

16.00

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Orquesta Tanguedia

Tango Nuevo afternoon

E The Antwerp tango ensemble Orquesta Tanguedia plays superb performances of the works of tango legend Astor Piazzolla. They've just released their second album: a double CD, devoted once more to the heritage of the bandoneon master Piazzolla. On Sunday afternoon 22 January accordionist Gwen Cresens and his colleagues will take their audience at the Ancienne Belgique on a trip to Buenos Aires for an exploration of Argentina's Tango Nuevo.



The group used to be called Sexteto Tanguedia. Where did the new name come from?

Gwen Cresens: Since Radio 1's Big Bang there have been nine of us, instead of six. The idea came from the producer, Rik Moens. I had been thinking about where we should go after the first Sexteto Tanguedia CD. You could hardly record another CD with the same concept. Along with Rik we came up with the idea of adding a number of strings for the Big Bang. It was too much fun to just do it once. So we continued with the bigger line-up.

What has changed in practice with the new line-up?

Cresens: The three extra strings (violin, viola, and cello, *bt*) give an extra dimension, although we don't play any louder or more powerfully because there are more of us. But it does give us a chance to try out new instrumental combina-

tions. On the CD you can hear the complete *Five Tango Sensations*; in the concert we won't play them all, as that's more suitable for a classic concert setting than for a theatrical venue. We try to make the music accessible, without always making the most obvious choices. There's no point putting together an incredibly impressive programme if nobody can take it in.

You play Astor Piazzolla's music exclusively. Tell us about him.

Cresens: Piazzolla is best compared with someone like Miles Davis in the jazz

world. In Piazzolla's view the development of the old tango tradition had pretty well run out of steam. Thanks to the training and experience he had picked up abroad, he was able to take a new approach to tango. He had studied classical music in Paris and spent years living in New York, where he came into contact with the jazz scene and with klezmer. The Tango Nuevo emerged out of the combination of all those kinds of music with the traditional tango. The crossover of musical styles was done in a very tasteful, very natural way. That's what makes his music so timeless.

What's the difference with traditional tango?

Cresens: Traditional tango was a lot more danceable. Piazzolla himself said his music was concert music, not dance music. I wouldn't always agree with that you can dance perfectly well to a number of his tangos. But there are lots of changes of tempo, so you need to know a bit about tango dancing to be able to dance readily to it. But it's not impossible. In Argentina Piazzolla got a hostile reception at first; people were distrustful. He became popular abroad first, and only later in his own country.

The new album is called *In Bocca al Lupo*

Cresens: In the jaws of the wolf. It means the same thing as "Break a leg". It's in Italian. Piazzolla's parents were from Italy and a number of his songs were sung in Italian. The CD has been in the shops since the end of December. We tried to record as diverse a repertoire as possible, both in terms of line-up and of mood. There are instrumental numbers and vocal ones. I think it's important that every instrument gets its due and has its own moment of glory.

N Het Antwerps tangogezelschap Orquesta Tanguedia vertolkt op meesterlijke wijze het werk van Astor Piazzolla. Met hun tweede album *In Bocca al Lupo* onder de arm voeren ze ons zondag mee naar Buenos Aires op de tonen van de Tango Nuevo.

F Sur son second (double) album, *In Bocca al Lupo*, l'orchestre de tango anversois Orquesta Tanguedia poursuit l'exploration du répertoire de Piazzolla. Dimanche, le groupe invite le public de l'AB à passer un après-midi à Buenos Aires...