

Piazzolla 100 years – part 3 - The New Tango Was Born

tango nuevo: a fusion of tango, jazz, and classical music. Piazzolla introduced tango to the concert hall.

By 1944 Piazzolla was ready to act upon the musical instincts that had been simmering in him for years. He broke off with Anibal Troilo and focused more of his time on composing. Still deeply interested in classical music, Piazzolla took courses on conducting. Many of his earlier pieces are decidedly influenced by Bach, Stravinsky, and other classical composers. His music began to take on a sound of its own as Piazzolla began to incorporate unusual elements into traditional tangos.

In 1946 Piazzolla formed the band Orquesta del 46 so that he could perform his nuevo tango. Although he didn't receive much support from tango traditionalists, he did gain interest from outsiders like American composer Aaron Copland.



Nadia Boulanger

While she marveled at his intricate compositions, Boulanger encouraged Piazzolla to search for himself in his music and to reach for his Argentinean roots.

According to legend, Boulanger one day persuaded Piazzolla to perform one of his tangos on the piano and promptly proclaimed, “*This*’s Piazzolla, not *that*. Throw the rest away!” After doing so, Piazzolla found peace for himself and his music. “I promised myself I’d write a tango a day and that’s what I did.”

In 1954 Astor took his family and musical talents to Paris, where he received a warm welcome. The French government offered Piazzolla and his wife fellowships specifically because of his prize winning *Sinfonia*. Astor began studying under the direction of composer Nadia Boulanger, who had worked with such impressive composers as Bernstein and Copland.

