

C O N T E N T S

3 Interview with
Diego Amarin
of Tango Danza
by Sean Erwin

5 Chicago Tango

6 Chicago Events
Calendar

7 Central Tango



Corazón Tango

An evening of tango, tapas and art
In honor of Valentine's Day

February 15, 2002



Door prizes
Spanish tapas
Cocktail attire

8:30 - 2:00am
Gallery On Lake
942 W. Lake Street

\$25 in advance
\$30 at the door

For tickets
call 773.505.1577
or buy tickets online
www.CorazonTango.com

Hosted by
Erica, Sean, Beth,
Yanira & Jan

Benefiting the Families of Freedom Fund
providing scholarships for those affected by 9-11

interview with diego amorín of tango danza

interview and translation by séan erwin

1. What personally brought you to tango? When? How did tango become so central to you? All at once — in stages?
2. You have taught tango in a number of communities – have you become aware of any striking distinctions in the character of these tango communities and the way(s) tango is danced in them?
3. Do you feel that tango is misrepresented (misunderstood) and/or distorted outside of Argentina? How about within Argentina? If it is misrepresented, how is it misrepresented and what do you see to be the cause(s) for it?
4. Do you believe there is such a thing as an *authentic, pure* tango? If so, how would you describe it? If not, what alternative way(s) might you have for describing the diversity of tango styles?
5. Do you see gender politics (relations of power, dominance and submission, victimization, *et al.*) coming into play in the way(s) tango is **now** danced? If you do see such relations at work between the sexes, around what kinds of issues do they seem to come out? Do you believe these issues are the core issues or do they operate as *masks* for more sensitive, and, in your eyes, more *central* issues?
6. Tango as dance, music and tradition is considered by many Argentines, whether they actually dance tango or not, as somehow expressive and central to understanding the very essence of Argentine nationality – as even central to understanding the essence of *Argentineness*. Do you see the tango as operating in this way – if so, could you put into words the way(s) you see tango as somehow expressive of this Argentine essence?
7. Tango has seen a sharp resurgence both in Argentina and abroad since the early 80's. What causes would you assign for this resurgence?

The questions to the left were given to Diego Amorín, one of the principal dancers of *Tango Danza*, during his last visit to Chicago this past August. Having spoken informally to Diego on a number of occasions and finding him to be quite energetic when it came to issues of politics, philosophy and aesthetics, I had really begun to wonder about the kinds of responses he might give to some of these questions that have served as the framework for other interviews published in *Tango Noticias*. Unfortunately, because of all the preparations for *Tango con cuatro*, Diego and I could not actually find time to sit down in a face-to-face interview as *Tango Noticias* has done in the past. I decided then to make this obstacle the opportunity for con-

ducting an experiment, trying something new, since my intention for some time has been to broaden and deepen the scope of *Noticias* by including, among other things, more and more articles and news items that directly reflect the different language aptitudes and nationalities of our diverse audience. Thus, this issue is devoted to continuing that trend which was begun with our habit of publishing translations of tangos together with the original Spanish; we have published then this month the following interview, in its entirety, in both Diego's Spanish together with a translation. Since I consider the whole issue of *translation*, in the breadth of its nuances, as central to the practice of dancing tango in North America, I would like to express the greatest interest in receiving contributions of a tango-related kind from any one of our readers who should desire to pursue a similar translation project, *whatever* that original language should happen to be.



continued on page 4

continued from page 3

1- Yo comencé a bailar tango cuando mi padre decidió abrir su propia milonga, “Negracaha”. Eso fue por ahí de 1994. Fuimos juntos a tomar las primeras clases de tango a un lugar en San Telmo, creo que con Sergio y Alejandra. Recuerdo que no me gusto porque no podía hacer nada. Pero después de la tercer clase me empece a sentir un poco mejor. Además el mundo de la noche, y particularmente el del tango, me era desconocido, exótico, sumamente atrayente. El rango de gente que se entremezcla en el ambiente es muy amplio, cada quien tiene sus razones particulares. Eso siempre me gusto. De aquel tiempo lo que más recuerdo es mi ultima noche de milonga antes de venir a vivir a México. Aquella noche por primera vez Bailé un tango. Sentí lo que nunca antes había sentido en mi vida. Fue un ensueño en movimiento.

Después vine a cursar mi carrera a México y aquí conocí a Jorge Bartolucci con quien seguí aprendiendo y con quien comencé a bailar más seriamente. La conocí a Vanesa y empezamos a trabajar casi de inmediato, y en cierto sentido todo fue como un proceso de aprendizaje que se dio espontanea y repentinamente, y que me enriqueció profundamente. Hasta este punto nunca me había planteado volverme

Finalmente surgió el proyecto de la compañía *TangoDanza con Andrea y Leandro y eso me abrió mucho el panorama.*

bailarín de tango profesional ni nada por el estilo, simplemente me dedicaba, y aún hoy día sigue siendo lo mismo, a disfrutarlo. Para mi el escenario fue algo inesperado que en un principio me atemorizaba mucho; sólo a partir de mucho trabajo he aprendido a dominar los nervios y a disfrutar cuando estoy arriba.

Finalmente surgió el proyecto de la compañía TangoDanza con Andrea y Leandro y eso me abrió mucho el panorama. Pero en lo fundamental yo sigo buscando lo mismo en él tango: disfrutarlo y hacerlo lo mejor posible.

2, 3 y 4 – Yo sólo he enseñado en México y Estados Unidos, y en la Argentina sólo de forma excepcional. Donde he enseñado veo efectivamente que la gente lo baila de forma diferente a la que lo baila en la Argentina. Por ejemplo, en México la gente tiene gran dificultad para bailarlo bien abrazados y para escuchar la música cuando bailan. Y no sólo en México, con diferencia de grado el problema de escuchar la música y abrazarse bien es tal vez el problema más característico del tango como baile fuera de la Argentina. Otra diferencia radica en el hecho de que en la

Argentina junto con el baile viene un cuerpo reglamentario bastante estricto que prohíbe ciertos comportamientos y prescribe otros, por ejemplo, las tandas de baile (que regulan el tiempo que dos personas pueden pasar juntas), la

1. I began to dance tango when my father decided to open his own milonga, “*Negracha*.” That was around 1994. We went together to take the first tango classes at a place in San Telmo; I believe we took them with Sergio and Alejandra. I remember that I did not

Finally there emerged the project with *Tango Danza with Leandro and Andrea and that considerably opened up possibilities for me.*

like it because I could not do anything. But after the third class I began to feel a little better. Moreover, the night-world, and particularly that of the tango, was unknown to me – it was exotic and extremely attractive. The class of people that intermingles in the tango atmosphere is wide-ranging, each person having their own particular reasons for being there; I have always liked that fact. From that time I most remember my final night at the milonga before coming to live in Mexico – that night for the first time I danced a tango. I felt that which I had never before felt in my life; it was a dream in movement.

Afterwards I came to study for my profession in Mexico and here I became acquainted with Jorge Bartolucci with whom I continued learning and with whom I began to dance more seriously. I came to know Vanesa and we began to work together almost immediately and certainly it all felt like it was a process of apprenticeship that happened spontaneously and immediately, and that enriched me profoundly. Until this point never had I planned to become a professional tango dancer or anything along those lines – I was simply dedicated to continue enjoying the dance, and still today I continue being the same. For me the stage was something unlooked-for that in the beginning very much terrified me. Only after much work have I learned to conquer my nerves and even to enjoy myself when I am up there.

Finally there emerged the project with *Tango Danza* with Leandro and Andrea and that considerably opened up possibilities for me. But, at the bottom, I continue looking for the same thing in tango – to enjoy it and to do it the best I possibly can.

2, 3 and 4. I only have taught in Mexico and the United States; in Argentina I have taught only rarely. Where I have taught I saw clearly that the people there dance in a manner different from the way they dance tango in Argentina. For example, in Mexico people have a hard time dancing well while embracing and listening to the music when they dance. And not only in Mexico – with differences of degree the problem of listening to the music and embracing one another well is, perhaps, the most characteristic problem of the tango as it is danced outside of Argentina

Another radical difference lies in the fact that in Argentina, together with the dance, comes a set of strict regulations that prohibits certain comportments and prescribes others. For example: the *tandas* of the dance regulate the time that two persons can spend together. They

continued on page 9

Chicago Classes

On-Going Classes: call instructors for details or check the teachers' pages on our website www.tangonoticias.com:

- ▶ Al Gates
- ▶ Bob Dronski and Kathleen Kreler
- ▶ Erica Sutton
- ▶ Fred Romero
- ▶ Sean Erwin

Chicago Milongas

Tuesdays

Club 720, 720 North Wells 3rd Floor, Chicago

Sponsor: Chicago Tango Club Argentine

8:00 pm – midnight; \$5 cover plus \$3 for tango floor
Complimentary lessons available at 8 until the floor gets crowded
18th - Charlotte celebrates her birthday! Come for cake.
Contact Charlotte Vikstrom 773.493.0666 for details.

First & Third Fridays – December 7th and 21th

Lake Street Milonga, 942 W. Lake (at Peoria), Chicago

8:30 pm – 1:00 am \$7. Introductory Lesson 8:00 – 8:30 pm
7th - Dress in your festive best. Bring one of your favorite holiday goodies to share.

21th - “Sparkly White Night” - Wear white (with something sparkly if you like). It's the shortest day of the year! We will have candles and twinkly lights to fill the dark and cold with light and warmth. Call Jan Carpenter 312.258.6137, Beth Braun 847.846.5611, or Erica Sutton 773.505.1577
erica@tangoparatodos.com for details.

Last Friday of the Month – December 28th

*Tres Tangueras Milonga; Latvian Community Center
4146 N. Elston (at Hamlin)*

This month the *Tangueras* will be hosting a
Special Holiday Party! 7:30 pm – midnight – \$15
Contact Valentina Cisar 773-763-8729 for details.

Saturdays

Tango...nada mas; 6137 N. Northwest Hwy, Chicago

9:00 pm – 2:00 am (Free Introductory Class at 8:30)
\$15 includes light buffet.

Contact Bob Dronski 773.792.2099 for details.

Second Sunday - December 9th

Chicago Dance Ballroom; 3660 W. Irving Park Rd. Chicago

7:00 – 10:00 pm \$8

Embellishment demo 9:00-9:15 pm; “Gloria Turn” this week.

Co-sponsored by Chicago Tango Club Argentine

Contact Charlotte Vikstrom 773.493.0666 for details.

Sunday, December 2 & 9

Bachatango

Gallery on Lake, 942 W. Lake Street, Chicago
Douglas is asked every time he dances Bachata to show people the moves and teach a workshop ... and because the dance is so **AWESOME** . . . we have **BACHATANGO!**

5:00 - 6:30pm Bachata workshop
6:30 - 7:00pm Bachata only practica
7:00 - 8:00pm Tango class as always
8:00 - 10:00pm Practica, TANGO + BACHATA

\$25 for the WHOLE NIGHT of Bachatango
\$20 Bachata class & 1/2 hour practica only
\$10 for the Tango class and practica only
\$5 for the 8:00 - 10:00pm practica only

The classes are progressive from
December 2nd to the 9th – plan to come to both.

For more information: erica@tangoparatodos.com 773.505.1577
www.TangoParaTodos.com

Absolutely the HOTTEST 2 Sundays in December!

Chicago Practicas

Tango...nada mas

6137 N. Northwest Hwy., Chicago

Fridays beginning at 8:00 pm Cost \$5

Contact Bob Dronski 773.792.2099 for details.

North Shore Dance Studio

6163 N. Broadway, Chicago

Fridays beginning at 7:30 PM Cost \$10

Contact Al Gates at 773.994.7929 for details.

Gallery on Lake

942 W. Lake, Chicago

Sundays 8:00 10:00 pm Cost \$5

Contact Erica Sutton 773.505.1577 or

www.tangoparatodos.com for details.

December

2nd & 9th Bachatango Workshop

Gallery on Lake, 942 W. Lake Street, Chicago
Get tango and *bachata* in one workshop! By special request, Douglas Rivera and Erica Sutton will teach two progressive workshops on *bachata* and tango. Join them for a *bachata* lesson and *practica* followed by a tango lesson and *practica*.

Cost for the entire evening, from 5:00-10:00 p.m., is \$25. Contact Erica Sutton 773.505.1577 or www.tangoparatodos.com for details.

9th Juan Carlos Argentino Show

Tango...nada mas, 6137 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago
To celebrate International Day of Tango, which is actually on December 11th, Juan Carlos Argentino will sing and present an evening of tango songs and music. Included for performances will be his wife and dance partner, Amelia, and live music with Armando and Breno. The performance begins at 5:00 p.m. Admission price of \$20 includes the show, *empanadas*, coffee and soft drinks. For reservations in Spanish, call 773.235.2407; for reservations in English, contact Bob Dronski at 773.792.2099 or www.tangonadamas.com.

10th, 17th, 20th Bob and Kathleen Workshop

Tango...nada mas, 6137 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago
Special one night workshops will be offered during the holiday season:

10th Incorporating Embellishments: For men and women; couples are encouraged.

17th Floor Craft: Learn to travel creatively in the line of dance.

20th Dancing to Pugliese, D'Arienzo (and others):
All classes are 1½ hours in length and begin at 8:00 p.m. Cost is \$20 per class.

Contact Bob Dronski at 773.792.2099 or www.tangonadamas.com for details.

31st New Year's Eve Party - Yea!!

Tango...nada mas, 6137 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago
Everyone's been asking and Bob and Kathleen have just announced they will host a blowout New Year's Eve party. Mark your calendars and contact Bob Dronski at 773.792.2099 or www.tangonadamas.com for details.

February

12th -19th Brooke Burdett Returns to Chicago

Various locations

Keep your calendar open for Brooke's return. Details in January's issue of *Noticias* or contact Erica Sutton 773.505.1577 or www.tangoparatodos.com.

15th - Corazón Tango Ball/Benefit for September 11th

Gallery on Lake, 942 W. Lake, Chicago
8:30 pm - 2:30 am

Come for a special evening of tango, tapas, and art, in honor of Valentine's Day. Enjoy Spanish tapas, door prizes, and music by Andrea Missé. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door with all proceeds benefiting the Families of Freedom Fund, which provides scholarships for those affected by the tragedy of September 11th. For tickets call 773.505.1577 or buy tickets online at www.CorazonTango.com.

Mid-February 2002 - Immersion Tango Tour

Ah, the chill of autumn...winter's on its way. Don't despair, just plan to get away...

Contact Natalie Pepa 312.217.4363 tangonata@aol.com or Phoebe Grant 312.446.6601 pgrant@idevgrp.com

Chicago Teachers



Tom Barnard*	tbarnard@hotmail.com
Vito Bertucci**	773.277.4398
Jose & Gerri Caravantes*	773.286.6424
Bob Dronski & Kathleen Kreher**	773.792.2099
Emilia Boykov**	773.743.2962
Sean Erwin*	773.274.9564
Carlos Favre *	773.481.1551/773.852.6555
Leroy Hearon *	773.276.1518
Louis Gallo **	773.878.8089
Mark Johnson *	312.446.0468
Gadi Lissak **	773.472.8776
Tina Mangos **	773.282.5108
Elena Robles*	773.327.1667
Fred & Yermen Romero**	773.725.0518
Pamela Strateman**	312.902.2803
Erica Sutton**	773.505.1577
Charlotte Vikstrom**	Argentango@usa.net

*Privates only

**Classes and Privates

Champaign-Urbana, IL

Contacts:

Rita Marvelli:
marvelli@uiuc.edu; 217-344-2123
Leonardo:
Tangoleon@aol.com; 217-328-1311
Joe Grohens: joe@wolfram.com; 217-328-1008

Class 7:30 to 9:00pm,
Practica 9:00 to 10:00pm.

Peña: Every 4th Saturday at the Pitsfield Grange, September through May; classes from 7-9 PM and general dancing from 9-1am. Light refreshments, \$10/students with ID \$5.



Milongas: *Tango Society of Central Illinois* — Monthly milongas held at *Phillips Recreation Center*: Sat Dec 1 from 9-12pm with lesson at 7:30; Admission \$3. For more information contact Leonardo.

Classes: For schedules visit www.prairienet.org/whitesteet/tango.html.

Detroit, MI

Contacts:

MotorCity Milongueros.com
Amy & Ray: MotorCity Milongueros.com; 313.561.3236
Lori Burton:
Argentinetangodetroit.com; 810.726.2370

Amy & Ray: MotorCity Milongueros.com

Classes:

—Tuesdays at DanceSport Academy of Michigan, Dearborn. All levels 8:00 to 9:00pm.
—Thursdays 7-9 pm followed by a Practica 9-10 pm;
Pitsfield Grange, Ann Arbor - all levels. \$10 (\$5 with student id) for all evening.
—Fridays at Farmington YMCA, Farmington Hills.

Lori Burton:

Argentinetangodetroit.com or LnBrtn@compuser.net; 810.254.0560

Classes:

— *Argentine Tango Detroit*: every day of the week, 7758 Auburn, Utica, MI; see website for details.

Milongas:

— *Argentine Tango Detroit/Tango Suave*; three times weekly see website for details
Brickhouse. Auburn Road, Utica, MI. 8 pm; \$7.

Visiting Teachers:

The following teachers are being hosted by the studios of Lori Burton:

Kely & Facundo – First two weeks of January

Ames, Iowa

Contacts:

Valerie Williams:
515.232.7374;
vjw@cnde.iastate.edu

Classes: 7-8 pm; Beginning Class and Technique

Tango Salon: Dance held following class on alternate Thursday; call for information or check website.

Location: *Café Diem*, 323 Main Street, Ames, IA 50014

Kansas City, MO

Contacts:

Korey Ireland;
korey@kodair.com or 816.665.4916; also <http://www.kodair.com>

Classes: Tuesdays at St Mark's, 38th & Troost: 7-8:30 Beginning; cost \$5 8:30-10:00 Intermediate; cost \$5.

Practicas: McCoy's Public House in Westport from 6:00-7:30pm on Sunday nights.

Milongas: Wednesdays at *Fedora on the Plaza*; lessons from 7-8 pm. Live tango music 8-11:00 pm. —*Piropos* in Parkville on Thursdays. Contact Korey for more details

Madison, WI

Contacts:

Steven Fosdal:
fosdal@mail.com; 608.288.8339
Anna Snider:
atango@mail.com; 608.848.6109

Practicas: *Pasión del Tango*: Every Tuesday at Union South, Univ. of Wis. campus at the corner of

Randall and Johnson streets; 7-8:30, no charge.

Milongas: Contact Steven & Anna.

Mt. Vernon, MO

Contacts:

Karen Whitesell: 417.471.1001; Fax 417.471.1002. Fax 417.471.1002
www.thelearningdepot.com/murrays-1/

Milonga Venue:

Murray's Vintage Venue: 202 S Hickory, Mt Vernon MO 65712

St. Louis, MO

Contacts:

Roxanne McKenny:
stltango@aol.com
Carter Maier:
tngomn@hotmail.com
Estella & Randy:
tangoartists@tangorosa.com
Lourdes Ylagan:
Lylagan@path.wustl.edu

Practicas: First two Mondays at *Focal Point* – Maplewood, MO from 8-10pm - cost \$5; call 314.849.3007 for details.

Milongas:

—*Club Viva*, Second Tuesday of every month;

continued on page 8

continued from page 7

call Roxanne for details.
—*Soulard Coffee Garden*;
910 Geyer Avenue; call for
details: 314.241.1464.
—*Monthly Milonga*: Cost
\$10 at Focal Point; call
Estella & Randy for details.

Classes:

Estella & Randy: call for
classes or see schedule at
www.tangorosa.com
Roxanne: Basic,
Intermediate, and Advanced

Tulsa, OK

Contact:

Bob & Gretchen Manhart;
OKTANGO@prodigy.net

Milongas: Contact for
more details.

Classes: Every other
Saturday 6-8 pm. \$8 per
person or
\$15 per couple.

Twin Cities, MN

Contacts:

*Tango Society of
Minnesota*:: Mntango.org
Steve Lee: 612.729.5306
tango@winternet.com,
www.geocities.com/twinci-
tiestango
Lois Donnay: 612.822.8436
donnay@donnay.net
Frank Williams:
612.379.4565
Frankw@tc.umn.edu

Practicas: Rebecca Trost's
Tango Practicas: Tuesdays
9-10:30 pm; \$2.
*Four Season's Dance
Studio*: Mondays, 9-10:30
pm – cost \$4; 1637
Hennepin Avenue,
Minneapolis 612.342.0902.

Thursdays - *Lake Harriet
Dance Studio*, 6438 Lyndale
Ave., So., Richfield.
Structured *practica* with
Steve Lee; 9:00-10:30 PM:
— \$4 unstructured, \$5
structured. Focusing on
material from Fernanda y
Guillermo's Workshop

Milongas:

Tango Society of Minnesota:
2nd Saturday/monthly at
Dancesport Dance Studio in
Hopkins, MN. Lesson at
8pm; dancing from 9pm –
1am. Cost \$5 for members
or \$8 for others.

Steve Lee's Tango Plus.
Friday after 2nd Saturday of
each month; 9 pm – 1 am;
lesson 9-9:30 PM. \$5.
*Michael Cordner's Mini-
Milongas*: Sundays 7-9:30
pm \$2; *Four Season's
Dance Studio*, 1637
Hennepin Avenue,
Minneapolis 612.342.0902

Classes:

*please see the following
websites for details:*
www.mntango.org/tsomcal
http://i.am.tctango

Visiting Teachers:

Florencia Tacetti – *ongo-
ing at Four Seasons Dance
Studio*; contact at
612.379.4565 or ftac-
cetti@yahoo.com
*For a weekly update of Twin
Cities tango activities, go to
http://mntango.org/mail-
man/listinfo/ and subscribe
to 'TSOM- announce.'* ♦

*Thank you to all of you within the Chicago
tango community who participated in the
recent workshops provided by Norberto
Esbrez & Luiza Paes and by Paulo Araujo. In
particular, those who were open to a
Brazilian teaching Argentine tango were uni-
versal in their enjoyment of Paulo's brilliant
style, technique and instruction. (We will
bring Paulo back in early 2002!! – Watch for
this and other WindyCityTango, Unlimited
events in the New Year.) Special thank
yous are extended to: Julie Koidin – for find-
ing Paulo in Rio (with an introduction from El
Pulpo) and her tireless efforts to secure his
visa; to Erica Sutton – for her superb web
site and e-mail promotion of these events;
and, to Douglas Rivera, Javier Gomez, Oasi
Veronesi and Romulo Assis - for their insightful
translations.*

WindyCityTango, Unlimited

Happy Holidays!!

WindyCityTango, Unlimited
Leroy Hearon, Jr. & Phoebe J. Grant

Advertising Opportunity in Tango Noticias

Advertise in both the *Tango Noticias* newsletter and our website
www.tangonoticias.com. The cost of advertising per month on the
website is only an additional 50% of the monthly newsletter fee:

Size of ad	Newsletter	+	Website	Total
1/8 page	\$25		\$12	\$27
1/4 page	\$35		\$17	\$52
1/2 page	\$50		\$25	\$75
whole page	\$85		\$42	\$127

Deadline for consideration in the next issue is December 20th. Please call
or e-mail Editors Sean Erwin or Jan Carpenter with your copy or questions.
Tango Noticias is a not-for-profit, independent, monthly newsletter
whose objective is to provide timely information about happenings of
interest to members of Chicago's Tango community.

Senior Regional Editor: Dr. Sean Erwin 773.274.9564 drtango@hotmail.com
Chicago Events Editor: Jan Carpenter 312.258.6137 tangojan@hotmail.com
Layout & Design: Connie Orbeta corbeta@elgin.cc.il.us
Tango Stories Editor: Natalie Pepa tangonata@aol.com
Interviewer and Writer: Jonathan Bedi jbedi@wpo.it.luc.edu

continued from page 4

forma en la cual se debe convidar al baile (el hombre debe “cabecear” a una mujer para sacarla a bailar y no ir a la mesa a pedirle que baile). Por cierto que esto último sucede muy poco en México y en varios lugares de los Estados Unidos, sobretodo donde las comunidades son muy chicas y todos se conocen, entonces nadie cabecea a nadie. En Buenos Aires es mucho menos factible (pero no imposible) este tipo de comportamiento. Se observa claro una mayor confianza entre amigos, pero con la mayor parte de la gente se suelen cumplir las reglas. ¿Porqué? Es difícil decirlo. En principio hay que subrayar que el sujeto puede elegir no seguir la convención de la norma, y que aquí radica su única libertad de elección puesto que una vez que se decide a jugar el juego ya no se vuelve atrás. Y además cuando aprendes a jugarlo entonces todo es más fácil. Y tal vez esta sea la razón, aunque paradójica (el hecho de que las reglas definan el juego) por la cual una persona decide cumplir dichas reglas. En este sentido la danza del tango es comparable a ese tipo de poesía sumamente estructurada y formal donde se cuentan de forma maníaca la duración de los versos, se procura la rima perfecta, etc., se encuentra un enorme placer dentro de las restricciones las cuales en última instancia lo único que hacen es delimitar el ámbito dentro del cual habrá de llevarse a cabo la acción creativa. Aunque en un principio resulta difícil regirse por las reglas al final siempre resulta facilitador, estipula los aspectos que podrían resultar más problemáticos en el proceso de relacionarse, como el primer acercamiento a un desconocido, el comportamiento de las parejas (y no sólo en la pista de baile).

Existen además otras diferencias en la forma de bailar el tango en los diferentes países que resultan más difíciles de poner en palabras. Por ejemplo la noción de lo que es “bailar bien”. Fuera de la Argentina, pero también dentro de ella, existe la ilusión de que bailar bien es hacer muchos pasos, pasos muy difíciles, bailar muy rápido, etc., en tanto que dentro de la argentina, o más bien dentro de la tradición milonguera, bailar bien es ir con la música, “sentir” el baile,

also regulate how one ought to invite someone to dance, since the man ought to ‘nod’ to a woman in order to take her out to dance and not to go to her table to ask her to dance. Certainly this last item happens very little in Mexico or in many places in the United States. Above all, it does not happen where the communities are very young and everyone knows one another; at these places, no one nods to anyone. In Buenos Aires, this type of behavior is much less feasible, but not impossible. One clearly observes a great familiarity between friends, but with the great majority of people one is in the habit of obeying the rules. Why? It is difficult to say. In the beginning one must emphasize that the person new to tango can choose not to follow the conventions that govern everyone else. At this precise point a person establishes his or her sole freedom of choice, since after one decides to begin to play the game there is no turning back. And, moreover, when you learn to play the game then everything grows very easy. And perhaps this is the reason why people choose to play since, in fact, it is the rules that may define the game. Such a reason would indeed be a paradoxical one for deciding to observe tango’s rules. Understood thus, the dance of tango can be compared to that type of extremely structured and formal poetry where one, in composing it, maniacally counts the duration of the verses, one procures the perfect rhyme, etc. In doing this one finds an enormous pleasure inside of the restrictions which in the final instance are the only things that delimit the parameters inside of which one will carry out the creative action. Although at the outset it is difficult to govern oneself by such rules, in the end the result is always to make things easier. The rules of tango stipulate the aspects of the dance situation that could cause problems in the process of relating oneself to someone else – for instance, the first time one approaches someone unknown, the comportment of the couples, and this not only just in the steps of the dance.

Moreover there exist other differences in the diverse ways of dancing tango in different countries that are very difficult to put into words. One example is the notion of ‘dancing well.’ Outside of Argentina, but as well as inside of it, the illusion exists that to dance well is to do many steps, steps that are very difficult, to dance very rapidly, etc. This is the case within Argentina, or, rather, within the *milonguero* tradition, since among such adherents to dance well is to ‘go with the music,’ to ‘feel’ the dance,

continued on page 10

COLD??? RESTLESS???

LET'S GO TO BUENOS AIRES AND TANGO!!!

**Join us for our second
“Tango Immersion Tour”
February 17 - 24, 2001**

Contact:

Natalie Pepa • 312.217.4363 • Tangonata@aol.com
Phoebe Grant • 312.342.4335 • pjg@mindspring.com



continued from page 9

y compenetrarse con la persona con la cual se esta bailando. A riesgo de estar equivocado me atrevería a decir que por lo menos en amplios sectores de los bailarines argentinos lo estético es una dimensión de lo emotivo, en tanto que en el extranjero lo emotivo es una dimensión de lo estético. Pero esto no es siempre necesariamente así.

Y sin embargo no creo que podamos hablar de “misinterpretation”. Se interpreta si de formas diferentes según el acervo de experiencias que se tienen a mano y según las preferencias propias, pero no creo que podamos concederle un estatus superior a una u otra interpretación. Claro que algunas personas te dirán que esto es más correcto o que en realidad lo correcto es aquello, y en definitiva todos hemos de tomar una posición, pero finalmente no es una cuestión de quien esta en lo correcto. A los ojos de cada quien uno siempre esta en lo correcto (sólo a posteriori nos podemos dar cuenta de nuestros errores). El punto es que cada interpretación refleja una parte de la realidad del tango y sobretodo una parte de la realidad de la gente que lo baila.

Y aquí entre la cuestión de la *autenticidad* de los diferentes estilos. Como dice la protagonista de “Todo sobre mi madre”, película de Almodovar, “por que uno es autentico cuando más se parece a lo que uno soñó de si mismo”, y de aquí que sólo uno puede ser su propio juez en lo que se refiere a la autenticidad. Si nos referimos a estilos de baile se puede hablar tal vez de un estilo más moderno y de uno más apegado a cierta tradición de baile, o de uno más ritmico y otro más melódico, o de uno más ludico y otro más sobrio, o se puede construir toda una tipología de estilos sin entrar en el falso dilema de la autenticidad desde otros y no desde sí mismo. Desde este punto de vista ningún estilo es más autentico que otro, es más bien una cuestión de ‘estilo’.

También se dan diferencias de interpretación, por decirlo de alguna manera, según uno baile con el corazón o con la mente. Este es tal vez un punto difícil de resolver. Por ejemplo, una misma persona tendrá interpretaciones divergentes al bailar según se deje llevar por la música, caso en el cual la los observadores se verán altamente implicados en la emotividad de la interpretación, o no, caso en el cual el bailarín se dedicara a unir pasos que más o menos vallan con los matices de la música pero sin estar él mismo directamente implicado en el sentimiento del tango. Yo creo que esto nos pasa a todos. Siempre bailamos en una u otra frecuencia. ¿nunca te ha pasado que bailas con alguien y sientes que tu pareja esta como ausente? Bueno, pues es porque muchas veces se esta en frecuencias diferentes.

5, 6 y 7- En el tango existe un hecho fundamental, la división de roles al bailar, i.e., una repartición de las responsabilidades, y existen también un conjunto de creencias sumamente diferenciadas asociadas a ese hecho funda-

and to ‘be in communion’ with the person with whom one is dancing. At the risk of being wrong, I would dare to say that among large sectors of Argentine dancers the aesthetics of the dance are a dimension of the emotive, whereas among foreigners the emotive is a dimension of the aesthetic; but it is not always necessarily this way.

And, nevertheless, I do not believe that we can speak of *misinterpretation* in dancing tango. One interprets in different ways according to the accumulated experiences one has had and according to one’s own preferences, but I do not believe that we can concede a superior status to one or another interpretation. It is certain that some persons will tell you that this particular interpretation is more correct or that, in reality, the correct one is really that other one; and, definitely, we all have to take a position, but finally it is not a question of who is correct. In each one’s own eyes, one is always correct – only later do we become aware of our earlier errors. The point here is that each interpretation reflects a part of the reality of tango and, above all else, each interpretation reflects a part of the reality of the people that dance it.

And here enters the question of the *authenticity* of the different styles. As says the protagonist of *Todo sobre mi madre* [All About My Mother], a film by Almodovar, “*por que uno es autentico cuando más se parece a lo que soñó de si mismo,*” [“because one is authentic whenever one appears more like that which one dreamed for oneself”]. And, hence, one can only be his or her *own* judge in all that which relates to the question of one’s authenticity. If we relate this last thought to the issue of styles of dancing one can perhaps speak of a more modern style or of one being more devoted to a certain tradition of the dance; or, further, of one being more rhythmical or of another as more melodical, or even of one as more playful and another being more sober. One could even construct a complete typology of styles without entering into the false dilemma of authenticity toward others and not being authentic toward oneself. From this point of view no one style is more authentic than another; it is rather all a question of *style*.

As well there arise differences of interpretation whether one dances with the heart or with the mind; this is perhaps a point difficult to resolve. For example, one and the same person will have divergent interpretations for dancing the same tango whether he gives himself up to being carried by the music, in which case the observers will experience themselves as being highly implicated in the emotionality of the interpretation; or whether the dancer would be simply content to connect together patterns that more or less hinted at the colors of the music but without being directly implicated in the sentiment of the tango. I believe that this happens to us all. Always we dance in one or another frequency – has it never happened to you that you dance with someone and you feel that your dancing partner is absent? Well, this is because many times one is coupled with someone in a different ‘frequency.’

5, 6 & 7: In the tango exists a fundamental fact: the separation of the roles for dancing, i.e., a division of the responsibilities between the dance partners; and there exists as well a whole set of extremely differentiated beliefs associated with this fundamental

continued on page 11

mental. Algunos, tanto hombres como mujeres, creen que este hecho fundamental lleva en si mismo la semilla de una relación asimétrica, y por lo tanto de subordinación, mientras que otros interpretan este mismo hecho primario como señal de que lo que existe es una suerte de horizontalidad. Quisiera apuntar que éstas creencias son más significativas que el hecho en el cual se fundan. Son en realidad reveladoras de la situación de cada quien. Hay personas para quienes el papel de la mujer no es propositivo y debe limitarse a seguir, y hay otros que opinan que dentro de sus posibilidades la mujer es también propositiva en su baile. Hay inclusive personas que piensan lo primero pero que en la práctica buscan lo segundo, y viceversa.

Hay además otro problema que no proviene propiamente hablando de la esfera del baile y que podríamos llamar “de transferencia”, y es cuando problemas que no son del baile se expresan y se resuelven, o no, a través de la experiencia dancística. Así, muchas veces el hombre abusa de su responsabilidad de llevar (marcar) asumiendo una actitud prepotente y brusca mientras baila, y la mujer le corresponde con una actitud de desinterés y ausencia. Un conflicto externo al baile mismo transforma su objetivo y esencia, y el baile pasa a ser el escenario de una confrontación y deja de ser un lugar o un medio de comunión. Tal es el caso de un renombrado milonguero de Buenos Aires quien solía ser cafisho en la vida cotidiana y quien en el baile es conocido por ser sumamente caballeroso y suave. Evidentemente la transformación no es gratuita.

Y tal vez este es uno de los aspectos centrales del tango como danza social actualmente, lo que muy a pesar de algunos yo llamaría su carácter ritual: a través de él se pueden resolver o generar conflictos y se puede también lograr una profunda compenetración con la pareja, con otra persona. Se puede lograr vencer la brecha de la tajante individualidad de hoy día, se puede llegar a alcanzar una cierta comunión. Tal vez suene un poco fuerte lo que estoy diciendo pero piénsese lo siguiente: ¿en que ámbitos de relacionamiento actualmente puede uno tener un acercamiento tan profundo y arrebatador con un completo extraño como en el tango? Asistimos a un momento histórico donde trabar relaciones con alguien fuera del ámbito laboral o de actividad cotidiana es muy difícil, donde los circuitos para conocer gente diferente a uno son sumamente circunscriptos. Y una de las riquezas del ámbito tanguero es precisamente que en él hay todo tipo de personas, *gente para todos los gustos* como decimos nosotros, de todas las edades, colores, profesiones, países, etc. A diferencia de otras danzas de pareja no hacen falta condiciones especiales para poder bailarlas: allí donde el danzón es visto como una danza para viejos, el rock para jóvenes, la salsa para latinos, etc., el tango sólo demanda poder apasionarse. Y para apasionarse sólo hace falta ser humano.

Tal vez este es uno de los motivos que han llevado al resurgimiento del tango como género dancístico, aunque indudablemente también la necesidad de revitalizar una identidad cultural frente a las homogeneizadoras tendencias globalizantes. ♦

fact. Some people, as much men as women, believe that this fundamental fact carries in itself the seed of an asymmetrical relation, and therefore of subordination, while others interpret this same fact as a sign that that which exists is an opportunity for achieving symmetry. I would like to point out that these beliefs are more significant than the fact in which they originate. In reality they reveal the situation of any person. There are persons for whom the role of the woman is such that she cannot propose movements and she ought to limit herself just to following. And there are others of the opinion that, within her range of possibilities, the woman is also able to propose movements through her dancing. There are also persons that think the first but that practice the second, and vice-versa.

There is, moreover, another problem that does not properly stem from the sphere of the dance and that problem we could call the ‘problem of transference;’ this is when problems and issues that are not from the dance express and resolve themselves, or even fail to do so, in and through the dance experience itself. Thus, many times the man abuses his responsibility for leading (marking) assuming an attitude overly powerful and brusque while he dances; and the woman corresponds with an attitude of disinterest and even absence. A conflict that is external to the dance has then transformed itself into its object and essence, and the dance passes to being the scene of a confrontation and stops being a place or a medium for communion. Such is the case of a renowned milonguero of Buenos Aires who was in the habit of being a pimp in daily life and who in the dance is known for being exceedingly chivalrous and gentle. Evidently the transformation is not always gratuitous.

And perhaps this is one of those central aspects of tango as actually a social dance – that which I would call, very much against some, its ‘ritual’ character: through this character one is able to resolve or generate conflicts and one can, indeed, achieve a profound communion through the couple in being with that other person. One can manage to conquer the gap of the sharp individuality of today; one can arrive at the point of reaching a certain communion. Perhaps what I am saying sounds a little strong, but I think the following question makes sense: In what areas of relationships is one actually able to have a sense of closeness so profound and captivating with a complete stranger as in tango? We are living in a historical period where to strike up relations with someone outside of the work field or of daily activity is very difficult, where the circuits for becoming acquainted with people different from oneself are highly restricted. And one of the riches of the *tanguero* population is precisely that in it there are all types of people, *people for all tastes*, as we would say ourselves – people of all types of ages, colors, professions, countries, etc. And unlike other couple dances one does not need special conditions to be able to dance it: for example where *danzón* is seen as a dance for the old only, *rock* for the young, *salsa* for Latinos, etc. – the tango only asks that one be passionate. And in order to be passionate one needs only to be human.

Perhaps this is one of the reasons that has supported the resurgence of tango as a dance *genre*, although undoubtedly as well such resurgence has been supported by the necessity of revitalizing a cultural identity in the face of the homogenizing tendencies of globalization. ♦