

Tango is a genre which appeared as a result of the merger of nostalgic immigrants from Europe that were received in this port city. As an example it is easy to perceive that while Tango is melancholy and pessimistic, Salsa Caribbean or Samba in Brazil are festive and joyous. Tango is a musical genre whose origins are steeped in mystery. Various theories are presented in order to explain its creation. The most accepted version states that towards the end of the 19th century, a new musical genre was born to be danced in brothels and bars. This music had African and Spanish influence (candombe, payada, milonga, habanera, tango andaluz, polka and vals). With the arrival of large waves of European immigration, tango incorporated such foreign musical instruments as the "bandoneon"¹. Songs were written with tango music, and the lyrics usually expressed love stories gone awry, broken hearts and passion related tragedies. From these very humble origins in the port and dock neighborhoods, Tango music gained more and more acceptance, until it became part of the dances of the salons of the aristocracy of Buenos Aires. We can trace three main periods of Tango music:



Carlos Gardel

1.- GUARDIA VIEJA (OLD GUARD)

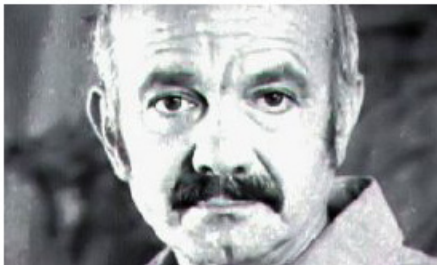
The first professional tango composers to gain international fame in Paris wrote their music in the 1920's. Small orchestras with bandoneon, flute and violin, or even just one guitar, played the first written tangos. Carlos Gardel became the most famous Argentine tango singer worldwide and a symbol of Argentine culture. The tango music sung by Gardel was accepted and praised all over Europe. The mystery surrounding his origins and his tragic death in a plane crash EN QUE AÑO.. consolidated his myth. For most "porteños" Carlos Gardel "sings better and better each day."



Roberto Goyeneche

2.- GUARDIA NUEVA: (NEW GUARD)

The 1940's saw the appearance of the big orchestras that interpreted tango in night clubs and salons where luxury and art deco surrounded the dancing couples. Famous orchestras directed by Anibal Troilo, Osvaldo Pugliese, Carlos Di Sarlo and Horacio Salgan elevated the tango music to its highest quality. Poets such as Homero Manzi, Enrique Cadicamo and Catulo Castillo wrote the lyrics and famous singers such as Roberto Goyeneche (El Polaco), Alberto Marino and Edmundo Rivero interpreted these songs. Towards the end of the 50' tango music entered a period of decline, due to the success of foreign rhythms and foreign music companies.



Astor Piazzolla

3.- VANGUARDIA (THE AVANT GARDE)

During the 1960's the music of Astor Piazzolla took the tango world by storm and created an enduring division among generations of tango fans. Equally worshipped and derided by tango lovers, Piazzolla was a brilliant composer, educated in Manhattan in his early childhood. He incorporated jazz and classical influence into the tango music he created.

¹ Similar to the accordion while smaller and with a more tearful sound, the Bandoneon was in its origins, a portable wind instrument used by Europeans to play in modest churches that lacked of an ORGAN?. It is assumed that it was brought to the country by German sailors. Its inventor was called Band and the cooperative which produced it in Buenos Aires took the name Band Union which gave birth Bandoneon by adapting as popular name.