common *milonga* and *habanera* rhythm notated in 2/4 time.[223]

Dr. Kacey Quin Link, a tango scholar, has compiled a list of musicians who incorporated elements of 3+3+2 rhythm before Piazzolla did.[224] In her analysis, violinists Julio De Caro and Alfredo Gobbi both flirted with this rhythm in their performances. Later, the piano players Orlando Goñi[225] and Osvaldo Pugliese enhanced key moments in their music with cross-bar hemiolas.[226] By the time Piazzolla arrived as a tango figure, he had been steeped in these rhythmic influences, and he applied it liberally in his own compositions.

The specific connection between early tango rhythms and 3+3+2 subdivision can be deduced through a rhythmic cell known as a *tresillo.*[227] A *tresillo* includes the same rhythms as the *milonga*, but the two middle notes are attached with a tie. By connecting these notes, the middle dotted sixteenth and eighth note becomes a dotted quarter note, creating a 3+3+2 subdivision.

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[223] Link, 23.
[224] Ibid, 37.
[225] Ibid, 38.
[226] In Osvaldo Pugliese's track "Negracha," a 3+3+2 rhythm is heard in the percussion part.
Osvaldo Pugliese, "Negracha," *Los 25 Mejores Tangos*, mp3 (Buenos Aires: Centauro Moni, 2015) https://app.napster.com/artist/osvaldo-pugliese/album/los-25-mejores-tangos-de/track/negracha (accessed May 29, 2018).
[227] The literal English translation means "triplet."
Link, 38.

Figure 4.5: *Tresillo* rhythm: *milonga* pattern with tie connecting middle two notes.[228]

When expanded into 4/4 time and simplified, a *tresillo* would look like the example below.

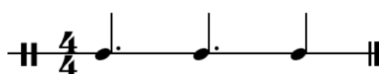

Figure 4.6: *Tresillo* rhythmic pattern in 4/4 time.[229]

Pedal tones, pitch class sets {0,1,5}, and *tresillo* rhythms are the building blocks of *Four for Tango.* Even though this work has an avant-garde flavor, these three elements appear regularly. By including them, Piazzolla is able to organize different textures and separate each section.

Performance Considerations

Four for Tango contains nonstandard noise effects that also appear in his other works. In traditional tango ensembles there isn't usually a drummer,[230] and strings often create percussive effects in its place. Piazzolla was especially fond of integrating these sounds in his compositions. *Four for Tango* uses four percussive techniques: *tambor, lija*

[228] Ibid, 38.
[229] Ibid, 38.
[230] Though he wrote music influenced by tango, Piazzolla also was the best-known exception to this role. His foray into electronic ensembles includes projects with both percussionists and drum set players.

(or *chicharra*)*, látigo,* and *golpe de caja.* Understanding the origin of each description will help with translating Piazzolla's music to different instruments.

Tambor, literally meaning "drum" in Spanish, is created by putting the middle finger between the G and D strings on violin. The right hand plucks on the string to create a hollow, drum-like sound.[231] In one of Piazzolla's first published arrangements, *tambor* is notated with an eighth note cue. This appears for the first time in the viola part, from measure nine to 16.[232]

In the saxophone arrangement, Claude Voirpy has notated these eighth notes as "slap tongue." Slap tongue is an effect used on reed instruments where the performer uses suction to draw the reed to the tongue before releasing pressure. The reed then "slaps" back to the mouthpiece with a percussive sound. This equivalency is quite close to the *tambor* sound of the violin, and it is an effective way to mimic the original sound.

Another noise effect notated in the original string version of *Four for Tango* is *lija/chicharra. Lija* means "sandpaper" and *chicharra* means "cicada" in Spanish. Both terms relate to a scratching effect commonly used in eighth and sixteenth note passages. *Lija* is produced by sawing the bow between the bridge and the tailpiece of a violin, typically on the D string. It can be a difficult technique to master, because one specific area of the string is needed for the correct subharmonics.[233] *Lija* also requires an unusual holding position of the bow.[234]

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[231] Stradmagazine, "Tango Effects - Tambor," demonstration by Caroline Pearsall, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jB0aMXymQeU (accessed May 31, 2018).
[232] Astor Piazzolla, *Four for Tango: pour Quatuor à cordes,* score (Paris, France: Henry Lemoine, 1989), 2.
[233] Alejandro Marcelo Drago, "Instrumental Tango Idioms in the Symphonic Works and Orchestral Arrangements of Astor Piazzolla: Performance and Notational Problems: A Conductor's Perspective" (PhD diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2008), 129-146.
[234] Ibid, 132.

"The very nature of *lija* is soloistic, and it is almost always executed by one violin."[235] Because of this, it is important to create the right sound when performing a transcription of the original work. In the string arrangement, measure 59 has an example of *lija* in the first violin part. In the saxophone version, this measure appears in cue notation. At the bottom of the page, the arranger says "*Sons multiples, au choix mais avec aigu, détachés mais pas trop forts.*"[236] When translated into English, the arranger is requesting a harmonic effect that is detached in nature but not too loud.

Lija has been interpreted a few ways by different saxophone quartets. The Aurelia Saxophone quartet in their album, *Piazzolla: Tango Nuevo*, uses breath and enunciated syllables inside the mouth to create the *lija* sound.[237] This is notated in Figure 4.7 below.

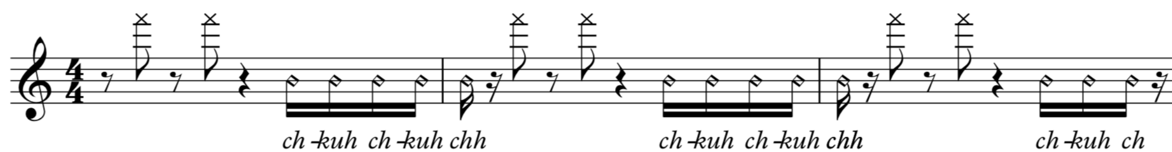

Figure 4.7: *Lija* realized with enunciated syllables, measures 19-21.

Another quartet, the student-lead Copperhead Quartet from the University of Oklahoma, choses instead to use multiphonics.[238] Though breath syllables at first seems closer to the original sound, multiphonics convey the character very effectively. A good fingering for this is to play a low C without the index finger of the right hand. This multiphonic has

[235] Ibid, 132-133.
[236] Astor Piazzolla, *Four for Tango: pour Quatuor de Saxophones*, score arranged by Claude Voirpy (Paris, France: Henry Lemoine, 1993), 6.
[237] Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, "Four for Tango," *Piazzolla: Tango Nuevo,* mp3 (Netherlands: Challenge Classics, 1996) Apple Music (accessed March 31, 2018).
[238] Curtis Vanzandt, "Four, for Tango," Copperhead Quartet*,* live recital recording https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeXw5YDuy1w (accessed May 31, 2018).

tones in common with the other parts, namely concert A, B-flat, and B. Even though *lija* has a distinctly percussive sound on violin, tone still exists in its original form on this instrument. The sandpaper effect that Piazzolla originally intended translates well with saxophone multiphonics.

For the first recording of this piece, the Kronos Quartet adds *lija* in places that are not notated in the published arrangement. In an interview, David Harrington confirmed that these notations were in the original manuscript and must have been lost when the piece was published.[239] If saxophone quartets wish to integrate this, *lija* would need to be added in measure 18 to 23. In these measures, the alto saxophonist would still perform the whip effect, but they should then add *lija* immediately after passing the melody to the tenor in measure 20. Below is a notated example of the Kronos Quartet's *lija* rhythm, realized in the alto saxophone part. Though it is not in the published score, adding *lija* is worth considering.

low C multiphonic

Figure 4.8: *Lija* in the alto saxophone part with multiphonics, measures 18-23.

In the sample above, there is another important noise effect along with *lija.* The eighth note percussion notation on the high concert A is called *látigo.* This translates to

[239] Harrington, interview February 27, 2019.

“whip” in Spanish, a descriptive term that matches the sound. To accomplish a *látigo*, the violinist quickly slides their left hand across the string while gaining momentum in the bow. This ends with an accent as the finger leaves the string.[240] A more technical description is, “Látigo –“whip” – consists of a brisk glissando upwards on the E string, usually ending on the B_5 natural harmonic or some note of undetermined height.”[241] Additionally, a traditional tango *látigo* on violin can include vibrating the bow as the left hand moves, creating 32nd notes.[242]

In their first recording of this arrangement, the Kronos quartet took *Four for Tango* at a slower tempo and their *látigos* were consequently longer in length. As they continued to perform this piece, the whip sound became shorter. Subsequent ensembles have adopted a short *látigo* for this piece. This length adjustment works in a saxophonist’s favor, because performers can copy a whip sound by bending the note with the jaw before quickly returning back to normal playing position.

For *látigo*, Claude Voirpy’s saxophone arrangement gives the instructions, “*Son aigu au choix, (différent du Do# précédent) bref et accentué, mais pas trop fort.*”[243] In English, this asks saxophonists to select a note of their choice other than the previous C-sharp, allowing a brief accent that is strong but not too loud. Because *látigo* is more of a gesture than a specific note, the final note’s arrival can vary.[244] In the Kronos quartet’s *Winter Was Hard* album, the arrival note is in the vicinity of a concert E-flat. Concert E,

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[240] Stradmagazine, “Tango Effects - Látigo,” demonstration by Caroline Pearsall, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwxHO2wxM8k (accessed June 3, 2018).
[241] Drago, 159.
[242] Stradmagazine, YouTube.
[243] Voirpy, 6.
[244] Harrington, phone interview February 27, 2019.

E-flat, D, and D-flat are all acceptable options and if possible, altissimo will bring the saxophone closer to a violin timbre.

Along with the appearance of *lija*, the Kronos Quartet's manuscript contains traditional *látigo* during two of the glissando sections.[245] This happens in measure 39 to 41 and measure 173 to 175. Rather than doing a straight glissando into the following note, they vibrate the bow with their right hand to create a 32nd note effect. Though this is an interesting sound, traditional *látigo* is difficult for saxophonists to mimic. Saxophonists may be able to add and release fingers in their right hand to vary the timbre with false fingerings,[246] but this effect is not necessary if it proves too difficult to recreate.

A glissando notation discrepancy exists between the string and saxophone versions. In the string arrangements, glissandos are notated as a straight line from the bottom notes to the top. In the saxophone part, Voirpy writes chords within the glissando's path. One example is on beat one of measure 40, where an E-flat chord is written halfway through the glissando figure. In measure 50, he adds a chord following the first chord in measure 49, and a chord also appears in measure 185. Voirpy was likely accounting for a smaller range of notes in the saxophone. Most saxophone quartets play this figure as written; but having an uninterrupted figure between the notes brings the piece closer to the original. To accomplish this, performers could instead hold the first note for a longer amount of time, then adjust the glissando to fit the remainder of the bar.

The last effect to translate from violin to saxophone is *golpe de caja.* This literally translates as "strike the box/drum." For *golpe de caja*, the string player directly strikes the

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[245] In Appendix A, the interview with David Harrington discusses this in further depth..

instrument with their fingers.[247] There is no specific place for this; it is up to the performer to choose the sound that they want. In the string arrangement of *Four for Tango*, drumming with the fingers is notated in measure 41, 59, 76, 163, and 179. This is either listed as a roll with grace notes (measures 41, 163, 179) or a quarter note with the word "thumb" next to the notes (measures 59, 76, 179).

The saxophone arrangement of this piece has the following instructions: "*Coup frappé sur le pavillon de l'instrument.*"[248] In English, this translates to "knock on the body of the instrument." Voirpy uses two approaches to replicate the string's effect. Sometimes he substitutes slap tongue for the *golpe de caja*. In other situations, Voirpy recommends tapping the saxophone with the fingers. Tapping the saxophone is inherently problematic, because the instrument doesn't have the same natural amplification that stringed instruments do. Alternately, slap tongue is easier to hear, but it can fall short when Piazzolla requests varying timbres of *golpe de caja, lija,* and *tambor* at the same time. In measure 179, the composer combines all of the techniques and if the unique sound of *golpe de caja* isn't included, the effect becomes two dimensional.

It may be worthwhile to instead find an item nearby with more resonance. Tapping a music stand could be an option, because it has a different timbre than slap tongue. In measure 41 to 45, the tenor saxophone could do a grace note roll with their fingers into beats two and four. The same rhythm appears in the soprano saxophone part of measure 163 to 167. In 179 to 183, this rhythm would be performed in the baritone saxophone part on beat four. A quarter note tap would then be used for the baritone

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[247] Stradmagazine, "Tango Effects – Golpe de Caja," demonstration by Caroline Pearsall, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MuBDLk7MoY (accessed June 4, 2018).
[248] Voirpy, 6.

saxophone part in measure 59 to 62, 76 to 79, and 179 to the end of 182 (beat two). If a music stand doesn't produce the desired sound, an alternate resonator could also be explored.

Claude Voirpy's arrangement of *Four for Tango* is a valuable addition to the saxophone quartet repertoire. It marries Piazzolla's style with the technical capabilities of the instrument. This work features four voices of the same instrument family, which also is the makeup of a saxophone quartet. Understanding the form of this piece helps performers to make informed decisions about repeat signs. The use of {0,1,5}, and pedal tones creates a foundation for Piazzolla's unique musical writing. Finally, percussive techniques from the tango tradition such as *lija, látigo,* and *golpe de caja* can be translated to saxophone arrangements with accurate representation of the original sound. *Four for Tango* is a complex piece that fits well in the contemporary saxophone quartet repertoire.

CHAPTER 5

HISTOIRE DU TANGO

Histoire du Tango was a piece written for flute and guitar duo in 1985. Piazzolla had taken special notice of the classical guitar, and he wrote three works in short succession for this instrument. This impetus was likely inspired by an informal meeting that happened a few years earlier, where the composer was introduced to two Brazilian brothers: Sergio and Odair Assad.[249] Soon after these guitarists performed for him, Piazzolla wrote the *Tango Suite* for two guitars. The Odair brothers recorded this piece in 1985, and reviewers called it "extraordinarily individual and expressive music [from] a Szymanowski of the Pampas."[250]

On March 15 of that year, Astor Piazzolla was invited to the Liége Fifth International Guitar Festival to premiere another work of his that featured guitar, the *Concerto for Bandoneon, Guitar and Strings.* This concerto skillfully balanced melodic lines, tango nuance, and technical passages between both instruments. Many famous guitarists included this work in their programs soon after its appearance, including Cacho Tirao, Leo Brouwer, Roberto Aussel, and Baltazar Benítez.[251] These early performances were well-received, and the piece continued to garner accolades as other artists programmed the work.

Also at the Liége festival, a guitar and flute suite by the name *Histoire du Tango* had its world premiere. *Histoire du Tango* is a concert work that explores the different

[249] Azzi, 237.
[250] Ibid, 237.
[251] Ibid, 239.

phases of tango history through the lens of Astor Piazzolla's compositional style. When writing this piece, Piazzolla's overall goal was to present a cross section of tango's history through one hundred years of musical evolution. Because *Histoire du Tango* has four separate movements, this chapter will present an overview for each individual movement. This includes historical reference, an analysis, and performance suggestions. Diverging from previous chapters, the historical discussion in this chapter relates not to the year that this work was written, but the stylistic period that inspired the movement.

Bordel 1900: History

The first movement, "Bordel 1900," harkens back to the earliest years of tango's history. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Argentina had established a reputation as a country lavish with natural resources. The years 1853 to 1914 brought a wave of immigration that drew people from around the world to establish a new life for themselves in South America. During this time, the population of Argentina expanded sevenfold.[252] As immigrants relocated to the countryside, the *tango criollo*, or Creole tango style emerged. This music was lighthearted with rural themes, and performers usually sang and accompanied themselves on guitar, flute, or violin.[253] Harmonically, early *tango criollo* was less complex than other tango styles that appeared at the later part of the century.

Tango soon spread from the *pampas*, or countryside, to the city centers. The carefree sound of *tango criollo* blended with the night life of the Río de la Plata region.

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[252] Daniel K. Lewis, ed. Frank W. Thackeray and John E. Findling, *The History of Argentina* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 54-55.
[253] Oscar Del Priore, *El Tango de Villoldo a Piazzolla y Después* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Manantial SRL, 1999), 42-43.

As Argentina's economy expanded, disparity also expanded between rich and poor. In *A Brief History of Argentina*, Jonathon C. Brown explains that, "while the phenomenal export-led development between 1880 and 1916 had expanded the nation's wealth, it had done nothing to equalize the distribution of income."[254] During this transition, *tango criollo* forged an alliance with the lower class of society. Its musical strains were heard in small establishments, tenement houses,[255] and brothels. Immigrants from all parts of the world gathered in these venues, sharing rhythmic elements and melodic ideas from their culture.

Such seedy origins could be seen as an unfortunate start for the beginnings of tango. Yet today, *tango criollo* has a unique character that distinguishes it from later styles. Lighthearted lyrics, tonal harmony, small ensembles, and blended rhythms all contribute to the sound of "Bordel 1900." Astor Piazzolla drew from these early tango elements when he wrote the first movement of his piece.

Bordel 1900: Analysis

"Bordel 1900" contains some important aspects of the early tango style. This includes 2/4 time, *habanera* and *milonga* rhythms, and an ABCA song form. A duo was a typical size for this era, which translates well into a flute and guitar ensemble. Compared to works that Piazzolla wrote in his later years, the first movement of *Histoire du Tango* is relatively tonal and lighthearted, specifically reflecting the sound of *tango criollo.*

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[254] Jonathon C. Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina* (New York: Facts on File Incorporated, 2003), 169.
[255] Tenement houses were modest apartments with an open courtyard where residents would gather to socialize.

In Claude Voirpy's arrangement, "Bordel 1900" begins with an introduction that is shared between the soprano and alto saxophone. The tenor and baritone saxophone join in with key clicks and short interjections. The A section appears just after measure 12, where Piazzolla establishes a clear V-I cadence before embarking on the melody in measure 13. This theme is centered around the key of G major. Though most of the melody is in the soprano saxophone, alto and tenor both have important roles. The alto sometimes takes over the melody, while the tenor provides an indispensable rhythm from this time period. Measure 14 contains the first appearance of this; a *habanera* rhythm that is heard for the first time in the tenor part. Figure 5.1 demonstrates this dotted eighth, sixteenth, and two eighth note syncopated rhythm. In this example, it appears in measure 14 through 20.

Figure 5.1: *Habanera* rhythm in tenor part. "Bordel 1900," measure 14-20.

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In measure 48, Piazzolla closes this section with a clear V-I cadence. Measure 49 begins a transitional area, analyzed here as the B section. The alto saxophone shares the melody with soprano as the piece briefly tonicizes to the key of B-flat. A ii-V7 sequence[256] appears in the next four measures, ending with a G major chord. Measure 53 repeats the same sequence, resolving this time with a G minor chord. More developmental material follows, with Piazzolla using mode mixture between G major and G minor to transition "Bordel 1900" into a new thematic section.

By measure 62, the key of G minor takes hold as the primary tonal center. Here, Piazzolla establishes a dotted eighth, sixteenth, eighth note 3+3+2[257] rhythm between the baritone and tenor saxophone parts. In measure 66, the tenor leaves its role to join the higher voices for four measures before passing the melody back to soprano. This thematic area, labeled as a C theme, lasts until measure 96. *Basso lamento*[258] lines appear more frequently in this section than the previous sections. The baritone part contains a good example of this. In measure 69, the top note of the baritone part descends every measure, creating a falling chromatic line with the pitches G, F, E, E-flat, and D. This section closes with developmental material. "Bordel 1900" then transitions back to the A section, with *golpe de caja* effects and sequential motives. After a final statement of the A section, the movement reaches its finale in measure 48. A chart of the form is presented in Figure 5.2 below.

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[256] Specifically, C- to F, B-flat to E-flat, and then Aø to D7.

[257] Dr. Kacey Quinn Link refers to this as a *tresillo*, or triplet rhythm. A complete explanation of *tresillo*, as well as its roots in other genres, can be found in chapter four.

[258] *Basso lamento* and Chromatic 4th both relate to a falling chromatic motion that is common to tango music. This is discussed in further depth in chapter three. The technique also exists in music of other genres that date as far back as the Baroque period.

Section	Introduction	A	B	C	Transition	A (repeat)
Measure	1-13	13-49	49-62	62-107	107-113	8-49
Tonal Center	G major	G major	G major/G minor	G minor	G major	G major

Figure 5.2: “Bordel 1900” form chart.

In *Histoire du Tango,* “Bordel 1900” is written to reflect the characteristics of *tango criollo*. Piazzolla explores this by writing in 2/4 time and using an ABCA form. He also incorporates rhythms that were prevalent in tango’s early stage, including *habanera* and *milonga*. The light hearted, syncopated personality of *tango criollo* is skillfully captured within this first movement.

Bordel 1900: Performance Considerations

Unlike works discussed previously in this dissertation, *Histoire du Tango* was originally written for flute. In *Libertango* and *Four for Tango,* stringed instruments and bandoneon created a gateway for interpreting Astor Piazzolla’s writing. In contrast, this piece features an instrument that has inherent similarities to other members of the woodwind family. Flute players accomplish tonguing, breathing, fingering, and expressive nuance in a similar way to saxophone, and flute notation translates naturally to the saxophone.

The biggest adjustment for this piece is instead found in the guitar accompaniment. In Claude Voirpy’s saxophone quartet transcription, the three bottom voices share a role that was originally written for guitar. The sound of three saxophones blends easily, and this is similar to how a guitar blends with itself. Yet, the interpretation

of some elements will need to be clarified with a saxophone transcription. One example is a written designation in measures three, 100, 102, and 104 of the original score. Here, Piazzolla instructs the guitarist to *frapper sur le chevalet*, or knock on the instrument body.[259] This effect comes from the *golpe de caja* tango technique.

The saxophone score says to *B. sons frappes (clés main droite*), or "click the right hand keys." The majority of saxophone quartets who perform this piece have followed the instructions that appear in the saxophone arrangement. This creates a percussive effect, but the result is noticeably quieter than the sound of a guitarist tapping on the body of their instrument. Other options could bring more volume for saxophonists, such as tapping on the stand with one's fingers, tapping the floor with one's foot, or adding air to amplify the sound of the key tapping. Any form of increased volume will help to bring out the effect's original intention.

Beyond adjusting *golpe de caja* for volume, two other ideas are worth considering in the first movement of *Histoire du Tango*. This includes maintaining a sense of levity with the piece, and including time flexibility when possible. "Bordel 1900" was meant to conjure the lighthearted personality of early tango with a duo ensemble. When consequent arrangements add instruments, such as a saxophone quartet, the work can become heavy and lose its improvisatory character. An awareness of the time period that "Bordel 1900" references will help bring out the carefree nature of this movement.

The original instrumentation also has opportunities for time flexibility. From measure one to 13, soprano and alto saxophone both take turns with the melody. There is no accompaniment here, and performers can experiment with rubato when they have a

[259] Astor Piazzolla, *Histoire du Tango: pour Flûte et Guitare,* score (Paris, France: Henry Lemoine, 1986).

featured part. In the baritone and tenor saxophone, similar moments appear later in the movement. Because *tango criollo* would have been performed by a self-trained singer or instrumentalist in an informal setting, time flexibility is not unusual for this period.

The first movement of *Histoire du Tango*, "Bordel 1900," is rooted in the early years of tango's evolution. Piazzolla's choice to use ABCA form, tonal harmony, *milonga* and *habanera* rhythms, and 2/4 meter helps to conjure the sound of *tango criollo.* He also drew inspiration from early tango by leaving space for rubato. This sets the stage for "Café 1930," a nostalgic movement that references the Golden Age of tango.

Café 1930: History

The 1930s were a transitional time for tango music. The rustic *tango criollo* had been discarded in favor of *tango danza,* or tango dance music. This soon morphed to *tango canción,* a song-based approach to tango. Musical standards rose as musicians developed from amateurs to professionals, leaving behind small establishments to perform in concert halls and stages. Setting aside the rural subject matter of previous years, *tango canción* instead embraced idealistic lyrics, dramatic melodic phrasing, and the *orquesta típica* ensemble.[260] In the editor's introduction to *Histoire du Tango* for saxophone quartet, "Café 1930" is described as "another age of the tango [where] people stopped dancing it as they did in 1900, preferring instead simply to listen to it. It became

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[260] *Orquesta típica* translates to "typical orchestra." In Argentine tango, this includes a combination of strings, piano, and bandoneon. The number of instruments for this group varies depending on the time period.

more musical and more romantic."[261] Today, the period from 1935 to 1955 is known as the Golden Age of tango.

Despite this grandeur, *tango canción* was borne from an arduous phase in Argentina's history. In the early years of tango music's development, Argentina suffered both externally from the Great Depression, and internally from the effects of two military governments. In 1946, Juan Perón became the first democratically elected president in more than a decade. Many Argentinian citizens fondly remember Juan Perón's presidency, because he worked tirelessly to promote social programs for the working class and poor.

Even though these social initiatives were popular, tango musicians also experienced a dark side to Perón's rule. Artists were required to edit their work, reflecting the ideal state that the president promoted.[262] In his book *The Argentine Tango as Social History, 1880-1955: The Soul of the People*, Donald Castro recounts that "tango was robbed of its currency that had made it so vital in the 1920s and 1930s. Tango authors appeared to seek the security of the past by turning their backs, at least in their lyric, to the reality about them and by seeking the security of the barrios of their youth in the 1920s."[263]

Despite setbacks from this period of censorship, tango music was able to leave Argentina's small nightclubs in lieu of theaters and concert halls. The audience became wider and more diverse. Musicians developed their technique, and ensembles responded by adding more players to their *orquesta típica* roster. Expressive melodic phrases

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[261] Astor Piazzolla, *Histoire du Tango: pour quatre saxophones,* score arranged by Claude Voirpy (Paris, France: Henry Lemoine, 1991).
[262] Ibid, 41.
[263] Castro, 243.

became more common, and lyricists delivered subject matter that was carefully crafted to fit Perón's cultural goals. In *Histoire du Tango*, "Café 1930" reflects both the nostalgia, and idealism, that resulted from this stage in tango's history.

Café 1930: Analysis

Though instrumentation in this movement remains a duo, Piazzolla's writing nonetheless reflects aspects of the Golden Age. Tango music from 1930 to 1955 was transitional. It was more polished than early tango, but the overall structure still borrowed from early tango. An analysis of "Café 1930" unearths an abundance of melodic sequencing, embedded within an ABA song form. Combined with rubato and longer phrases, all of these factors seamlessly present an authentic *tango canción*.

"Café 1930" begins with a slow introduction shared between the baritone and tenor saxophone.[264] This is written in F minor with an opening progression of i, i^6, VI, and V. Each chord change happens on the downbeat of the measure, repeating with slight variations until the main melody appears in measure 15. As soon as the alto saxophone enters, sequences develop the melodic theme. One example of this is measure 15 to 19 where a repeated figure descends, measure by measure, to a C major chord with an F suspended resolution.

[264] In the original arrangement, this part is performed on solo guitar.

Figure 5.3: Sequencing in measure 15-19, “Café 1930.”

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Sequencing is the primary melodic building block of this movement. This technique remains constant throughout “Café 1930,” even when chords diverge from the original i, i^6, VI, V[265] progression. Though Figure 5.3 above provides an example over a tonal chord progression, sequencing also exists in more dissonant sections. In measure 23 to 31, the soprano and alto saxophone share the melody. Underneath this line, the accompaniment provides a combination of diminished seventh chords and B-flat pedal tone sequences. This is demonstrated below in Figure 5.4.

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[265] This could possibly be analyzed as a ii chord, defining the Ab as a suspension leading to G. I chose not to analyze it this way because the root, G, only lasts for half a beat on the “and” of beat three. Flat VI pre-dominant chords are also common in *milonga*.

Figure 5.4: Sequencing over diminished seventh chords and pedal tones.

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Even with a dissonant foundation, sequencing and repetition remains prevalent throughout this movement.

The A section closes in measure 51 with a brief cadenza shared between the alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones. In measure 52, a tonicization to the parallel major key of F gives rise to the B section. Sequences continue to influence phrasing, even as the main melodic material changes. In this section, Piazzolla relies primarily on four measure phrases. The alto saxophones' eighth note lines from measure 56 to 59 and soprano's

sixteenth note lines from measure 60 to 64 both are both good examples of this. At the end of the B section, a repeat sign leads back to the beginning of the first A.[266]

When "Café 1930" repeats back to the beginning of the piece, the opening melody returns to F minor. Even though augmentation is used in the first ending to slow rhythmic motion, Piazzolla chooses a different approach to end this movement. The conclusion instead consists of a jagged eighth, quarter note figure that slowly settles to the final measure. This is presented in Figure 5.5 below.

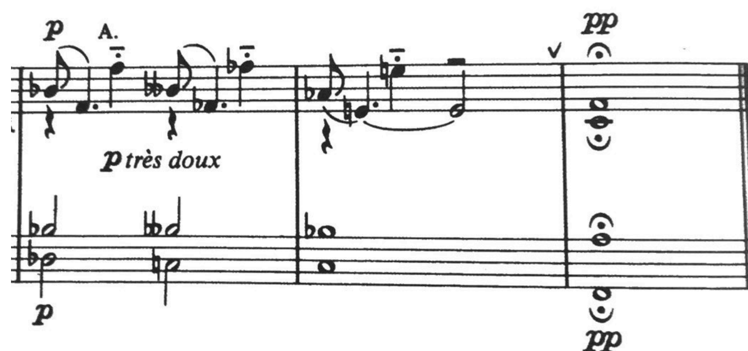

Figure 5.5: Sequencing in final three measures of "Café 1930."

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The first and second endings in the saxophone edition may be confusing, because the first ending begins in measure 41. This measure is still part of the A section, and the B section follows within the first ending. An alternate way to think of this piece is to cancel the first and second ending designation, but leave the repeat sign. After the repeat,

[266] In the original score, there is no repeat because the piece is through composed. The content remains the same between both versions, it is just notated differently in the saxophone version.
Piazzolla, *Histoire du Tango: pour Flûte et Guitare,* 6-9b.

a Coda would be marked at the end of measure 40. Figure 5.6 below presents a chart of the piece's overall form, with a Coda notated instead of a second ending.

Section	Introduction	A	B	A (repeat)	Coda
Measure	1-15	15-52	52-82	15-41	82-87
Tonal Center	F minor	F minor	F major	F minor	Chromatic/F minor

Figure 5.6: Form chart of "Café 1930."

Sequencing is the key to analyzing the second movement of *Histoire du Tango.* Piazzolla accentuates this technique by varying the rhythmic durations, adding a descending chromatic harmony, and presenting melodies with four measure phrases. Though "Café 1930" reflects the *tango canción* style*,* its ABA form also draws from early tango. In this movement, Piazzolla skillfully conveys the nostalgia of the Golden Age of tango.

Café 1930: Performance Considerations

The use of repetition in "Café 1930" creates a natural framework for expressive lines and rubato. Because this movement relies on elements of the Golden Age, performers who were not raised within the tango tradition should familiarize themselves with recordings from this period. Many professional ensembles existed during the Golden Age, and reliable recordings are available through CDs, the internet, and music streaming services. The musicians Juan D'Arienzo, Aníbal Troilo, Miguel Caló, Osvaldo Pugliese,

Pedro Laurenz, Roberto Firpo, and Roberto Goyeneche all are good references for this style.[267]

Two stylistic adjustments will draw out the unique character of this period. Namely, adding rubato and ornamentation will help to deliver an authentic performance of "Café 1930." Music from the Golden Age typically follows a soloist, which is often a singer. Even when words are absent, rubato will add depth and character to instrumental performances. The flautist Cécile Daroux and guitarist Pablo Márquez in their album, *Piazzolla: Histoire du Tango*, demonstrate a tasteful ebb and flow with their interpretation.[268] Another reference is the tango singer Roberto Goyeneche. On the compilation album *Sung Tangos,* Goyeneche's performance of "Cafetín de Buenos Aires" liberally applies rubato throughout the vocal part.[269] Both interpretations show the extent that time can be stretched for dramatic emphasis.

Because "Café 1930" was originally written for two instruments, performing with similar flexibility in a quartet setting may prove difficult. Adding more musicians doesn't make rubato impossible, but a discussion about which lines can be slowed or accelerated would be helpful. In most situations, maintaining a focus on moving eighth notes is the clearest way to define rubato. Each saxophonist will have the responsibility of directing rubato at some point in this movement. The tenor saxophone is responsible for moving lines in measure 15, while baritone takes over this role at the end of measure 20. Eleven

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[267] Clint Rauscher and Shelley Brooks, "The Golden Age of Argentine Tango: 1935-1955," Tangology 101, http://www.tangology101.com/main.cfm/title/The-Golden-Age-of-Argentine-Tango:-1935-to-1955/id/59 (accessed August 5, 2018).

[268]Cécile Daroux and Pablo Márquez, "II. Café 1930," *Histoire du Tango pour Flûte et Guitare,* mp3 (Paris, France: Harmonia Mundi, 1997) Apple Music (accessed August 5, 2018).

[269] Roberto Goyeneche, "Cafetín de Buenos Aires" *Sung Tangos,* mp3 (New York: Imex Media, 2015) Apple Music (accessed August 5, 2018).

measures later, soprano has moving eighth notes and by measure 47, alto saxophone also joins this group.

In addition to rubato, ornamentation can also accentuate the sound of the Golden Age. When *tangueros*[270] perform, they often add embellishments, especially on bandoneon and piano. Some professional musicians outside of the tango genre have included effects and embellishments in their interpretations. One example is the Kronos Quartet's version of *Four for Tango*. Tango effects such as *lija* that were written in the Piazzolla manuscript can also be added to later arrangements. "Café 1930" has grace note ornaments notated in the soprano part in measure 60 to 63, 65, and 69 to 71, but these do not have to be the only instance where the melody is embellished.

One way to gain confidence with this concept is to transcribe bandoneon players, especially those who performed during the Golden Age. Aníbal Troilo's performance of "Danzarín" from the album *Concerto en Tango*[271] provides an excellent example of possible embellishments on bandoneon. When he separates from the ensemble at 0:53, Troilo garnishes the melody with chromatic grace notes. He also anticipates resolutions, adds extra sixteenth notes, and incorporates chromatic turns later in the piece.

Ornamentation related specifically to *Histoire du Tango* exists in some flute and guitar recordings. In Cécile Daroux's interpretation, ornaments are integrated into both parts. In measure 18, the flautist adds a mordent to the suspended resolution from F to E natural. Just before beat three, the guitarist also adds a mordent in his part. As the piece

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[270] A colloquial term for a person (commonly Argentinian) who performs and accepts the overall tango lifestyle as their own. This is first mentioned in chapter two.

[271] Aníbal Troilo et al,"Danzarín," *Concierto en Tango,* mp3 (Germany: THAI records, 2002) Apple Music (accessed August 5, 2018).

continues, chromatic additions and flourishes continue to appear in both voices.[272] A seasoned tango performer would typically improvise embellishments, but for less experienced performers, planned ornaments can still deliver a similar effect.

In the second movement of *Histoire du Tango,* Piazzolla relies upon stylistic influences from the Golden Age of tango. Through sequencing, Piazzolla seamlessly blends an early song form with lyrical elements of the Perón era. To further understand *tango canción,* transcribing famous tango artists from 1930 to 1955 is recommended, paying special attention to their use of rubato and ornamentation. "Café 1930" references a period that existed just before social and political upheaval would change Argentina, and its music, completely.

Night Club 1960: History

For many countries, the 1960s was a period of change where society's status quo was challenged. Argentina was not immune to this. President Juan Perón's policies had fallen short with corruption, inflation, and mismanagement of resources. In a violent coup, a military government took over the presidency, forcing Perón to flee the country.[273] In quick succession, President Arturo Frondizi was ousted in 1962, with Arturo Ilia following a year later.[274] A string of military governments fought for power for the next fifteen years. The impact of this still remains in the memory of those who lived during that time.

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[272] Daroux, "II. Café 1930," *Histoire du Tango pour Flûte et Guitare.*
[273] A&E Television Networks, "Peron Deposed in Argentina," History, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/peron-deposed-in-argentina (accessed September 11, 2018).
[274] Azzi, 78.

Fortunately, this progression of events in Argentina's history did not eclipse the social change that was happening worldwide. By the 1960s, technology had drastically increased communication through television, radio, and live performance. Jazz, folk, rock, and classical music passed through boundaries that seemed impermeable, and tango separated from its traditional confines to reflect Argentine culture that surrounded it. In the same way that American jazz musicians pushed beyond the big band genre to create bebop and eventually free jazz, Argentinian artists in *orquesta típicas* experimented with *el movimiento vanguardista,* or the avant-garde movement.

Tango was poised for change, and Piazzolla was ready to guide the music into a new paradigm with his *nuevo tango*, or new tango, style. *Nuevo tango* downplayed the role of singers, abandoned tango-dance as the primary medium, rejected "showbiz" elements, used noise as a viable compositional tool, incorporated different instruments, allowed improvisation, and included extended harmony.[275] The third movement of *Histoire du Tango*, "Night Club 1960" brings these stylistic ideas to light, highlighting aspects that define this new sound.

Night Club 1960: Analysis

"Night Club 1960" reflects the turmoil of the 1960s by contrasting the foreign with the familiar. Traditional tango factors including *basso lamento* progressions and 3+3+2 patterns[276] remain, but this movement also introduces *nuevo tango* noise effects and mixed meter. Because Piazzolla was a primary influence in the creation of this tango style, "Night Club 1960" also displays aspects that relate to his personal approach.

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[275] Drago, 24-27.
[276] Especially common in Astor Piazzolla's writing.

The overall form of the piece is ABCABC. In this movement, Piazzolla presents three distinct themes that last for sixteen measures. The energetic A theme begins with repeated notes and accents in the soprano part. In a nod to tango tradition, the A theme melody is supported by a *basso lamento* chord progression. The example below shows a now familiar descending chromatic line in the baritone saxophone part.

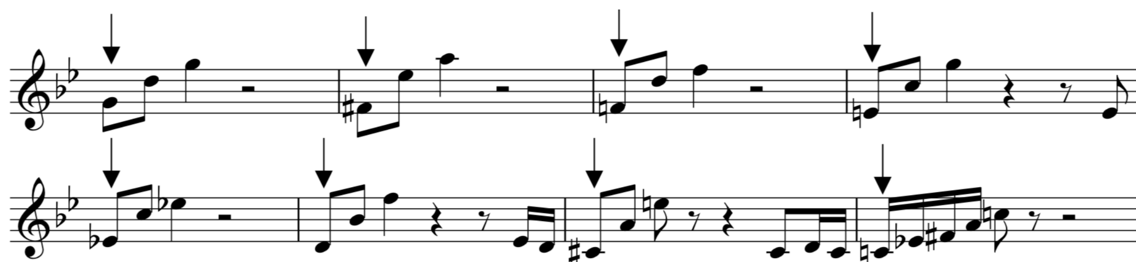

Figure 5.7: *Basso lamento* in baritone saxophone part, measures 2-9.

As the piece nears measure 18, Piazzolla uses a ii-V7 progression and sequential chain to marshal the listener into the next section. In the key of D-flat minor, this is a iv-VII, iii-VI, ii-V7-i progression. A sequential sixteenth note transition briefly moves to the alto saxophone part for four measures during the first ending, before it returns back to soprano. Halfway through this section, the tempo slows, transitioning into the B theme. A new tempo designation also appears, changing from *deciso*, with a metronome marking of 120, to *lento.*

The B section begins in measure 36 with a key change and the expressive designation *pesante/tristamente*, or pondering/sadly. In contrast to the fiery sixteenths of the A theme, this theme is introspective. Melodic sequences in the soprano voice establish the foundation for this section. The tonality also changes to B-flat major, with mode mixture appearing in measure 44. Though the inaugural theme at the beginning of

"Night Club 1960" closely reflects Piazzolla's personal style, the B theme maintains remnants of the Golden Age with romantic melodies and tonal harmonies.

In a tapering eighth note line that is shared between alto and baritone saxophones, measure 52 to 53 brings the B section to a close. The baritone saxophone abruptly plays a sixteenth note pickup in the key of B-flat minor. This is the beginning of the C theme. There are some similarities to the A section, such as accented 3+3+2 rhythms and driving sixteenths. Yet, the C theme goes a step farther, introducing a 6/8 meter in addition to the original 4/4 time. Noise effects appear for the first time in measure 66 to 68 with a *frullato,* or flutter tongue, designation in the flute part. In the original score, Piazzolla also instructs the guitar to play *legno*, or to strike the wood of the instrument. In the saxophone quartet arrangement, the editor translates this request as a slap tongue notation.

At the conclusion of measure 68, "Night Club 1960" repeats back to the first A section. The 3+3+2 *tresillo* rhythm surfaces before the second ending brings the B theme back to soprano saxophone in measure 87. This time, the B theme ends with half note chords instead of the previous tapering eighth note line. An abrupt transition appears in measure 108, driving all voices in "Night Club 1960" to the last statement of the C theme. Extended techniques, 6/8 meter, accents, and *forte* dynamics carry the piece to an energetic close. "Night Club 1960" represents the sound of *nuevo tango* within the overall framework of tango's evolution. Figure 5.8 below presents a chart with the overall form for this movement.

Section	A	B	C	A (repeat)	B	C
Measure	1-27	27-54	54-85	1-18, 85-87	87-108	108-125
Tonal Center	B-flat minor	B-flat major	B-flat minor	B-flat minor	B-flat major	B-flat minor

Figure 5.8: "Night Club 1960" form chart.

Night Club 1960: Performance Considerations

This movement of *Histoire du Tango* combines three separate themes. Theme A relies on energetic lines and accentuation, which is indicative of Piazzolla's personal writing style. Theme B portrays elements from the Golden Age of tango, and theme C reaches forward into *nuevo tango*. Some suggestions presented in the earlier chapters of this dissertation can be applied to "Night Club 1960." These include adding ornamentation to theme B, emphasizing 3+3+2 rhythms with theme A, and applying rubato/accelerando throughout. In addition to this, some additional suggestions can be explored when performing the third movement.

The process of transcribing and arranging from one instrument to another can have its shortcomings. Though flute is similar to saxophone and other woodwind instruments, the guitar has more pronounced differences. Most importantly, guitarists can play and arpeggiate chords, while chords are impossible for a solo saxophone. In this movement, the majority of the guitar accompaniment relies on chords. Piazzolla often writes a bass note in this part, then arpeggiates the rest of the measure. The natural resonance of a guitar's wooden body maintains the chordal root and helps to complete the harmony.

In the saxophone arrangement, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophone share chordal responsibilities while soprano plays the melody. This ensures that all notes are present. Yet even with all notes accounted for, "Night Club 1960" can sound dry when compared to the original score. This is because the chordal root in the baritone saxophone only lasts for an eighth note before continuing to other chord tones. In contrast, a guitar would continue to sound through the measure because of the instrument's construction.

There are two ways that saxophonists can minimize a loss of tone. The first is to search through the baritone saxophone part for places where chordal roots can be held longer. Measure 36, 63 to 66, and 102 all have moments where quarter or half notes can be extended. A decrescendo at the end of elongated notes also will help to mimic the natural decay that the guitar produces. An alternate option is to move the baritone's eighth note lines to another part, replacing what is left in this voice with quarter or half notes at the beginning of measures. Measure two is one example where the second half of beat one in the baritone saxophone could be repurposed to the tenor part. In both situations, searching for places where the baritone saxophone can sustain roots will help preserve the ambiance of this movement.

In addition to adjusting moments in the baritone saxophone part to longer durations, a segment in "Night Club 1960" also has *nuevo tango* effects that are conspicuously missing. This happens in measure 54, 66 to 69, and later when these sections repeat. In measure 54, the original score designates double tonguing[277] for the flute while the guitar plays an arpeggiated melody. The saxophone arrangement differs; Claude Voirpy instead writes two notes a minor second apart in the middle voices. His

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[277] A technique that hastens tonguing speed. The performer alternates different syllables to create articulation such as the syllables "tuh-kuh."

intention may have been to mimic the sound of *lija* or *chicharra*[278] on a violin bow. Even though this does not match the original score, minor seconds between two voices adds an interesting sound to the movement. A purposefully rough tone or growling[279] could also bring the effect closer. If performers wish to adhere more closely to the original score, they may substitute breath accents, creating false notes in measure 54 to 60. Figure 5.9 below shows the original notation from the flute and guitar score.

Figure 5.9: *Nuevo tango* techniques in original score, measure 56-59.

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The other technique not marked in the saxophone quartet score is *frullato,* or flutter tongue, that appears in the measure 66 to 69 glissando. This is paired with a *legno* notation. Saxophonists can interpret this by either doing flutter tongue in their parts or using alternate fingerings to change the tone in the right hand before it is drawn upward. Adding both breath accents and flutter tongue will bring the saxophone arrangement stylistically closer to the original score's *nuevo tango* roots.

[278] Discussed in further depth in chapter four. This is a technique where the violin bow creates a scratching sound by playing between the bridge and tailpiece.
[279] A sound created by growling with one's voice, while still playing fingerings on the saxophone.

"Night Club 1960" is written in the style of the *nuevo tango* movement. An awareness of the original instruments will help to define the character when transcribing this movement for saxophone quartet. Other adjustment suggestions include sustaining root notes for a longer amount of time, integrating *nuevo tango effects*, and emphasizing the specific personality of each theme. By combining tradition with new sounds, "Night Club 1960" prepares listeners for "Concert d'aujourd'hui," a movement that fully commits to the realm of contemporary classical and avant-garde music.

Concert d'aujourd'hui: History

The literal translation for "Concert d'aujourd'hui" is "concert of today." The description in Claude Voirpy's saxophone arrangement states: "Modern-day Concert: certain concepts in tango music become intertwined with modern music. Bartok [sic], Stravinsky, and other composers reminisce to the tune of tango music. This is today's tango, and the tango of the future as well."[280] Though "Concert d'aujourd'hui" references some tango, its overall character is noticeably different from the movements that proceeded it. The title emphasizes this change. Rather than stating dates for a specific period in Argentine history, "Concert d'aujourd'hui" promises only a new experience.

Histoire du Tango's fourth movement focuses on contemporary classical sounds, with less reliance on traditional tango elements. Though Piazzolla was influenced by various types of music, he had extensive classical instruction. In his younger years, he was fortunate to study with both Alberto Ginastera and the famous French pedagogue,

[280] Astor Piazzolla, *Histoire du Tango: pour quatre saxophones,* back page of each individual part.

Nadia Boulanger. Piazzolla's interest in this genre is evidenced by the operitas, film scores, concertos, and solo works for concert instruments that he wrote during his career.

When Piazzolla began to combine other genres with tango music, it was a controversial decision. Many of his colleagues felt that these stylistic changes would destroy a foundation that had been painstakingly built over the years. In the 1960s, a "war between piazzollistas and anti-piazzollistas resumed. Piazzolla's own natural combativeness sometimes added fuel to the flame."[281] Traditional tango musicians were uncomfortable with his experimentation, bristling especially at the inclusion of electronic guitar in the 1955 group, *Octeto Buenos Aires*.[282] By challenging stereotypes, tango's definition became less clear. "Concert d'aujourd'hui" could just as easily be labeled a twentieth-century classical piece influenced by tango, as a tango piece influenced by classical music.

According to Piazzolla, this was a necessary step, because tango was on the brink of "revolution."[283] He believed that the best way to define tango was to challenge preconceptions, and those who remained in the status quo would be left behind. Astor Piazzolla's commitment to, and mastery of, classical composition is evident in "Concert d'aujourd'hui." Though this movement is labeled a modern day concert, it equally portrays the ideals and personal writing of Piazzolla at the height of his career.

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[281] Azzi, 79.
[282] Azzi, 60.
[283] Azzi, 57.

Concert d'aujourd'hui: Analysis

"Concert d'aujourd'hui" differs stylistically from the vignettes that proceeded it. This movement does not have a lilting tempo and tonal melody like "Bordel 1900." The romantic phrasing found throughout "Café 1930" is absent. Extended techniques from "Night Club 1960" also do not appear. Rather than reminiscing on the past, "Concert d'aujourd'hui" reaches fully towards the twentieth-century classical aesthetic.

Melodic figures in this final movement are steeped in chromaticism, while the harmonic foundation relies on half-whole diminished scales. Multiple variations of the melodic minor scale and its cousin, the altered[284] scale, also appear throughout the movement. "Concert d'aujourd'hui" has an ABA'C form. Though there are brief reminders of previous themes, most of the melodic material is original to this movement.

"Concert d'aujourd'hui" begins with a brief introduction in the soprano, alto, and baritone saxophones. This is based upon a first inversion E minor chord above an F bass note, and all of these notes are derived from the B-flat whole-half diminished[285] scale. In measure five, the tenor saxophone joins the group with the first statement of the A section. Chromaticism is readily apparent in this opening melody, and the rhythmic structure follows a cross-measure hemiola. The figure below shows a linear reduction of accented notes in the tenor saxophone part, starting at measure five.

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[284] The altered scale comes from the seventh mode of the melodic minor scale. B altered would be the seventh mode of C melodic minor, consisting of the notes B, C, D, E-flat, F, G, A, B. It also can be understood as a formula of half and whole steps (hwhwwww).
Levine, 71.

[285] In classical music, this is called the octatonic scale. In the jazz tradition, this scale is specified as either whole-half or half-whole diminished, because each version serves a different role when improvising.

Figure 5.10: Chromatic opening, structural melody in "Concert d'aujourd'hui."

The tenor saxophone is not the only voice where chromaticism can be heard; Piazzolla uses this technique throughout the movement. Two measures before the first ending, the soprano part integrates chromatic lines with a rhythmically similar reference to "Bordel 1900."[286] This moves back to tenor saxophone by measure 17. Meanwhile, the accompaniment draws inspiration from the D half-whole diminished scale. In measure 31 to 37, Piazzolla uses an enclosure, or "a linear or melodic device in which an object note is approached by both the upper and lower leading tones,"[287] with the notes G-flat, F, E-flat, and E. Whether continuing in one direction or residing in an enclosure, chromaticism prevails throughout the first section.

In measure 43, the B section begins. The low register of the baritone saxophone contrasts with the soprano saxophone at the top of its range for an assertive moment of arrival. A homorhythmic accompaniment in the tenor and alto saxophone emphasizes the importance of this textural change. Chromaticism continues through this section. In measure 51 to 55 Piazzolla pairs this chromaticism with a tonal melody in the soprano part. As this theme closes, measure 62 to 66 again references "Bordel 1900," with an

[286] This references the first movement, measure 37 through 38.
[287] The full definition is: "An enclosure is a linear or melodic device in which an object note is approached by both the upper and lower leading tones. The object note is the eventual note aimed for by the improviser. An upper leading tone is one-half step above that object note and the lower leading tone is one-half step below the object note."
Jerry Coker, *Elements of the Jazz Language for the Developing Improvisor* (Miami: Belwin, 1991), 50.

accompaniment that vacillates between A-flat dominant and C dominant chords. Accented rhythmic unison in the alto, tenor, and baritone saxophone brings this thematic area to a close.

Following the completion of the first ending, “Concert d’aujourd’hui” repeats back to the beginning for an abbreviated A section. Because of its shortened duration, this section is analyzed in Figure 5.11 below as A prime. A falling chromatic line in measure 15 prefaces the second ending, which functions practically as a coda. Here Piazzolla mixes 6/8 and common time meters, a concept that is first introduced in “Night Club 1960.” Various scale forms are used in the second ending. This includes: harmonic minor scales in measure 106, altered scales in measure 107, and half-whole diminished scales in measure 109. As “Concert d’aujourd’hui” nears its conclusion, the C theme grows increasingly frantic with widening intervals, chromaticism, and mixed meter. Dynamics also increase until an accented *sfff,* or *subito fortissimo,* gesture in all voices ends the work.

Chromaticism, half whole diminished scales, and mixed meter are central elements to the structure of *Histoire du Tango’s* finale. Because of the heightened chromaticism, it is counterproductive to analyze this movement with traditional tonal centers. The parent[288] whole-half diminished scales have been substituted in its place. Figure 5.11 below demonstrates the overall form for this movement.

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[288] There are only three whole-half diminished scales because the formula of whwhwhwh repeats after the third chromatic modulation. The parent scales referred to here are C, C-sharp, and D.

Section	Introduction	A	B
Measure	1-5	5-43	43-74
Tonal Center	D whole-half diminished	D whole-half diminished	C whole-half diminished

Section	A (repeat)	C (Coda)
Measure	5-17	91-112
Tonal Center	D whole-half diminished	D whole-half diminished

Figure 5.11: "Concert d'aujourd'hui" form chart.

Though rhythms from previous movements are briefly referenced, this movement is best analyzed as a self-sustaining finale. "Concert d'aujourd'hui" directly reflects Piazzolla's personal style, highlighting his mastery of twentieth-century classical composition. *Nuevo tango* influence makes it possible for this finale to contrast with other sections of this work, yet still fit within the history of tango.

Concert d'aujourd'hui: Performance Considerations

This final movement of *Histoire du Tango* deviates from what preceded it. Rather than tonal harmony and danceable rhythms, it relies on chromatic melodies, complex harmonization, and mixed meter. Though some of these elements relate to *nuevo tango*, "Concert d'aujourd'hui" also has strong similarity to twentieth-century classical music. This is an advantage saxophonists, because most standard classical saxophone repertoire

is based upon this time period. A few basic suggestions are worth exploring, but otherwise "Concert d'aujourd'hui" fits comfortably in the saxophone quartet realm.

The most important consideration in Claude Voirpy's arrangement relates to tempo marking. At the beginning of the piece, the written tempo indicates *Presto, molto ritmico*. The accompanying metronome marking designates the tempo at 140. Depending on the performer's interpretation, a Presto marking could push the limits of *ritmico*, or rhythmic, performance. In contrast, a 140 metronome marking verges on laborious, emphasizing notes that shouldn't otherwise be accented.

On current recordings, a wide range of tempos exist. Two contrasting examples are the Adelphi saxophone quartet, which performs this piece at metronome marking 137, and the flautist Cécile Daroux, who performs at metronome marking 181.[289] In both versions, the effect of tempo on the piece's energy is palatable. Though this choice depends on the performer, setting the metronome around 155 will help to sustain energy without losing the rhythmic nature of the lines. This also bridges the difference between both examples mentioned above. Ensembles can fine tune this tempo in either direction, depending on their personal taste.

Along with tempo markings, one specific measure from the original score is worth re-evaluating. This is the first ending that includes measure 70 through 74. In the original arrangement, the flute remains in the upper octave for all four measures. Contrasting with this notation, the soprano part switches between upper and lower octaves in the saxophone quartet arrangement. This arrangement also asks that alto

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[289] Adelphi Saxophone Quartet, "Histoire du Tango: Concert d'aujourd'hui," *Simply Four Saxophones* mp3 (London, UK: BMI Records, 1998) Apple Music (accessed September 12, 2018).
Cécile Daroux and Pablo Márquez, "II. Café 1930," *Histoire du Tango pour Flûte et Guitare,* mp3 (Paris, France: Harmonia Mundi, 1997) Apple Music (accessed September 12, 2018).

saxophone alternate between concert C and A-flat in these measures, differing from the static chord in the original guitar part.

The arranger may have written the saxophone part this way because the original harmony includes five notes, and a saxophone quartet is short by one voice. To accommodate the missing voice, Voirpy alternates between two notes in the alto part. He also alternates the soprano notes between two octaves, possibly to meet the alto saxophone with contrary motion. Though this accounts for the missing note, maintaining a high E-flat on soprano while allowing the alto saxophone to move would also work. This keeps both notes present through the alto saxophone part, while still maintaining the excitement of a high melody note.

Though there are many contrasts with other movements in *Histoire du Tango*, “Concert d’aujourd’hui” encapsulates the final stages in tango’s development. The piece delves into the *nuevo tango* style with prevalent chromaticism, mixed meters, and atonal harmonies. These three elements help emphasize Piazzolla’s controversial choice to stretch tango beyond its boundaries. Choosing a tempo that brings out the piece’s character, as well as paying attention to instrument tessituras, will help preserve the original character of *Histoire du Tango’s* finale.

CHAPTER 6

CREATING NEW ARRANGEMENTS

Astor Piazzolla was a composer who wrote many different types of works. Within his catalogue, there is potential for arranging a diverse repertoire of tango music for saxophone. Unlike the *tangueros* that proceeded him, Piazzolla did not hesitate to combine his ideas with jazz, rock,[290] and classical elements. This redefined the meaning of tango and established the *nuevo tango* movement, opening new possibilities for both composers and performers who followed.

Likewise, the saxophone has merged different music styles by challenging preconceived musical ideas. This instrument is associated with various genres, including classical, jazz, rock, and musical theater. Because of its background, the saxophone adapts naturally to Piazzolla's *nuevo tango* writing. In this dissertation, the saxophone quartet versions of *Four for Tango*, *Histoire du Tango,* and *Libertango* were discussed and analyzed, paying special attention to the original instruments and their influence.

Other unexplored Piazzolla works also may be good candidates for saxophone arrangements. The saxophone's similarity to the bandoneon is the key to transcribing music for saxophone. There are multiple ways in which one can approach this. Mixed ensemble works by Piazzolla can be performed, keeping the original instruments intact and substituting a saxophone for the bandoneon. Two good examples for this would be

[290] Piazzolla included electric guitar, drum set, electric bass, and keyboards at various times. He also wrote music for the popular radio market and formed groups that were meant for the rock-fusion genre. The song "500 Motivaciones," performed live at Teatro Gran Rex in Buenos Aires, is one example. In his biography, María Susana Azzi's states, "Piazzolla himself was definitely putting out feelers to the rock world." Azzi, 195-196.

"Chin-Chin" from his *Libertango* album[291] and "Fuga y Misterio" from the *Ultimate Collection*.[292] Another option is to take a solo bandoneon work and arrange it for four saxophones. Both "Lo Que Vendrá" and "Los Sueños"[293] translate well with this approach. Works written for single line instruments with chordal accompaniment are also good choices. One especially popular piece in this vein is "Oblivion."[294] The final chapter of this dissertation will demonstrate one way to create tango arrangements with the goal of adding more tango pieces to the saxophone quartet repertoire.

Background

Lo Que Vendrá, which translates as "what is to come," was premiered by Astor Piazzolla in 1956,[295] just after he completed his studies with Nadia Boulanger. During this time, Piazzolla's primary focus was his *nuevo tango* ensemble, *Octeto Buenos Aires*. The group's stated mission was to expand the boundaries of tango music by "[presenting] this musical expression of the land where the tango originated, to demonstrate its evolution and to further justify the appreciation in which it is held."[296] *Lo Que Vendrá*

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[291] Astor Piazzolla, "Chin-Chin," *Libertango*, mp3 (Milan, Italy: Editions Milan Music, 1997), Apple Music, (accessed March 18, 2019).
[292] Astor Piazzolla, "Fuga y Misterio," *Astor Piazzolla: The Ultimate Collection*, mp3 (Italy: Halidon, 2014) Apple Music (accessed March 18, 2019).
[293] Ruben Soy, "Los Sueños (solo de bandoneon)–Astor Piazzolla," YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBuOV8CnclI (accessed March 18, 2019).
[294] Chris Botti, "Oblivion," *Impressions,* mp3 (New York: Columbia Records, 2012), Apple Music, (accessed March 18, 2019).
[295] Gorin, 223.
Sources differ on the year that this piece appeared. www.piazzolla.org states that this song was written between 1950 and 1954. In María Susana Azzi's biography, she dates its first appearance as 1957. Jorge Pessinis and Carlos Kuri, "Astor Piazzolla: Chronology of a Revolution," translated by Francisco Luongo, Piazzolla.org: The Internet Home of Astor Piazzolla and his Tango Nuevo, http://www.piazzolla.org/biography/biography-english.html (accessed Aug 28, 2018).
Azzi, 47.
[296] Ibid, 59.

appeared on the group's 1957 album, *Tango Progresivo*,[297] and most sources refer to this recording as the piece's debut.

Within a few years, *Lo Que Vendrá* also appeared on the albums *Astor Piazzolla* (1956 and 1957), *Tango Progresivo* (1957), *Lo Que Vendrá* (1957), and *Tango Contemperáneo* (1963).[298] Each iteration has a different musical emphasis and instrumental lineup, evolving with Piazzolla's personal taste. The earlier recording, *Tango Progresiv*o, includes a guitarist and relies on jazz improvisation. In contrast, the 1963 album, *Tango Contemperáneo,* has percussionists and flautists that perform in a through-composed setting. A string orchestra also was featured in the 1956 *Astor Piazzolla* album.

Lo Que Vendrá can adjust easily to different musical situations because of its core structure. This piece is formatted similarly to a jazz standard or popular tune, with ABAC form[299] and tonal harmony. Just like *Libertango,* both works can be transcribed, arranged and orchestrated without losing their essential character. This contrasts with *Histoire du Tango* and *Four for Tango* because in the latter, intricate writing is central to the work's structure and the transcription process is more rigid.

Many artists have noticed *Lo Que Vendrá*'s inherent flexibility and have recorded their own versions. This includes the Austin Piazzolla quartet,[300] Alessio Bax and Lucille

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[297] Gorin, 224.
[298] Ibid, 224.
[299] "Many popular songs from the 1930s-1950s were in the 32-bar ABAC song form. Well-known examples include 'White Christmas,' 'Someday my Prince Will Come,' and 'When I Fall in Love." Robert Hutchinson, "Music Theory for the 21st-Century Classroom," In *12 Form in Popular Music,* University of Pudget Sound, http://musictheory.pugetsound.edu/mt21c/ABACForm.html (accessed March 13, 2019), draft.
[300] Austin Piazzolla Quintet, "Lo Que Vendrá" *Lo Que Vendrá,* mp3 (Austin, TX: Self-Produced, 2013) Apple Music (accessed September 4, 2018).

Chung piano duo,[301] Orquesta de Cuerdas Astor Piazzolla,[302] and the modern bandoneonist, Néstor Marconi.[303] In the same way that Piazzolla adjusted instrumentation and melodic material to fit his groups, other individuals have applied artistic discretion with their interpretation.

Of these recordings, the Néstor Marconi version translates especially well to saxophone. This is because of the similarity between the bandoneon and the saxophone. The bandoneon's register reaches almost five octaves[304] while the saxophone can extend to three and a half octaves with altissimo register. Like saxophone, bandoneon uses vibrato, and it can easily perform obbligato and technically virtuosic lines. Though solo saxophone is unable to play chords,[305] bandoneon harmonic accompaniment is sparse. These chords can be written for an accompanying instrument, or they can be shared with other saxophones in a group.

Néstor Marconi himself is a skilled performer and a notable orchestrator. On the website *Todo Tango*, the website introduces him as "a genuine representative of the generation of great musicians of the 70s, he is recognized by his technical prowess in bandoneon playing. His fingering speed and synchronization are virtues accepted even by his critics […]"[306] Marconi's album, *Tiempo Esperado*,[307] consists of unaccompanied

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[301] Alessio Bax and Lucille Chung, "Lo Que Vendrá," *Stravinsky, Brahms, & Piazzolla: Works for Piano-Four-Hands*, mp3 (Middlesex, UK: Signum Records, 2013) Apple Music (accessed September 4, 2018).
[302] Orquesta de Cuerdas Astor Piazzolla, "Lo Que Vendrá," *Negracha (Historical Recordings)* mp3 (Buenos Aires: Viamas GmbH, 2015) Apple Music (accessed September 4, 2018).
[303] Néstor Marconi, *Tiempo Esperado,* mp3 (Buenos Aires: Epsa Music, 2008) Apple Music (accessed August 28, 2018).
[304] Gabriela Mauriño, "A New Body for a New Tango: The Ergonomics of Bandoneon Performance in Astor Piazzolla's Music," *The Galpin Society Journal* 62 (April 2009), http://www.jstor.org/stable/20753637 (accessed May 1, 2018), 264.
[305] on a single saxophone.
[306] Ricardo García Blaya, ed. Bruno Cespi et al, "Néstor Marconi," Todo Tango, http://www.todotango.com/english/artists/biography/825/Nestor-Marconi/ (accessed September 8, 2018).
[307] Marconi, *Tiempo Esperado,* mp3.

bandoneon tracks that he arranged and performed. This highlights both Piazzolla's writing style and Néstor Marconi's technique.

Approach

When a score is available, the tango arrangement process is greatly expedited. Many of Piazzolla's works are published and available for purchase through sheet music providers.[308] Often these scores include specific tempo markings, dynamics, and articulation designations, which will save time for the arranger. In contrast, bandoneon or tango works by other composers may have a less formal beginning. As of 2019, the only legally published collection of lead sheets is the *Tango Fake Book* by Mark Wyman.[309] If the desired pieces are not in this book, arrangers may need to personally contact tango musicians.[310] The Academia Nacional del Tango de la República Argentina can aid musicians on their quest.[311] It also is possible that an internet search will yield lead sheets.[312]

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[308] JW Pepper currently has 237 listings for Piazzolla arrangements.
"Piazzolla," J.W. Pepper & Son search tool, https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/search.jsp?keywords=piazzolla (accessed September 8, 2018).
[309] As of September 15, 2018.
Mark Wyman, *The Tango Fake Book: Tango Melodies & Chords a la Parilla* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Mark Wyman/Delf Music, 2006).
[310] The website Mandrágora Tango lists two musicians' contact info (Ben Bogart of TangoJam.com and Julian Graciano from the National Academy of Tango).
Bob Barnes, "Sheet Music," Madrágora Tango, http://www.mandragoratango.com/sheetmusic.php (accessed September 8, 2018).
[311] The website is under archive, but the last listed contact info is (54-11) 4345-6967/68 acadnaltango@speedy.com.ar
TodoTango, "Academia Nacional del Tango de la República Argentina," archived website, https://web.archive.org/web/20120509233843/http://www.anacdeltango.org.ar/noticias.asp (accessed September 8, 2018).
[312] These searches are generally more successful if the search terms are in Spanish. Many Argentinians are accustomed to lax copyright laws and unauthorized websites appear, then disappear, when they are discovered. One particularly useful not-for-profit website, Tangojam.com, has been shut down during the course of this dissertation because of tightened European regulations.

Whether musicians procure parts or build the arrangement solely from audio sources, creating a saxophone quartet from solo bandoneon is a relatively straightforward process. The melodic line is first written in a voice of the arranger's choice, then the remaining harmony parts are transferred to the other three voices. Most of the original score can be applied directly to the saxophone, though a few adjustments will need to be taken into consideration. These include register, stylistic components such as vibrato and articulation, rubato, and harmony.

Though both the saxophone and bandoneon have an expansive register, the bandoneon extends one and a half octaves further. As a result of this, some of the octave designations in *Lo Que Vendrá's* original recording will not work in a saxophone quartet arrangement. This primarily affects the soprano and baritone saxophone parts. Maintaining a lower tessitura on soprano throughout most of the piece will conserve the dramatic impact of higher notes. Conversely, the baritone saxophone transposition is one octave plus a major sixth lower than written. Adjusting it to match a higher bandoneon tessitura negates the full sound that the baritone saxophone can produce and in most situations, it is better to leave the baritone part in its natural range. Throughout the arrangement process, writers should use discretion when deciding whether to employ octave adjustment at key moments.

The process of notating stylistic elements in *Lo Que Vendrá* follows a similar approach to the method used in previous chapters. Original instruments will provide guidance for interpretation, and this should be coupled with an understanding of the time period in which the piece was conceived. Though the first recording of *Lo que Vendrá*

had a large ensemble, the arrangement in this dissertation relates to Néstor Marconi's solo bandoneon album.

The saxophone and bandoneon have much in common, but there are some differences. Vibrato is the most noticeable dissimilarity. Saxophonists produce vibrato with a jaw motion[313] while a bandoneonist produces vibrato by shaking[314] the instrument with their hands. Bandoneon players also use vibrato more sparsely than the saxophone, using it only in select moments. When performing *Lo Que Vendrá,* saxophonists can use a traditional saxophone sound that includes vibrato throughout, or something that aligns more closely to the original instrument. The arrangement in this dissertation designates moments for both techniques. Figure 6.1 demonstrates restricted vibrato in measures four through seven, while Figure 6.2 shows vibrato added partway through the note duration. Other places not marked in the arrangement are up to the discretion of the performers.

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[313] Most saxophonists will be familiar with this concept. For others, the first step to learning vibrato is to experiment with an exaggerated jaw motion, both up and down. As one becomes more skilled, the muscles around the lip area (and less of the jaw) will become the primary means to control the sound. Advanced study helps to fine tune the amount of variations per beat, depth of vibrato, and overall ratio of upward versus downward motion.

Figure 6.1: *Lo Que Vendrá* vibrato restriction, measure 4-7.

Lo Que Vendra
By Astor Piazzolla
(c) 1954 (Renewed) EDITORIAL LAGOS
This arrangement (c) 2018 EDITORIAL LAGOS
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Figure 6.2: Vibrato introduced partway through note duration, measure 80.

Articulation also warrants consideration when transcribing tango music. Bandoneon articulation, especially staccato, is percussive. This relates to the design of the instrument, where buttons stop the air stream through a reed mechanism. For arranging purposes, most bandoneon articulations transfer directly from the original instrument to saxophone. This includes tenuto, accents, and staccato. Sometimes though, slur marks need to be created to clarify lines on a saxophone. One example of this is a slur that was added in the soprano part of measure 13.

Figure 6.3: Slur added in measure 13 of soprano part.

In conjunction with slurs, staccatos are very short on bandoneon and appear frequently in Néstor Marconi's performance of *Lo Que Vendrá*. It may be worthwhile to include a note about staccato length in the arrangement's preface. The analysis section in chapter three discusses this trait in further depth, from a performance standpoint.

Marconi's solo version of *Lo Que Vendrá* uses ample rubato, accelerando, and tempo variations. In this arrangement, the most effective way to reproduce radical tempo changes was to add metronome markings for reference. Including both traditional and non-traditional notation may help to clarify the degree of adjustment needed. This can include traditional terms such as *rubato, accelerando, molto rallentando*, *cadenza*. It also may necessitate informal descriptive designations like "much slower" or "march-like." Because this version was created for solo bandoneon, rubato may at first be difficult to

translate to a saxophone quartet. Nevertheless, this technique can be secured with the help of clear notation and dedicated rehearsal time.

The final consideration when transferring bandoneon tango music to saxophone relates to harmony. In *Lo Que Vendrá,* Néstor Marconi uses chromatic harmony to color the piece's original chord progression. While many chords consist of three and four note voicings, there are moments where the performer uses five to seven note voicings. One way to arrange for less voices is to first establish which notes determine chord quality, such as the third or seventh. After that, the arranger can choose which color tones[315] best deliver Marconi's intended effect.[316] If the chord is dominant, the selection will likely be chromatic. It is also important to remember voice leading if a chord progression has five to seven notes. Though it is not always possible for a saxophone quartet to perform all notes in a complex chord, the overall effect will remain intact if the harmony is carefully chosen.

Conclusion

Lo Que Vendrá was written in the early stages of the *nuevo tango* movement. Because of its song form and tonal harmony, this piece can be arranged and interpreted many different ways without losing its core nature. There are many recordings of this work, both by Piazzolla and other performers, and Néstor Marconi's solo bandoneon version translates especially well to saxophone.

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[315] "Color tones" is a term commonly used in jazz. In jazz harmony, basic chordal structure typically includes a root, third, fifth, and seventh. Color tones are seen as extensions to this harmony that "color" the sound. Some examples are ninths, thirteenths, and sharp elevenths.
[316] This is a basic recommendation for arrangers who do not have as much experience. For those who are familiar with composition and arranging, other approaches can be explored.

Writers who wish to arrange tango music for the saxophone should have an awareness of some important factors to maintain the character of these works. This will lead to decisions about vibrato, rubato, note selection, and register. With these considerations in mind, pieces by both Astor Piazzolla, and other composers, can be transferred to the saxophone quartet repertoire. A lead sheet and full score of *Lo Que Vendrá* is provided at the end of this chapter for reference. This can be studied in conjunction with Néstor Marconi's recording on the album, *Tiempo Esperado.*

Lo Que Vendrá

Astor Piazzolla

Lo Que Vendra
By Astor Piazzolla
(c) 1954 (Renewed) EDITORIAL LAGOS
This arrangement (c) 2018 EDITORIAL LAGOS
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Lo Que Vendra

Astor Piazzolla
as performed by Nestor Marconi
arr. Sarah Cosano

♩ = 108

Soprano Saxophone
soprano
Alto Saxophone
soprano
Tenor Saxophone
soprano
Baritone Saxophone

f f f f

5

no vibrato sfz ff
no vibrato sfz ff
no vibrato sfz ff
no vibrato sfz ff

dim
molto rall.
dim
dim
dim

p mf
p mf
p mf
p mf

♩ = 108

Alto

DS only

Alto

Alto

march-like

march-like

march-like

18

molto rall.

♩= 72

rall.

ff

ff

ff

♩= 86

22

accel.

dim

dim

dim

dim

rit.

To CODA

vibrato

To CODA

vibrato

To CODA

vibrato

To CODA

vibrato , 1xo

Much slower

p with feeling

Much slower

Much slower

Much slower

26

p p p

3 6 3 3

31

5

rit.

♩ = 84

accel.

p p p p

3 3 3 3

mp mp mp mp

♩ = 108

36

mf
a tempo

mf

mf

mf

f

f

f

f

40

44

rall..

DS al CODA ♩ = 108

solo cadenza

48

solo cadenza

solo cadenza

52

molto accel.

f

soprano cue

f

soprano cue

f

soprano cue

f

55

play

play

play

8

molto rall.
♩ = 104
A tempo
58
(half tempo)
A tempo
(half tempo)
A tempo
(half tempo)
A tempo
3

♩ = 84
62
rall.
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
p
p
p
p
3
3
3
3
accel.

♩ = 108

66

mf *mf* *mf* *mf*

a tempo
f
a tempo
f
a tempo
f
a tempo
f

70

Lo Que Vendra
By Astor Piazzolla
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CONCLUSION

The success of tango music, in the modern era, is due largely in part to the influence of Astor Piazzolla. The academic community has reinforced this, documenting his contribution through published scores, recordings, performances, academic research, and websites. Piazzolla himself was a multifaceted musician. In his early years, he studied with classical composition teachers and apprenticed with tango ensembles. Later, as a working professional, he explored ways to integrate jazz, rock, and classical music in live performances.

Piazzolla's interest in different styles brought him in contact with artists from different backgrounds, including jazz musicians, folk singers, lyricists, string quartets, and radio producers. These relationships inspired him to write for many types of groups, from small ensembles to orchestras. Most importantly, Piazzolla was an adamant proponent for the evolution of tango music, fighting as an ambassador for the *nuevo tango* movement.

Though Piazzolla did not write original music for the saxophone, his willingness to explore different sounds creates an ideal situation for transcription. Some of his works have already been adapted for other instruments, and strong potential exists for future arrangements. The saxophone is an ideal conduit for this role. Its range is expansive, and its timbre can mimic different instruments such as strings, voice, brass, and the bandoneon. *Nuevo tango* elements that are prevalent in Piazzolla's writing can include percussive effects, glissandi, sixteenth note lines, and dynamics. All of these techniques are accessible to the modern saxophonist.

Saxophonists are constantly expanding the field of performance and musical exploration. This places the instrument at the forefront of new music. In this dissertation, four different types of tango arrangements were discussed: a popular music tune written for mixed ensemble, an twentieth-century classical piece for string quartet, a four movement concert work for flute and guitar, and a short and versatile piece performed on bandoneon. Performers who understand the theory, history, and original intent of these works will be able to emphasize the unique sound that tango music brings to live performances.

Libertango is a mixed ensemble piece that Piazzolla wrote for the popular radio market. The composer had temporarily relocated to Italy to complete this project at the request of Curci-Pagani music. The instrumentation was unusual for tango; rather than an *orquesta típica*, Piazzolla chose instead to combine strings, electric instruments, flute, percussion (including drum set), and bandoneon. *Libertango* became an international success, inspiring cover versions by many other artists.

The overall form of *Libertango* is AABA, which is a common structure in the popular music tradition. In this work, chromaticism and jazz-influenced harmony influence the formal procedure. Chromaticism in Piazzolla's oeuvre borrows from both the classical and tango traditions, including *basso lamento*, Chromatic 4th, and chromatic planing. In *Libertango*, the Chromatic 4th is especially prevalent. Jazz influence also can be deduced because of the B section's altered ii-V7 progressions. Piazzolla collaborated with famous jazz artists around this time, as evidenced by the album *Summit* with Gerry Mulligan. All of these elements combine to create an audience-friendly piece for saxophone quartet.

Four for Tango was written for the Kronos Quartet, combining the homogenous sound of a string quartet with twentieth-century classical composition. Piazzolla had arrived at the height of his career, achieving both stability and musical fulfillment with the projects he was involved in. While on tour in the United States, he was introduced to the ensemble and wrote a work for them soon thereafter. *Four for Tango* draws heavily from modern classical music, while also integrating *nuevo tango* string effects. This includes *tambor*, *lija* (or *chicharra*), *látigo*, and *golpe de caja*. A basic understanding of how these techniques are accomplished will help performers when they perform this arrangement on other instruments.

Four for Tango is organized by three musical elements: melodic fragments, noise effects, and frantic sixteenths. These components define each area of the piece. Harmonically, Piazzolla uses the pitch class set {0,1,5}, and pedal tones to create the majority of his chordal structures. He also integrates the 3+3+2, or *tresillo*, rhythm. The *tresillo* originates from the earliest years of tango's development, drawing from its predecessors the *habanera*, *candombe,* and *milonga.* The virtuosic technique, homogenous instrumentation, and twentieth-century harmony of this piece translates especially well to the saxophone quartet.

Histoire du Tango was a concert piece written for a flute and guitar duo. The flute and saxophone are both from the woodwind family, and this piece's accompaniment part is created around a homogenous guitar sound. Both of these factors can be replicated effectively with four saxophone voices. Piazzolla had taken special notice of the guitar just before this was written because of an informal meeting with the Odair brothers in 1983. Within a two year period, he wrote *Histoire du Tango*, *Tango Suite* (for two

guitars), and the *Concerto for Bandoneon, Guitar, and Strings. Histoire du Tango* references 70 years of tango's evolution, presenting different periods of history through four separate movements.

Due to the breadth of time included in *Histoire du Tango*, many compositional aspects appear throughout the piece. "Bordel 1900" captures the lighthearted sound of *tango criollo* with 2/4 meter, *habanera* and *milonga* rhythms, ABCA song form, and tonal harmony. In "Café 1930," Piazzolla references the nostalgic Golden Age of tango. This *tango canción*-inspired movement includes melodic sequencing, rubato, and descending chromatic harmony in an ABA form. The worldwide social upheaval of the 1960s inspires "Night Club 1960." Though the third movement incorporates *basso lamento* and 3+3+2, it also draws from *nuevo tango* with mixed meter, *lija*, and an ABCABC extended form. The finale, "Concert d'aujourd'hui," delves into twentieth-century classical sounds. Chromaticism, the melodic minor mode, and mixed meter permeates this raucous finale. Each movement in *Histoire du Tango* highlights different features from tango's evolution, and the saxophone's versatile background makes it an ideal candidate for performing this piece.

The final chapter in this dissertation presents a new arrangement that was created by the author. There are many tango pieces that exhibit potential as future additions to the standard quartet repertoire. For this demonstration, a solo bandoneon recording by Néstor Marconi was chosen, because it highlights the technical capability that both instruments have in common. This work also was re-interpreted with many different groups under Piazzolla's guidance, suggesting an inherent flexibility.

Each of these saxophone quartets unveils different aspects of Piazzolla's personal writing style. It also showcases the incredible diversity that his body of work holds. By understanding history, analysis, and original instrumentation, saxophonists can present tango music to audiences in a stylistically authentic setting. Writers also will gain the confidence to create informed arrangements, showcasing the unique potential of saxophone in the tango genre. Piazzolla's music has a natural affinity to the saxophone, and ample opportunity exists for future additions to the repertoire.

APPENDIX A: PHONE INTERVIEW WITH DAVID HARRINGTON, KRONOS QUARTET FOUNDING MEMBER

27 February 2019
Telephone Interview
12:30 PM

SC: Thank you so much for talking with me today. I know that you are very busy and I appreciate you taking time for this. I don't want to make this too long because you guys are playing a lot, I just have four or five main questions.

DH: Sure.

SC: So you were one of the founding members of the Kronos quartet, correct?

DH: Yes, in 1973, in Seattle Washington. On or about September first is when we had our first rehearsal.

SC: Wow that's incredible. That's what, maybe…40 years now.

DH: Yeah, 45 years.

SC: Let's get right to it. My first question is, I have a discussion of how this came about from one of the Astor Piazzolla biographies, but would you be able to tell me how you guys ended up doing [*Four for Tango*] for Piazzolla?

DH: What happened is Bob Hurwitz, the president of Nonesuch records, brought Astor Piazzolla to a concert of ours at Carnegie Hall. I think it was 1987 or '88. I met Astor after that and I heard his music before, so it seemed very natural to me, that, it would be a great thing if he were to write a piece for Kronos. We both talked about that. What I didn't know is that about three weeks later we would get the manuscript in the mail.

SC: Awesome. That sounds just like the stuff I wrote down. Let me open this [document] up…he was writing a lot of projects at the time and then after that, I have [that] it was recorded on your album *Winter Was Hard* in November of the same year.

DH: It must have been '87 then because we played it for about a year or so before we recorded it.

SC: And, the album was a concept album with a lot of different composers right? So you were putting it in with the rest of those.

DH: Yeah. It was on with all kinds of music. That's right. Including the Adagio by Samuel Barber and music of John Zorn I think.

SC: What was it like working with him? When he sent it to you, were you going back and forth talking about it a lot? Or did he just kind of leave you to work on it yourself?

DH: Well, what happened is that--so we got the music. Then I think what I did, I'm not sure what everybody else did, but I cut my part out of his score and so I was playing from his manuscript actually. I don't do that anymore because it's really hard to read…it was right around the time that Tango Zero Hour came out as I recall. The quintet was in town and Astor and Fernando Suarez Paz came over to our rehearsal.

SC: Oh wow…

DH: Yeah. And that was just a fabulous, fabulous moment for us. It was a beautiful rehearsal and we played the piece. They both had some suggestions and we played it a few more times and just had a great time. It felt very collegial, very warm, and very "musicianly." I remember that I went to the concert and the particular seat that I had was right above Fernando. I was on the opposite side, I could see Astor, I could see his face the whole time and I was right above Fernando. What a great violinist that man is.

SC: Oh yeah, I've seen some demonstrations of ways to [interpret] tango nuances on his instrument.

DH: I eventually had a lesson with Fernando. This was after Astor died and Kronos played in Argentina. I went over to Fernando's place and had a lesson. I kept saying "Fernando, how do you do that?" and then he would do whatever it was. And [then] I said, "but how do you *do* it?" and finally he just said, "I just do it!"

SC: You know, I'm a saxophonist and I've played both jazz and classical. It is so similar to the jazz mindset, you just kind of know it. You hear it, you're around it, and you somehow know it from being surrounded by it all the time.

DH: Yeah. Another story about that trip that you might appreciate is Laura Piazzolla invited us after our concert to their home. And we had a party there. It was pretty amazing actually, to see Troilo's bandoneon, to see Astor's bandoneon, all these photographs, all these amazing things in their home. Fernando and his wife were there. As the night wore on...I wish I could remember her name, she's a very good singer and tango dancer. Eventually she was out on the floor giving a tango lesson.

SC: Omigosh, how fun is that!

DH: Somehow I ended up trying to have a tango with them. Which was incredibly unsuccessful, I have to tell you. Finally I looked over at Fernando. If you've heard his voice, he's got a very low voice. He was smoking a cigarette and he was kinda sitting on the steps and he looks up at me with his cigarette. I said, "Fernando please dance with your wife and show me how to do it." He looks up in a very low voice and says, "David, violinists don't dance."

SC: [laughing] That's why we play music, so they don't pull us out there!

DH: [laughing] So anyway, that's my Fernando story…

SC: Okay, so…well actually I have one question before I go to my next main question. There's some argument that knowing about the dance helps with the music. How do you feel about that? Do you feel that they feed into each other very closely or…if Fernando himself didn't dance do you think it's important for people to know a little about the dance?

DH: You know, I just wonder if, what you were saying about…what Fernando said to me as a violinist, you absorb things. You absorb certain inflections and a sense of rhythm. That's a question I really don't know. I mean, I know that Piazzolla himself was very proud to be playing his music in concert halls and clubs and not in dance halls. He liked the idea [that] we were going to be playing with him at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center. He liked that. He wanted his music front and center. And so, I guess I'm saying [that] I don't know the answer to your question. I've read things about his studies with Boulanger, about his work with Troilo and the fact that he played with Carlos Gardel in the earliest days. His tango pedigree was unbelievable, and also his appreciation of music in the widest sense was wonderful as well. I remember the last time that we ever played with him was in Germany and we did a concert with all kinds of stuff. He was backstage and he loved it. Just loved it. By the way, that was the night that Argentina won the world soccer championships.

SC: Woo! [laughs]

DH: I know that for a fact because he and Laura had a champagne dinner in the hotel and I remember seeing them together. If you want to know the date of our last concert with Astor Piazzolla, it was the night that Argentina won. That would have been early nineties, I think maybe '91. I'm not sure.

Editor's note: the date was June 29, 1986.

SC: Awesome. Now that you're talking about how Piazzolla pushed the music forward to a different level of, I would say, influences...it's actually very apparent in *Four for Tango* because I describe this piece almost as classical piece with tango influences. It has so many avant-garde techniques and characteristics. It really goes past just a dance.

DH: Right.

SC: Related to that, I noticed…let me see if I can ask this in a clear way. You have the manuscript but there's also a thing with tango where you can add things here and there, little ornaments if you will. I've done some study on different techniques on violin and in the score that everybody uses, even when they arrange it for other instruments, there are some spots where you added some improvisatory things, even *lija* for example. Did that take a lot of thought or did Piazzolla coach you?

DH: I mean, you'd have to tell me exactly what you're referring to because the printed version that eventually came out…the Italian published version had all kinds of mistakes in it from the manuscript.

SC: Ahhh, ok.

DH: All kinds of mistakes. And what we did is we played the version that we played for Piazzolla and for Fernando.

SC: Ok. So everything that's on your recording was on the original manuscript.

DH: To the best of our ability to do it, yes.

SC: Interesting…ok, because some periods of tango do have improvisation but for somebody who doesn't do it full time, it's tricky to figure out what it is, where it fits, and what sounds natural. So when people are starting out with tango it is easier just to do what is written first.

DH: Right. I mean, having said that, this is our interpretation too. So you run into all sorts of issues like what is meant by a whip, for example. I'm looking at my part right now and it says whip. Well, the other day we were experimenting with doing a different bowing than we've ever done before and we decided to go back to the one we've always done because we thought that it sounded better. But there's different way you can do that. And so, you make your decision. You use your own ability of what feels right, but it might feel different to somebody else. It might sound different in another group's interpretation. And that's one of the magics of music actually.

SC: Yeah, and if you have a score, actually that would be amazing. I can be more specific. And I know what you're saying about the whip because I think I listened to an earlier recording of you guys and I heard a later one and the whip landed on a different note.

DH: Oh well, somebody asked me about this in a totally different context…we're not trying to land on any note.

SC: Got it, it's just like a "whooff" release of the bow, right?

DH: It's an undefined, uh, yes, it is. And it likely will be different every time.

SC: That's also an advantage to playing an instrument that it was originally written for. It does that so naturally. Let me find in here a few specific things. So my arrangement is an arrangement, of another arrangement, of the original score. You can imagine that it's like a game of telephone. My score doesn't have *lija* the [imitates sound] sound in measures 18-23. The part where the melody goes [imitates melody]…there's two whips, and between the whips there's the sandpaper sound.

DH: Right. Yeah, I don't have the score, I'm just looking at my part right now but yes, that's right.

SC: So that would have been originally written but it probably got lost in the published version later?

DH: I don't know.

SC: It's really cool sounding and when people listen to your recording they add it, but when they don't they just leave it empty without that effect. So I was just wondering if you guys added it on the fly or if it was pre-written.

DH: Oh no, we would not have added it, he would have written that. It's just not something that I do at the point.

SC: Got it because you're doing the whip.

DH: Yeah.

SC: And then, another thing that was a little bit different but not so drastically different, is at the very end. I think it was written originally as a whip but you guys do a sixteenth note [imitates sound] all the way up. I saw on a YouTube [instructional] video that this was a traditional way of doing it. Does that sound familiar at all? It was in the last four measures.

DH: What's written in the score is a tremolo with a slide going up to an undefined high note.

SC: Ok.

DH: That's three before the end. Before that is tremolo sixteenth notes. Which at the tempo we played is practically impossible to do, so you're basically just playing with your bow arm as fast as you can play. You get to the sixteenth tremolos, then you get to the double stop tremolo slide all the way up through the end. You're just making as much noise as you can.

SC: Great that explains it. Because the saxophone score (which is taken from another score) doesn't have it written that way. Wonderful. That actually answers a lot of things. Leading into that, was there anything that was difficult to do as a classical musician playing tango?

DH: Well, one of the things that we learned when we played *Five Tango Sensations* and when we recorded with Piazzolla, have you heard that recording by the way?

SC: I haven't.

DH: Oh you have to know that! You should definitely get that because we went into a studio with Astor in New York and it was the last recording he ever made.

SC: I will definitely check that out.

DH: One of the things that was very, very important was timing. Timing. And the sound. The sound…I'll never forget. During that recording session, looking over at him and his hands were kind of arthritic almost. He had Band-Aids on his fingers because you know with the bandoneon you have to put your fingers through these rings. It must have been painful, but he had this look on his face. He was pulling this sound out of this instrument. I've said it in other interviews but I've never played with a musician that had more willpower than Astor Piazzolla. There's no question about it. The willpower was just awesome. Actually we recorded *Five Tango Sensations* in about three hours and it was one of the quickest recordings that we've ever done. I feel like he just kind of willed it out of us.

SC: From the things I've read, he was very specific. If he wanted something played a certain way it had to be that way. Does that sound right? Very composer-like in that sense?

DH: You know, I've heard that before but I have to say that our relationship with him was totally collegial. He had so much respect for us. We felt the same way about him and basically we just kind of, played. It felt really natural. We all knew the recordings that we had heard of his, and it felt like we were just joining something that we kind of already knew about. It felt that way coming from him too. I don't remember any real issues. Except that if he wrote a dotted half note he wanted it held to the fourth beat you know, in 4/4 time. And if it was a crescendo maybe it needed to be more. If it was a little more crescendo, if it was a *sforzando* it needed to have a certain feel. But I don't remember him being fussy. I remember him being really passionate and excited about life and music.

SC: I mention this in my dissertation when I introduce the piece, I go a little bit into the Kronos quartet history and there's something kind of, kindred spirit, between your group's approach and his approach. Because you're a standard ensemble that is always testing the boundaries of what it means to be a string quartet. In the same way he was a tango musician steeped in the tradition that expanded the boundaries of what tango was as well. There's a very natural connection I think between you guys and him that makes a lot of sense.

DH: Yeah and at the time that he had his last stroke, he had agreed to write another piece for us. So there would have been another quintet.

SC: And we would have stolen it for saxophone if we could!

DH: [laughs] You should do *Five Tango Sensations* as a saxophone quintet or something. Check it out.

SC: I will definitely. I have actually one of the more important questions real quick [before we go]. In my dissertation, there is a part where he writes the first and second ending and then he measures the numbers as if the first ending happens. It repeats and then goes to the second. In your recording (and actually everyone else, because you were the first and everyone copied that), nobody really seems to take that first ending back…

DH: We never did it when we played it for him either.

SC: Really?

DH: It just didn't seem right and I don't remember actually what the conversation was but we have never done that with Piazzolla.

SC: Wow ok, so it might have been something in the manuscript that he later took out, or just kind of forgot to take it out.

DH: He might have taken it out. Yeah, so we played it for him in San Francisco that day. We did not play the second [repeat]. It's never been a part of our performance.

SC: Ok. That answers that. I wasn't sure because when analyzing it from a theoretical standpoint it seems odd since it doesn't repeat and it takes the other [ending]. It doubles up something, but if he heard it that way then that explains a lot.

DH: Yeah.

SC: Great. Well thank you so much for talking to me.

DH: Right.. Good luck and let me know how it goes.

SC: Sure. I will. I really appreciate it. Have a good one.

DH: You too.

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