

Tango Nueva

Pablo Ziegler & Christopher O'Riley



STEINWAY & SONS

Tango Nuevo

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

The two composers represented on this CD — Astor Piazzolla and Pablo Ziegler — are the founder and Dean, respectively, of the contemporary style known as *Nuevo Tango*. As the name, meaning “new tango,” suggests, *Nuevo Tango* is a genre of Argentine dance music in which new influences are applied to traditional tangos. Piazzolla, for instance, revolutionized the genre by adding electric guitar and saxophone to traditional tango orchestrations. More recent stylistic advances have included jazz melodies and harmonic structures. Despite these global influences, the *Nuevo Tango* remains grounded in the tradition and culture of Argentina, and much of the music on this album attests to that localization of tradition, particularly to the city of Buenos Aires.

Ziegler's *Maria Ciudad* — a love letter to Buenos Aires — lies at the heart of this album, which carries much the same function. Historically called “Santa Maria de los Buenos Aires,” the capital is now simply “Buenos Aires,” and *Maria Ciudad* captures its spirit with a slow *milonga* rhythm that takes listeners on an imaginary round trip journey from the modern city center to the old tango neighborhood, visiting the Obelisco monument in both directions. Ziegler returns to an old tango neighborhood in *El Empedrado*, which was inspired by the beautiful cobblestone streets, and later reflects on the street smart modern life of Buenos Aires in *Asfalto*. Piazzolla's *Michelangelo '70* is a remembrance of his concerts at a Buenos Aires tango club named after the famous painter; “70” refers to the year that the composer left Argentina with hopes of making it big in Paris. *Buenos Aires Hora Cero*, also by Piazzolla, also recalls playing late night gigs at tango clubs: the musicians would go out to the empty street to take a break

around midnight — *hora cero* — where they would only hear the sound of their own footsteps, with sirens and cars singing in the distance.

The music on this album also celebrates the participants of traditional tango culture, and not just its locales. Ziegler's *Milongueta* was composed in the 1990s for the guitarist of his first quartet in the slow milonga style of Argentinian cowboy music. *Elegante Canyenguito* illustrates an ironic portrait of old-fashioned tango guys' cocky attitude, and depicts these swaggering Argentinian men dressed in hats and nice suits, ready to join the dance. *Sandunga* — a style of *milonga* dance — was originally part of Ziegler's *Suite Canyengue*, which was inspired by tango dancers' attitude to walking, breathing, drinking and dressing on the streets of Buenos Aires.

Other works feature the myriad musical influences of *Tango Nuevo*. Ziegler's *Places* draws on the classical tradition, and incorporates Sonata form. Similarly, Piazzolla's *Fuga y Misterio* from the operita "*Maria de Buenos Aires*" reveals the influence of J.S. Bach on *Nuevo Tango*. Another massive influence on living *Nuevo Tango* composers is, of course, Astor Piazzolla. Accordingly, *Milonga del Adios* the "Farewell Milonga" was composed by Ziegler to honor his former collaborator and mentor upon the composer's death. The included version of *Elegia sobre Adios Nonino* was also adapted in honor of Piazzolla's passing. The original — a Piazzolla composition — was written after his father died while the composer was away in New York. The album concludes with a rendition of one of Piazzolla's most iconic works, *Libertango*.

— Robert Hillinck

Christopher O'Riley

Acclaimed for his engaging and deeply committed performances, the pianist Christopher O'Riley is known to millions as the host of NPR's *From the Top*. Now in his fifteenth year on air, O'Riley introduces the next generation of classical-music stars to almost a million listeners each week. He performs around the world and has garnered widespread praise for his untiring efforts to reach new audiences.

Christopher O'Riley has performed as a soloist with virtually all of the major American orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, National Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony. In addition, he has performed recitals throughout North America, Europe, and Australia.

Living by Duke Ellington's adage "There are only two kinds of music, good music and bad," O'Riley - a proponent of the former in all of its guises - has received the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and an equally coveted four-star review from Rolling Stone magazine. O'Riley strives to introduce new audiences to classical music with an almost missionary zeal by performing piano arrangements of music by Radiohead, Elliott Smith, Pink Floyd, and Nirvana alongside traditional classical repertoire. He has collaborated for many years with the flutist Sir James Galway and cellists Matt Haimovitz and Carter Brey.

A prolific recording artist, O'Riley has recorded the music of Beethoven, Stravinsky, Scriabin, Liszt, Ravel, Gershwin, Debussy, and John Adams. He splits his time between Los Angeles and rural Ohio.

Pablo Ziegler

For decades, the Buenos Aires-born pianist, composer and arranger Pablo Ziegler has been one of the most important figures in Argentine Nuevo Tango, the vibrant musical hybrid of classical music, tango and jazz. Mark Swed of The Los Angeles Times writes, "He is cool, understated and makes everything look easy and natural... Just as a really suave tango dancer seems not to move with feet but on wheels, Ziegler skates the keyboard."

After performing in Astor Piazzolla's legendary quintet for over a decade and appearing on iconic recordings including *Tango: Zero Hour*, *La Camorra* and *Central Park Concert*, Ziegler has led his own groups for over 20 years, refining and reimagining the bounds of the tango tradition. Touring throughout the world with his trio, quartet and quintet, recent seasons have seen Ziegler performing at venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Chautauqua Institute, the San Francisco Jazz Festival and the Laguna Beach Music Festival. He has been featured as guest soloist with major orchestras around the world, playing his own compositions as well as the music of Piazzolla with Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Presidential Orchestra of Turkey and Jazz Sinfonica Orchestra in São Paulo.

Ziegler's critically acclaimed album *Amsterdam Meets New Tango* (2013) sees his quartet paired with the Netherlands' Metropole Orkest, playing his most famous compositions re-arranged for jazz orchestra. 2013 also saw the release of saxophonist Julio Botti's Latin Grammy-nominated *Nostalgias*, featuring Ziegler as producer, arranger and pianist, along with several Ziegler tunes. In 2011, Ziegler's work as music director, arranger and pianist for bass-baritone Erwin Schrott earned an Echo Klassik Award for the album *Rojotango*. Ziegler's *Bajo Cero* (2005) won the Latin Grammy Award for Best Tango Album, and in 2008, his album *Buenos Aires Report* made the final list of nominees for the same honor.



Tango Nuevo

was recorded December 7-10, 2015
at Sono Luminus Studios, Boyce, VA

Executive Producer: Jon Feidner

Producer: Dan Merceruio

Engineer: Daniel Shores

Equipment: Pyramix using Merging Technologies

Horus Converters; mixed and mastered

through Merging Technologies HAPI Converter

Production Assistant: Robert Hillinck

Administrative Assistant: Joanne Hong

Design: Cover to Cover Design, Anilda Carrasquillo

Painting: *The Passing*, Oil Painting, Justyna Kopania

Pianos: Steinway Model D #590904 (New York);

Steinway Model D #538137 (New York)

Piano Technician: John Veitch

Christopher O'Riley & Pablo Ziegler

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Pablo Ziegler, Astor Piazzolla's collaborator and pioneer of the art of *Nuevo Tango*, joins the sensational Christopher O'Riley in a stunning album of compelling, vibrant and moving works for two pianos.

- 1 El Empedrado (Ziegler) 5:18
 - 2 Milongueta (Ziegler) 6:37
 - 3 Michelangelo '70 (Piazzolla) 3:46
 - 4 Asfalto (Ziegler) 5:12
 - 5 Maria Ciudad (Ziegler) 6:58
 - 6 Elegante Canyenguito (Ziegler) 4:54
 - 7 Elegia sobre Adios Nonino (Piazzolla) 9:32
 - 8 Places (Ziegler) 6:04
 - 9 Milonga del Adios (Ziegler) 4:51
 - 10 Fuga y Misterio (Plazzolla) 4:47
 - 11 Buenos Aires Hora Cero (Piazzolla) 3:53
 - 12 Sandunga (Ziegler) 4:04
 - 13 Libertango (Plazzolla) 5:14
- Playing Time 71:16



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