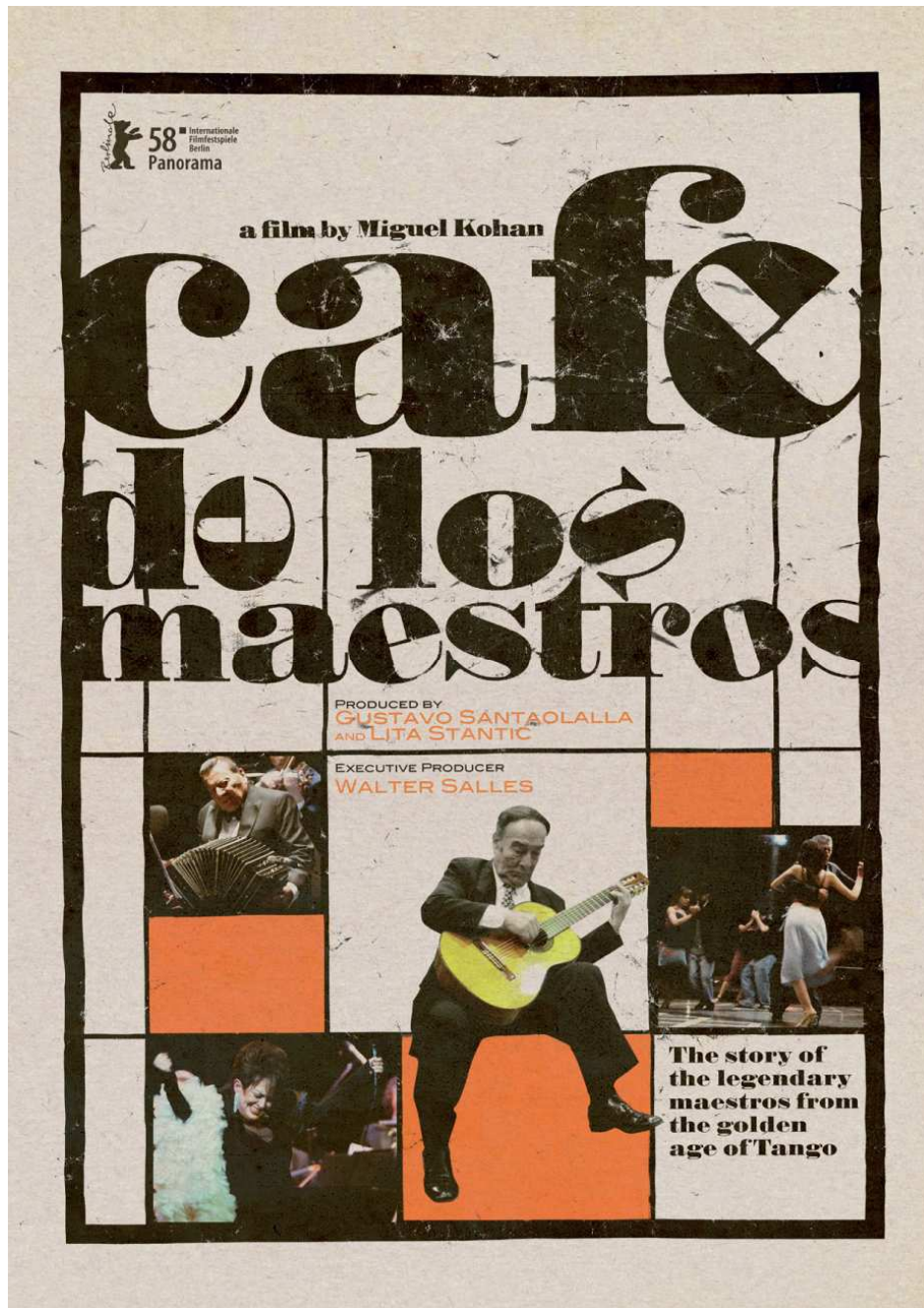


Persmap



Café de los maestros

Een film van Miguel Kohan

Producers: Gustavo Santaolalla & Lita Stantic
Executive Producer: Walter Salles

***De grootste levende muzieklegendes worden samengebracht
in deze zinderende tangodocumentaire!***

Met de terugkeer van de democratie bestaat er in Argentinië een uitzonderlijke ervaring van de belangrijkste nationale muziektraditie; de Tango. In Café de los Maestros komen de grootste levende legendes van dit fantastische muziekgenre bijeen. Deze wijze mannen en vrouwen, tussen de 70 en 95 jaar oud, laten ons kennismaken met de geheimen en oorsprong van deze muziek die tegelijkertijd melancholisch en sexy is.

De alom geprezen muzikant, producent en componist Gustavo Santaolalla (winnaar van twee Academy Awards) maakt ons getuige van het samenbrengen van deze unieke 'maestros' en vertegenwoordigers in zijn Café de Los Maestros.

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INTRODUCTION

Research for *Café de los Maestros* centred around interviews with some of Tango's greatest artists from the 1940s and 1950s – the golden decade of Tango history. The interviews delved not only into each artist's style, but also into their personal history to discover the social, economical and cultural context in which their ideas were formed. The idea was to build a compass for the development of this musical genre. Different styles of Tango are very distinguishable, not only by country or city, but right down to the district in which they evolved.

Within the project, the ideas of four great tango 'masters' are represented. These are Carlos Di Sarli, Juan D'Arienzo, Osvaldo Pugliese and Anibal Troilo. Some of the featured artists have carried on to develop these styles adding their own personal touch (e.g. Carlos García of Di Sarli and Carlos Lazzari of D'Arienzo), while others could never be separated from the original ways (e.g. guitarist Anibal Arias with Troilo). Other collaborators on the *Café de los Maestros* project are more individual and expressionistic musicians. Examples of these are pianist Emilio de la Peña, accordion player Gabriel 'Chula' Clausi – who began performing at the start of last century – or singers such as Lágrima Ríos. Many of these artists have enjoyed careers spanning almost 80 years, and between them reveal half a century of Tango music history.

In addition to these interviews, an album CAFÉ DE LOS MAESTROS, 'Coffee Masters,' was recorded in Buenos Aires' oldest studios – ION Studios. The songs for this recording were selected by Academy Award® winning composer Gustavo Santaolalla and his musical producer Gustavo Mozzi. It is from the video recording of these masters at work that we can learn the most about this passionate music.

With further participation from Virginia Luque, Alberto Podestá, Oscar Ferrari, Juan Carlos Godoy, Fernando Suárez Paz and conductor by Osvaldo Requena, the project culminated with the formation of the *Orquesta de los Maestros* (Band of the Masters), and these great tango musicians reunited for a one-off performance at Buenos Aires' Colon Theatre in the summer of 2007.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Forged from the union of several centuries of South American traditions, Tango is not just another musical genre. For many in the Río de la Plata, this emotional style of music and dance is a way of life. For all, it is a signal of origin.

Macedonio Fernandez once said, *“Tango is the only thing that we do not discuss with Europe.”* Tango belongs to Argentina, and in particular to the districts of Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Rosario, where its traditions are more than just a nostalgic echo. Where great veterans of the genre still live and perform—some of them have been doing so for nearly 80 years! In *Café de los Maestros* we meet some of these musical geniuses, amongst them creators of classic repertoire, founders of interpretative schools and spokesmen from bands that were popular in the golden decade (1940s-1950s).

As acclaimed musician, producer and composer Gustavo Santaolalla (winner of 2 Academy Awards®) leads us on this emotional journey, we see the reunion of some of the greatest Tango masters. Leopoldo Federico stands once more in front of his band, Lágrima Ríos travels across the Río de la Plata to find her guitarist Aníbal Arias, and once again we witness the untouchable partnership of José Libertella and Luis Stazo. Also calling upon Virginia Luque, Alberto Podestá, Gabriel Clausi, Ernesto Baffa, Fernando Suárez Paz, Oscar Ferrari, Carlos Lazzari, Juan Carlos Godoy and Emilio de la Peña, the amazing Orquesta de los Maestros (Masters Band) is formed, and together, educated by time but as energetic as ever, these artists return to the studio to re-record some of the genre’s most famous works. Reconstructing historical arrangements and recording unpublished material for the first time, this collaboration culminates with a grand performance of Tango music and dance at Buenos Aires’ famous Colon Theatre.

For those too young to remember Tango in its heyday, but who have grown up with it as a constant part of their sonic landscape, these artists display the genuine and human element of this music of the Río de la Plata. Whilst some are as famous as international celebrities, others have chosen to remain well-kept secrets. They are the authentic alternative to tourist fraud, and in the cracks of their leathery hands, history is written.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Never before have the greatest tango masters come together for a project like *Café de los Maestros*. A project that focuses on showing tango both at its most authentic and in its different variations. So for me, this project was not only challenging but also necessary.

From the vision of Gustavo Santaolalla (Producer), for me the only man with the ability to manage this selection of musical talents and artistic personalities, we began a journey that was intense, yet rewarding, from the beginning until the very last take.

ION studios in Buenos Aires was the ideal setting for the recording as it was where the majority of these Tango masters originally recorded their hits. Recording here allowed them to travel back in time. They felt at home performing at ION. It gave them a great sense of belonging, and the memories helped their musical talents to shine.

As one by one these masters performed, each of them offering a unique and personal tango experience, the cameras had no choice but to follow their rhythm, to dance with them. The result was an unforgettable repertoire of tango masterpieces, or expressive musical "conversations."

The shoot had many memorable moments. For me, two of the most emblematic were *Carlos Garcia's* recording of *Al maestro con Nostalgia*, a homage to his "master" Carlos di Sarli, and singer *Virginia Luque's* recording of the classic *La Canción de Buenos Aires*. She did this in a single take, the way she believes it is meant to be done, creating a grand "emotional" finale.

As we followed the masters in their everyday life we began to understand the way the tango culture inhabits them. They express themselves this way, because that is how they live. Juan Carlos Godoy's passion for horse racing is just one example of this vivid tango culture.

It was an honor and a privilege for me to be able to work on a documentary that has such a great sense of belonging, and I am grateful to Gustavo Santaolalla for inviting me to direct this project. From gathering all these masters together, I believe we can sum up the role that tango music has had in our history. As immigrants and people from different social classes have integrated, a new identity has been formed, and it is this that makes Argentine so unique. The standing ovation received at the live performance at the prestigious Buenos Aires Colon Theatre was enough proof that this Tango culture is still alive and kicking today.

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

From the beginning of my career in the music business until today, the concept of identity is something I have found inseparable to my work. Only if we know who we are and where we come from, can we peek into who we could become and how far we might reach.

Over the years I have come to realise the importance of tango in my life. Whether because of childhood memories of my father singing tangos every morning while he shaved, or because tangos were always within my sonic landscape—on the radio, TV or at family gatherings—I now truly feel that tango is a big part of who I am.

Café de los Maestros began as an album recording with the help of my partners Adrián Sosa and Aníbal Kerpel. We wanted to register the greatest stars of tango's golden era, the 1940s and 1950s, in order to show the different styles in which this genre has been and is currently interpreted. In no time we became aware of the historical significance of this gathering of Maestros and realised we needed to develop the recording into a concert, which could be held nowhere else but at the Colón Theatre, a book – awarded Best Book in Print & Published in Argentina 2006 by the Argentine Publishing Industry, and ultimately a motion picture. The film would document our journey with these talented, wise, funny and energetic “Maestros,” and would serve as inspiration for people everywhere.

My first approach to this project combined a high level of curiosity and innocence. I was not an expert in the matter and I will say that at the beginning there was a level of scepticism from the Masters since I am more known for my work in other music genres. One thing I knew from the start, if I was going to learn and immerse myself in tango and in its particular universe I needed to get close to the people who had created this art form: los “Maestros” (the Masters). The possibility of working and getting to know them has become definitely one of the highlights of my life. It is only in very rare occasions that we have the opportunity to learn from such a big group of true “geniuses” doing what they do best and showing us once more that age is something very relative. I always view *Café de los Maestros* not as a nostalgic project but as one that shows us the contemporary relevance of tango and of its great creators.

My dream of capturing this universe could not have happened without the “Maestros” themselves giving everything they had and making me feel welcome and accepting me into their world. And I cannot imagine making this film if it was not for the support of friends like Walter Salles, François Ivernel, the expertise and hard work of Lita Stantic and her team, the dedication and knowledge of Gustavo Mozzi, Jorge Da Silva , Aníbal Kerpel and Adrian Sosa and the talent, devotion, patience and vision of our director Miguel Kohan.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

MIGUEL KOHAN (Director)

A Masters Graduate of Film and TV Production at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA), Miguel Kohan began his career as an independent documentary filmmaker, not only as a director, but as producer, cameraman and Director of Photography.

His early credits include that of assistant director on the documentary *Six O'clock News*, by Ross Mc Elwee, cameraman for *Native Americans*, a series produced by Pat Mitchell for TBS (Turner Broadcast System), and in 1996, in co-production with THE 90's CHANNEL (an alternative TV network), he directed a short called *Visa Lottery* for the PBS (Public Broadcast System), USA.

In 1998, Kohan worked as director-producer at TV CULTURA LICEU, a cultural project sponsored by UNESCO, in San Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. There he directed four vignettes which received several prizes at popular Brazilian festivals. In 1999, he directed *La Boca, el barrio de Pérez Celis* and *Moisesville* (short film) for *People & Arts*, a Discovery Channel & BBC Network broadcast.

Back in Argentina he created K FILMS PRODUCTIONS, which produces feature documentaries, alongside commercials, music-videos and EPK's for SURCO-UNIVERSAL MUSIC, DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON, BMG and MTV, and programs for THE SUNDANCE CHANNEL and FRONTLINE WORLD, among others.

Kohan's recent work includes *Salinas Grandes*, a documentary selected for many international festivals, and he is currently in development on the documentary *América Colonial Judía*.

GUSTAVO SANTAOLALLA (Producer)

Gustavo Santaolalla's professional music career started at the early age of 16, when he wrote, recorded and produced his first single. In 1967 he founded ARCO IRIS, one of the leading bands in the early wave of Argentine alternative music. Known for its modern conceptual spirit, the group released 4 LPs, the most famous of which was the ambitious *Sudamérica o El Regreso de la Aurora* rock opera—a double album presented with a series of concerts at River Plate's Monumental soccer stadium and at the Opera Theater in 1972.

By 1975, Santaolalla felt he had outgrown ARCO IRIS and needed a new challenge. His new band, SOLUNA, recorded just one album, but it was hugely influential and is considered an essential album in the development of Argentine fusion folk-rock.

In 1978, Santaolalla, frustrated with the political and social situation in the military-ruled Argentina, moved to the USA and began a new musical life. Inspired by punk fever, he and his partner, Aníbal Kerpel, formed WET PICNIC and released one album. In 1981 he began his solo career with *Santaolalla*, a record that was, and still is, unanimously accepted by rock press and musicians alike as one of the most influential records in the history of Argentine rock.

Santaolalla's career took a new turn in the mid to late '80s, when the new Mexican rock movement began to flourish. Attracted by the fresh, irreverent sound of MALDITA VECINDAD, he recorded two albums with the band: *Maldita Vecindad Y Los Hijos Del Quinto Patio* (1989) and the groundbreaking *El Circo* (1992). Since then he has discovered and produced consistently some of the most relevant and successful alternative artists in Latin America. CAFÉ TACUBA, JULIETA VENEGAS, BERSUIT, etc.

Besides making and producing his own music, Santaolalla has a great interest in developing other artists. His first big discovery was León Gieco (an Argentine-style Woody Guthrie meets Bob Dylan singer-songwriter), who is one of the most beloved legends of Argentine music and a folk hero in his own right.

Santaolalla's vision to put Latin American music on the map was fulfilled in 1997 when he finally launched SURCO, his own record label. The joint venture with UNIVERSAL was a natural progression of his and Kerpel's work as the premier producer/engineer team in Latin rock. The first signing could not have been more successful. Molotov's *Dónde Jugarán Las Niñas?* (Surco/Universal, 1998) sold almost two million copies worldwide. Their next signing was one of the current biggest stars in the world, JUANES.

Parallel to his work as a producer, which has earned him 11 Grammys' to this day, including two for "Café de los Maestros", Santaolalla has also written many film scores. Among his works are the original scores for Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Amores Perros*, *21 Grams* and *Babel* (for which he won the Academy Award® and BAFTA for Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures, Original Score in 2006), Walter Salles' *The Motorcycle Diaries* (BAFTA award 2004) and Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* (Golden Globe for best original song "A love that will never grow old" and Academy Award® for Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures, Original Score in 2005)..

Today not only continues his work with SURCO, but also heads a publishing house, RETINA, which has published a book called "CAFÉ DE LOS MAESTROS" that is a companion to the film and the record. He also leads the group BAJOFONDO which combines traditional music from the Río de la Plata such as tango, milonga and candómbé with contemporary languages like rock, hip hop and electronica.

LITA STANTIC (Producer)

Lita Stantic is one of the leading producers in Argentina, responsible for the debut films of some of the most notable new Argentinean filmmakers such as Lucrecia Martel, Pablo Trapero, and Adrián Caetano. Her filmography includes *Hamaca Paraguaya* (2006) by Paz Encina, *La Niña Santa (The Holy Girl)* by Lucrecia Martel, In Competition at the Cannes Film Festival 2004, and multi-award winning *Tan de Repente (Suddenly)* from Diego Lerman. Lita's full filmography is as follows:

Choripan by Alfredo Arias (in development)
Agnus Dei (2008) by Lucía Cedrón
Café de los Maestros (2008) by Miguel Kohan
Hamaca Paraguaya (2006) by Paz Encina
La Niña Santa (The Holy Girl) (2004) by Lucrecia Martel
Tan de Repente (Suddenly) (2002) by Diego Lerman
Un Oso Rojo (A Red Bear) (2002) by Adrián Caetano
Bolivia (2001) by Adrián Caetano
La Ciénaga (The Swamp) (2001) by Lucrecia Martel
Mundo Grúa (Crane World) (1999) by Pablo Trapero
Historias de Vida (Life's Stories) (1998)
Dársena Sur (South Dock) (1997) a documentary by Pablo Reyero
Sol de Otoño (Autumn Sun) (1996) by Eduardo Mignogna
Un Muro de Silencio (A Wall of Silence) (1993) by Lita Stantic
Verano del Potro (Summer of the Colt) (1991) by André Melancon
Fútbol Argentino (Argentine Football) (1990) by Víctor Dinenzon
Yo, La Peor de Todas (I, The Worst of All) (1990) by María Luisa Bemberg
Miss Mary (1986) by María Luisa Bemberg
Camila (1984) by María Luisa Bemberg
Señora de Nadie (Nobody's Wife) (1982) by María Luisa Bemberg
Momentos (Moments) (1981) by María Luisa Bemberg
Los Miedos (Fears) (1980) by Alejandro Doria
La Isla (The Island) (1979) by Alejandro Doria

WALTER SALLES (Executive Producer)

Brazilian filmmaker Walter Salles' 1995 feature *Foreign Land*, which he co-directed with Daniela Thomas, won the Grand Public's Prize at the Paris Film Forum, among other honours.

His next film, *Central Station*, which was based on his original story, won the Sundance-NHK Cinema 100 Award for its screenplay, and then world-premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 1998. *Central Station* went on to win the awards for Best Film and Best Actress (Fernanda Montenegro) at the Berlin International Film Festival that same year, as well as the Golden Globe for Best Foreign Language Film and the BAFTA Award for Best Film not in the English Language. The film also received two Academy Award® nominations, for Best Foreign Language Film and Best Actress as well as more than 50 other international prizes.

Salles' 2001 feature *Behind the Sun*, which he directed and co-wrote, was nominated for the BAFTA Award for Best Film not in the English Language and the Golden Globe Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

The Motorcycle Diaries, released in 2004, was recognized with seven BAFTA nominations and won for Best Foreign Film and Film Score. The film also received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Foreign Film, two Academy Award® nominations, and three nominations at the Independent Spirit Awards. *The Motorcycle Diaries* has received multiple critical awards including the London Film Critics Award for Foreign Language Film of the Year.

Salles recently co-directed a piece titled *16 arrondissement* for the project *Paris je t'aime* with Daniela Thomas. The work includes five-minute films by twenty different directors, each an expression of one arrondissement in Paris. The feature length collective film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival 2006 at "Un Certain Regard."

At present, he is in post-production on *Linha de Passe* and working on a documentary on Jack Kerouac and the Beat generation.

In addition to his work as a director and screenwriter, Salles produces work by young Brazilian filmmakers. He co-produced the multiple Academy Award® nominee *City of God*, directed by Fernando Meirelles and co-directed by Kátia Lund. He also produced Karim Ainouz' acclaimed *Madame Satã*, winner of the 2002 Chicago International Film Festival. He most recently produced *Cidade Baixa*, the first film by his former Assistant Director Sergio Machado.

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Leopoldo Federico (*Buenos Aires, 1927*)

“I always wondered what would happen when I got to this age: would the large accordion leave me or would I leave him?”

Leopoldo Federico’s sentimental dilemma won’t be solved while the enthusiasm from his band (the oldest active traditional tango band) keeps pushing him to the stage. Beginning his career playing in cabarets while still a minor, this robust accordionist, composer and conductor is famous for blending traditional 40s tango with 50s avant garde. His professional performances began in the Tabarís cabaret, as a musician of Di Adamo – Flores’ band. He has also played with the traditional bands of Juan Carlos Cobián, Alfredo Gobbi, Carlos Di Sarli and Horacio Salgán before founding his own band in 1958.

Re-calling the diversity of his work in tango’s golden period, he says: “Each time I had a “stint” with a band, the conductor would ask me to work with him. It happened with Osmar Maderna, Horacio Salgán, Alfredo Gobbi and Astor Piazzolla. I was with Salgán for four or five years, but it didn’t prevent me from recording with Carlos García, or performing with Astor in the Buenos Aires’ octet, for example. They didn’t impose any exclusiveness. For years I was able to rub shoulders with different styles. In those days, I spent all day with the large accordion in my hands. Sometimes I had to turn recordings down because I was exhausted. I wouldn’t like to know what Carlos García would say if I confessed to him all the times I told him I didn’t feel well, so I didn’t have to go to a recording...”

Regarding his style, Leopoldo tells us: “I don’t think that you have to have a personal style. I enjoy playing many different styles, but I wouldn’t say they are summed up in the music of my band. I think the individual musicians influence the colouring of a band. I can make a particular arrangement, but it’s the soloists that give it personality”.

Leopoldo Federico was a fundamental figure in *Café de los Maestros*. For the project, he recorded orchestral versions of his milonga *Al galope* (composed by Domingo Rulio) and *Sueño de tango* (in collaboration with Nicolás Ledesma).

Aníbal Arias (*Buenos Aires, 1922*)

“Cousin, prepare the kid, we are going to see *Carlitos* today”. The kid was Aníbal Arias, then ten years old, and today at eighty-three he still hasn’t forgotten that afternoon. *Carlitos* was singer Carlos Gardel, a huge celebrity in the early thirties. Says Arias, “we arrived at the theatre where he performed and there wasn’t a seat left. We couldn’t get in. But after the show, while the crowd inside was still cheering, the hoards of people outside shouted for him to sing. He stood in the middle of the street and sang *La canción del carretero*”.

It was probably this event that confirmed Arias’ precocious affection for the Creole, and gave birth to his reverence for the imperfect, instinctive and rudimentary sound of tango music. He remembers the musicians of the time: “Most of them played by ear, were intuitive... they used to play roughly”. But would a more sophisticated accompaniment have been desirable? This is a controversy that Aníbal ends with an indisputable argument: “It would be like putting a bikini to grandma’s portrait”.

Guitar player Aníbal Arias was educated in classical music, but became a master of tango through his competent musical abilities and Creole sensibility. In his long career he has worked with singers such as Libertad Lamarque, Héctor Mauré, Rosita Quiroga, Susana Rinaldi, Julio Sosa, Roberto Goyeneche and Edmundo Rivero. In 1969 he joined Aníbal Troilo’s quartet and performed with the famous large accordion player until his death in 1975.

He has been a soloist for the Buenos Aires’ tango band since its foundation in 1980 and is one half of an accordion and guitar duet—the other half is Osvaldo *Marinero* Montes—who work to recreate many classics of the tango genre. As a founder of the School

of Popular Music in Avellaneda, he has helped to give an important thrust to a new generation of tango artists with the re-birth of the tango scene in the nineties.

For *Café de los Maestros*, he recorded the tango *Vieja Viola* with Lágrima Ríos, and the waltz *Un cielo para dos*, with Lágrima Ríos and Gustavo Santaolalla.

Atilio Stampone (*Buenos Aires, 1926*)

Nicknamed *Estampita* (Little Stamp), Atilio Stampone was born and raised in San Cristóbal, a district of downtown Buenos Aires. When he was eleven, his older brother bought a piano from an auction: whoever abandoned it, couldn't have dreamed of it having a better home than in the Stampone brothers' living room.

Four years later Atilio was the main attraction of the Cafe Marzotto. He played in the tango band and was famous for livening up the breaks with pages from Beethoven and Chopin. His story was the same as those from sons of many Italian immigrants: "My brother had married and I had to go out to work. So I thought: either I work as an employee, or I do what I do best, play some piano."

In 1946 a young Piazzolla, on passing by the Marzotto, asked Atilio if he was interested in being the pianist in his newly formed band. "Astor wasn't known among regular people, but he was in the milieu. Considering the arrangements he had made for Troilo and for singer Francisco Fiorentino's band, why wouldn't I find it interesting." And so Stampone signed up, and there he stayed the band dissolved in the 50s.

Stampone has also played with Leopoldo Federico, composed music for ballets (*Tango*, with choreography of Oscar Araiz) and films (the Academy Award Winner "*La historia oficial*", by Luis Puenzo), and since 2000 has conducted the National Orchestra of Argentinean Music Juan de Dios Filiberto. For "*Café de los Maestros*", he recorded orchestral versions of *Orgullo Criollo* (Julio De Caro and Laurenz) and his song *Mi amigo Cholo*.

Stampone often refers to himself in the third person, who knows if for pride or modesty. In regards to his own work, he says: "I believe Atilio Stampone has a defined style, some might like it, others might object... but they all recognize it by the first beat. That's because of the harmonization. Nowadays nobody is able to recognize the rhythm, the rhythms of tango have expired: Pugliese, Di Sarli, D'Arienzo, De Angelis, Troilo. So how is music made nowadays? How do you recognize one song from another? In the way the arrangements are structured. That is how each personality is defined."

Carlos García (*Capilla del Señor, 1914*)

Pianist, composer, conductor and arranger, Carlos Garcia started his career as a young boy playing the piano accompaniment to silent movies. In the thirties he performed with Roberto Firpo, a pioneering musician famous for introducing the piano to the traditional tango band. He has arranged and conducted the orchestral accompaniments of singer Alberto Marino, of Uruguayan musician Alfredo Zitarrosa and of Rubén Juárez, among many others. In the seventies he toured Japan many times as the head of his own *Tango All Stars* band before being called in 1980 to play with the Buenos Aires Tango Band Foundation, the biggest instrumental line up exclusively dedicated to the genre, co conducted by Raúl Garelo. He composed *Terrenal*, *Racconto* and *Al Maestro con Nostalgia*, which he recorded as head of the band for the "*Café de los Maestros*" project. Carlos Garcia has been a great presence, though not always visible, in the Argentinean popular music scene of the last seventy five years.

Garcia remembers the rivalry between traditional tango bands: "If you were with Troilo, you had to give your soul to Troilo, so you were almost fighting with Pugliese, with Di Sarli. Nowadays we lack challenges. There was once a natural but loyal and respectful

competition between conductors. They competed but at the same time, for example, Troilo was Di Sarli's fan."

Carlos Lázzari (*Buenos Aires, 1925*)

Large-accordion player, composer and arranger, Carlos Lázzari performed in the bands of Pedro Maffia, Miguel Caló and Osmar Maderna. He was also part of Francisco and Juan Canaro's line ups. In 1950 he began to work with Juan D'Arienzo's band, in which he stayed as large accordion player and arranger for twenty five years. At the request of the great conductor himself, he founded *Los Solistas de D'Arienzo* (D'Arienzo's soloists) with several partners. D'Arienzo has been a crucial influence on Lázzari's work. Francisco Loíacono *Barquina*, a popular character in Buenos Aires, said that his friend D'Arienzo's band "made the dead dance". "The corpses rose – was the fun but morbid image he used – and danced to his music. When D'Arienzo started the show, the whole country collapsed". This spirit is shown in Lázzari's current work, he has cloned that same sound that sets the dance floors on fire.

Lázzari composed the following tangos: *Julié*, *Sisebuta*, *Calla bandoneón*, and the waltz *De vuelta*. For "Café de los Maestros" he recorded the biggest hits of D'Arienzo's *Beat King*: his versions of *La Cumparsita* (Gerardo Matos Rodríguez) and the milonga *La puñalada* (Pintín Castellanos).

Emilio Balcarce (*Emilio Sitano. Buenos Aires, 1918*)

Emilio Balcarce is a violinist, composer, conductor, arranger and large accordion player. His name invokes that of the well-known Osvaldo Pugliese, with whom he worked for twenty years, and he can be linked to all the great milestones of the genre— from the massive success of singer Alberto Castillo to the cult phenomenon of the Tango Sextet. He arranged many pieces for the bands of Troilo, Gobbi and Pugliese, and as Pugliese's violinist he toured China, the Soviet Union and Japan. In the 90's, being a retired violinist, he started playing the large accordion, which he had learned as a child. In the Tango School Band, which he has conducted from its creation until today, he has passed the secrets of different historical styles onto new generations. He is the composer of *Si sos brujo*, *Sideral*, *Bien Compadre*, and *La bordona*, which he recorded for "Café de los Maestros" in Pugliese's band's original arrangement.

Balcarce spent twenty years working with Osvaldo Pugliese as a violinist, arranger and is considered one of the composers that nurtured Pugliese's classic repertoire and granted his band its identity. "At that time, what I less wanted was to be part of a band. Word was spread that I was a good arranger and that I was working for Pichuco and others. When they told me about Pugliese, I agreed to do it because I liked his band very much, and because I knew how well they worked together. Once you entered Pugliese's band, you didn't arrange for anyone else. The premise was that you should put all your creative energies there".

Speaking of the band's style he says: "I was drawn to it even before I joined, because of the porteño (Argentinian) way it expressed itself. It had a characteristic rhythm: the emphasis is in the first and third tempo of each beat, with a few syncopations that fall in the middle of each tempo, ... and then you have the dragging, which is the chord that is taken before the proper tempo and ends strongly when it gets to it. There are a lot of subtleties."

Pugliese was chased and incarcerated because of his communist affiliation. Remembering this time, Balcarce says: "During Peron's government, before 55, they went after him and he spent 6 months in Devoto's prison. Like other affiliates to the Communist party, they offered to set him free and made things easy for him, if he publicly resigned from the Party. He refused, of course. He was a regular prisoner. We went to visit him and they

brought him so that we could talk. He encouraged us to continue. The audience responded all the same while he was detained: we performed without the piano and all the people went to see us as if he was there. Sometimes they placed a red carnation on the piano's lid. Everybody knew when he was taken away. We didn't need to spread the word. Right away there were legends written on the walls that read: "Tango is imprisoned".

Emilio de la Peña (Buenos Aires, 1929)

During the forties, pianist and composer Emilio de la Peña was an occasional performer in the matinees of Tango Bar, Marzotto and Pucará, as well a member of the band that his father conducted. Admired by his colleagues, but almost unknown outside of a certain cult circuit, De la Peña spent years without performing in public. He was an engineer and set up a grand piano in his workshop, next to the lathe. "That's the kind of music fan I am. The piano was in the factory for a couple of months, until I had to move it because it didn't look good there, but it attracted customers: they wanted to see the man capable of such a thing." It was the same guy capable of admitting any challenge in the industrial design arena; "I can invent any machine they ask me to. It's amazing what can be done with a file and talent. Many times I had arguments with engineers which I won, not for being an engineer but for being talented."

His harmony teacher Manolo Juárez, noticed his talent in the eighties; and the famous Catalanian Teté Montoliú, who assisted at one of his sporadic presentations in Buenos Aires, favoured his presentation in Barcelona. In 1989 in Spain, at the age of sixty, he made his first record. For "Café de los Maestros" he recorded a soloist version of *Loca bohemia* (Francisco De Caro).

De la Peña doesn't have an answer for his late arrival, but he was never in any rush. He thinks there is time for everything: "When I grow up, I'm going to be famous".

Ernesto Baffa (Buenos Aires, 1932)

"Some people hear me play and shout: 'You are my idol, Baffa, don't you ever die!' I have no rush, but some day they are gonna call me upstairs", he says. On his lap, he has the large accordion that his father bought him: "And this is coming with me".

Recalling the beginning of his musical vocation, he comments: "Near my house there was a club. Hanging from the fence, I saw the best bands. In those times, I told my father that I was fond of the large accordion. 'Then, study the large accordion, figlio (son),' he said. That's how I began. I was eight years old. My father bought me a three hundred pesos large accordion, in two installments. It's the same that I'm playing now."

Large accordion player, composer, conductor and arranger, Ernesto Baffa made his professional debut in the forties. He was an instrumentalist for Héctor Stamponi's, Alberto Mancione's, Alfredo Gobbi's and Pedro Laurenz' bands, and in 1953 followed Leopoldo Federico as the first large accordion player of Horacio Salgán's band—the role that earned him his reputation. His sensibility is linked to Aníbal Troilo's style, and in 1958 he joined Troilo's band, where he remained for almost a decade. He performed with José Basso and Mariano Mores, and recorded with Astor Piazzolla.

Among his compositions are *B.B.* (in collaboration with Berlingieri), *Chumbicha* and *Más allá bandoneón* (with Raúl Garelo). For "Café de los Maestros" he recorded *Chiqué* (Ricardo Luis Brignolo) and his own *Pa'la guardia* (written by Antonio Scelza) at the head of a quintet with guitarist Ubaldo De Lio, Cristian Zárate in piano, Javier Casalla in violin and Gabriel De Lio in bass.

Fernando Suárez Paz (Buenos Aires, 1941)

Violinist Fernando Suárez Paz was part of the National Symphonic Orchestra and Buenos Aires' Philharmonic Orchestra for seventeen years. As a tango performer, he was called by different band leaders: Horacio Salgán, Miguel Caló, Pedro Laurenz, Anibal Troilo, Juan D'Arienzo, Mariano Mores, Atilio Stampone, Leopoldo Federico, Osvaldo Berlingieri, among others. He founded the Major Sextet in 1973, and from 1978 he was part of Astor Piazzolla's quintet, with which he toured the world for a whole decade. In 1996, he founded his own quintet devoted to Piazzolla's music. He performed with vibraphonist Gary Burton in several European festivals and toured with Sergio and Odair Assad as a trio. He was part of a duo with pianist Osvaldo Requena.

In "Café de los Maestros", he was head of strings of the *Orquesta Típica Los Maestros* (Traditional Band of the Masters).

Gabriel Clausi (Buenos Aires, 1911)

When large accordion player, composer and arranger, Gabriel Clausi's (*el Chulita*), father died, he was just six years old. Missing his father, himself an accordion enthusiast, Clausi at the age of eight learned to play *La racha*, from Agustín Bardi, on a large accordion he had borrowed, and by the age of ten had earned his first few pesos as an instrumentalist, playing at cafés, dances, and in serenades – which were also popular in those days. "You went to play to somebody's house for their birthday or because they were getting married: it was like a homage or a farewell. Early in the morning, you approached the door quietly, opened the large accordion box, the guitar player put his foot on the entrance marble, and then we started playing. It was banned in 1927 or 28, but sometimes we managed to do it anyway".

He made his professional debut in 1925 with the Milano-Ropi quartet. He performed with the bands of Carlos V. Geroni Flores, Minotto Di Cicco, Francisco Pracánico, Roberto Firpo and Julio De Caro. He conducted his own traditional line-ups in Argentina and Chile (where he lived for over a decade), but his main identity was his work as a soloist where his extensive repertoire covers popular tangos through to classical music adaptations. Today, at age 93, *Chula* is the master of the active large accordion players, and probably the oldest in tango history.

For "Café de los Maestros" he recorded *Mariposita* (Anselmo Aieta and Francisco García Jiménez) in a large accordion solo.

Juan Carlos Godoy (Aníbal Llanes. Campana, Provincia de Buenos Aires, 1922)

Accordian player Ernesto Franco started calling Juan Carlos Godoy "Hueco" (empty headed) the day he forgot the lyrics from the waltz *Hermana* in the middle of his performance on the radio. This was a nickname that was to stick.

Juan Carlos Godoy arrived in Buenos Aires at age fifteen and settled with his family in La Boca district. He was the vocalist in Manuel Buzón's and Ricardo Tanturi's bands before joining the traditional band of Alfredo de Angelis in 1958, one of the most popular of the tango scene. Additionally, he was part of the Glostora Tango Club, the biggest success in the history of Argentinean radio, and produced the hits *Se va la vida*, *Quien tiene tu amor* and *Angélica*. In the sixties, after touring several cities of Latin America both as singer of De Angelis and as a soloist, he settled in Colombia.

El Hueco returned to Argentina for good in the nineties, after several discontinuous seasons in USA cities. On his return, faced with a discouraging view of the local scene, he spent a whole season exclusively focused on his passion for racetracks. Godoy can spend hours talking about a batacazo (unexpected win) or the deception of a horse quitting. "I saw all the best running: Yatasto, Académico, Manantial... Manantial was a horse that won all

four crowns, which is something uncommon: the little colt, the Jockey Club, the Nacional and the Pellegrini. In 1990, I didn't want to sing anymore. On Tuesday, I went to La Plata, on Wednesday to San Isidro, on Thursday again to La Plata, on Friday to Palermo, and so on... racetracks brought me many satisfactions".

For "Café de los Maestros", he recorded the tango *Alma en pena* (Anselmo Aieta and Francisco García Jiménez) with young singer Cristóbal Repetto.

Mariano Mores (*Mariano Martínez. Buenos Aires, 1918*)

The living room of Mariano Mores' apartment in Recoleta is filled with awards, plaques and recognitions that he would have never got if he listened to the obscure predictions of his first teacher: "I started playing the piano when I was seven and a half. Six months after I began studying, my teacher, told me to call my parents, he wanted to talk with them. I called my uncle and my teacher told him: 'I do not want to continue teaching him and steal money: tell his parents that I cannot go on teaching him. In first place, I think that he doesn't like music. And in second place, he doesn't have the disposition to play'". The family sold the piano, but Mores practised secretly, in the back shop of the grocery at the corner of his house, where the grocer's sister taught him. A few years later, he was travelling to Madrid with a scholarship. What followed is history.

Pianist, composer and conductor, Mores is one of the most inspired melody maker's in the history of the tango genre. He began playing in the early thirties in a Corrientes street café before, in 1938, joining Francisco Canaro's band, who sponsored his talent and gave him a predominant part in its musical theatre productions. After ten years he became an independent conductor. He is the composer of such works as *Adiós*, *Pampa mía* and *Uno*, which despite their deep local roots have reached the whole world. For "Café de los Maestros", he recorded *Tanguera* with a band, and the first arrangement of *Taquito militar*, a historical composition never before performed in a studio.

Oscar Ferrari (*Oscar Samuel Rodríguez de Mendoza. Buenos Aires, 1924*)

Julián Centeya wrote: "Oscar Ferrari looks like me: we're both loose, but we are happy". Ferrari thinks that "life collects and pays" and it's balance is a lucky one.

The son of variety show artists, Ferrari has been on stage since he was five years old, making his professional debut in 1943, as the vocalist of Atilio Felice's band. He later formed the group "Los Cantores de América" with Adolfo Berón and Alberto Suárez Villanueva, and sang with the bands of Juan Caló, Alfredo Gobbi, Edgardo Donato, Astor Piazzolla and José Basso. In 1950, as Basso's singer, he recorded the tango *Venganza* for the first time, of which he now has eight versions registered.

During the sixties, a time of decline for this musical genre, Ferrari became a soloist with endangered traditional bands. "We used to work in lousy cabarets in the inlands of the country. We would tour for two or three months living together with the girls, the musicians and the waiters. The southern cabarets were generally chalets, far from the heart of the city's morals. There were girls who stripped, girls that would sing boleros, comedians, a magician, etc. I was all day long without anything to do, I just sang tangos at night. That's when I started to write."

Speaking of his work in this period he says: "The Profession allowed me to enjoy life. I don't know if it had to do with me being nice to women, my sweet personality, that I'm not chauvinist, but I had... great satisfactions. I'm not going to talk about women because, as a man, I have to respect my codes. But, generally, things went well for me. I won, lost and tied like everyone does. And when things went wrong, I'd chew the pain and anger all alone..."

For "Café de los Maestros" Oscar recorded *Será una noche* (José Tinelli and Manuel Enrique Ferradás Campos), joined by guitarist Bartolomé Palermo.

Osvaldo Berlingieri (*Osvaldo Bellinghieri. Buenos Aires, 1928*)

From the dances at *La Enramada* to the luxurious cabarets of Beirut and Baghdad, from the Tropicana to Havana, in Batista's Cuba, to the Bolivian bailantas (type of Bolivian dance): Osvaldo Berlingieri has played the piano in the most unbelievable places.

Son of a dressmaker from Aragón and a Sicilian rail worker, Osvaldo was born in the Buenos Aires suburb of Haedo, and at fifteen was performing professionally. During his career he has played with the bands of Domingo Federico, Edgardo Donato, Joaquín Do Reyes and Roberto Caló, dueted with large accordion player Ernesto Baffa and recorded with singer Roberto Goyeneche. A lifelong dream for him, he made his debut with Troilo's band in 1957. "I started without even rehearsing, because Pichuco almost never went to the rehearsals, he only went to erase what he didn't like. In the beginning, the radios and the newspapers criticised me, because I changed the sonority of the band. I caught everyone's attention. They said I was a jazz pianist. I'm not a jazz pianist. One commentator called me tango murderer!"

Speaking more of his style Berlingieri says: "I worked with almost every single traditional band in Buenos Aires. I must have played in almost forty bands, and for everyone I had an initiation test. That's when I started developing my own style. It took a long time, and I don't know if I prevailed, but I listen to most of the pianists and they steal from me: I always have to go back to creating something new."

For "Café de los Maestros" Osvaldo recorded Julián Plaza's arrangement made for Troilo's band of *A mis viejos*, and a quartet versión of Julio de Caro's tango *Tierra querida*.

Virginia Luque (*Violeta Domínguez. Buenos Aires, 1927*)

Film, theater and music star, Virginia Luque embodies the spirit of the great dramatic tango divas of the thirties. After a precocious theatre debut, she took her first film role in 1943 and went on to star in around 30 films, both in Argentina and abroad. In the sixties, her mysterious love life and disputed switches between TV channels kept her in the public eye, and she was a dazzling presence with her wardrobe of over 200 dresses designed by her exclusive dressmaker, Luis Bocú. A star of Buenos Aires' greatest tanguerías (*places where tango is played and danced*), she spent the eighties touring Japan with a resounding reception. But today, she confesses the simple tastes and domestic routines of a settled lady: "I'm very home loving. I return at almost one in the morning, have something warm to drink, I relax. Sometimes I surf the TV channels, I find one of my films and I watch it. Watching those films makes me happy, although films were not my greatest passion. My real passion is theatre."

For the Café de los Maestros project she recorded *El patio de la morocha* and *La canción de Buenos Aires*—some of the strongest songs in her ever-popular repertoire.

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