

# TANGO AUSTRALIS

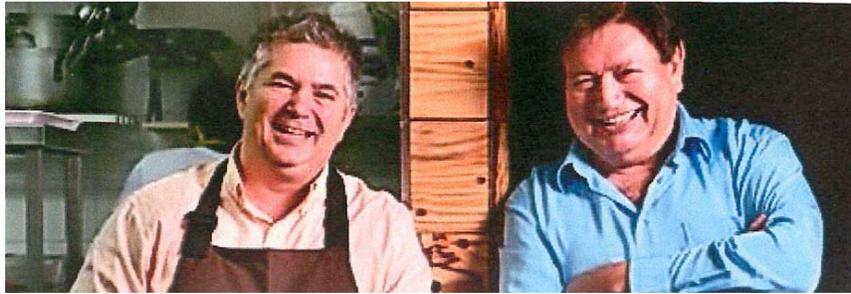
## AN AUSTRALIAN TANGO JOURNAL

### January – February 2013

Published by SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO - 50 Kauri Parade, Seacliff, South Australia 5049  
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#### Sergio de Pieri – the maestro whose cultural vision is changing Australia

This renowned Italian organist and composer came to Australia to be organist at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne. These days his home base is Treviso, in the Veneto region of northern Italy, but he visits Australia each year, spending time with his brother Stefano, the celebrity chef who put the city of Mildura on the culinary map (remember the TV program 'A Gondola on the Murray'?). Sergio was awarded the OAM for services to music and culture in Australia.



(Photo: Stefano de Pieri & Sergio de Pieri)

Sergio's brilliance as a musician may even be surpassed by his visionary work as festival artistic director. Eighteen years ago, Sergio, concerned by the lack of classical music in regional Australia, established the *Organs of the Ballarat Goldfields Festival*. Today it is a prestigious annual classical music event. Each year Sergio invites virtuoso musicians from Europe to perform in concerts in unlikely rural venues, with talented Australian artists he selects. This year's festival concert locations were in Ballarat, Clunes, Snake Valley, Elaine and Stawell.

Seven years ago, with Helen Healy, Sergio launched another visionary Arts project, the *Murray River International Music Festival*. This festival sends virtuoso musicians travelling along the Murray River doing concert recitals from Renmark in South Australia to Mildura in Victoria, and upstream as far as Albury/Wodonga.

When Sergio became aware of young tango dancers, Adrienne & Andrew Gill, he recognized their talents and the beauty of their dance performances and resolved to include them, and their art of tango, in classical music events. He booked Adrienne & Andrew to perform with European accordionist Mirko Satto in the outdoor concert that launched one Murray River Festival. This beautiful concert recital – of music and tango on a cliff above the river –



was broadcast live into Italy. (Photo: Adrienne & Andrew Gill, Mirko Satto. courtesy Murray River International Music Festival)

Adrienne & Andrew danced in a number of concerts along the Murray that year, spreading tango's beauty and power as they toured. They met Australia's wonderful classical pianist, Anthony Halliday, and brilliant Italian guitarist, Massimo Scattolin. Mirko Satto, Anthony Halliday and Massimo Scattolin have delighted audiences playing at tango events organized by Adrienne & Andrew. All have developed tango music repertoires because of this association. Adrienne & Andrew performed with Massimo, Anthony, and Argentine dancers Demian Garcia & Alejandra Mantinan, in a memorable concert at Daylesford's historic town hall in one Organs of the Goldfields Festival.



(Photo: 'The Mystique of Tango' starring Alejandra Mantinan, Demian Garcia, Adrienne Gill, Andrew Gill, Massimo Scattolin & Anthony Halliday - Organs of the Ballarat Goldfields Festival)

Sergio nurtures his chosen artists. He has watched Adrienne & Andrew mature as artists and their reputation grow, and is pleased to see that companies such as Leigh Warren & Dancers, State Theatre Company, State Opera, & Restless Dance Theatre are utilizing their professional skills.

Sergio also founded the *Brunswick Beethoven Festival* in Melbourne, and is artistic director for **St John's Feast of Music**, now in its third year, at St John's Church in Halifax Street in Adelaide. Father Christopher Myers of St John's said, 'We regard our Feast of Music as providing food for the soul'.

**The Night is Tango** is the first **St John's Feast of Music** concert on **Sunday, 10 February** at 6.30pm, with dancers **Adrienne & Andrew Gill**, **Mirko Satto** (bandoneon) and **Alberto Mersica** (guitar) performing works by Piazzolla, Lacalle, Mores, Gardel, Torris, Villoldo, Bardi, Laurenz. Mirko Satto has won numerous scholarships, national & international competitions, and has performed solo concerts throughout Europe, South America, and Australia. He is currently in a band that plays the work of Astor Piazzolla and other Argentinean tango composers. Alberto Mersica is a classical guitarist, who has also received many scholarships and awards. He has played with Ashkenazy, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Daniel Rowland and Marco de Santi. In 2011 he became responsible for the Musical Archives in the National Library in Istanbul. In 2012 he was nominated for a Grammy Award in the classical section for 'Best Solo Performance.'

(Photo: Mirko Satto)



Tango lovers will have an exceptional afternoon & evening to remember. They can dance at the **Tango By The Sea Milonga** at Henley Sailing Club from 4pm, then go on to Halifax Street, to enjoy **The Night is Tango** concert at 6.30pm. This concert is the only occasion on which these four artists will perform together. Chianti Classico is partnering St John's in staging the event. The de Pieri brothers are combining talents this year. Stefano will be joined in the kitchen by head-chef and co-owner of the multi-award winning Chianti Classico, Toby Gush and the Chianto team to prepare a fund-raising dinner on January 31. (Tickets have sold out.) Chianti Classico's Maria and Frank Favaro hale from the same region in Italy as Stefano and Sergio, and the families are firm friends, mutual admirers and supporters.

### **St John's Feast of Music Program:**

**Sunday 10 February**, 6.30pm, **The Night is Tango**, performed by Adrienne & Andrew Gill (Dancers), Mirko Satto (Bandoneon) and Alberto Mersica (Guitar)

**Monday 11 February**, 6.30pm, **Beethoven, Schubert & Schumann** performed by Anthony Halliday (Piano) and Peter Tregear (Baritone)

**Tuesday 12 February**, 6.30pm, **All That Is Jazz**, performed by Allan Zavod (Piano)  
Tickets: \$25 per concert (\$70 for 3 concerts). For bookings: [trybooking.com/BCIA](http://trybooking.com/BCIA), or telephone 08 8223 2348, or purchase at the door.

## **New Year Resolutions**

New Year is when people resolve to learn tango, quit smoking, lose weight, or otherwise change lifestyle patterns. This annual concentration of good intention is usually not enough, and people soon slip back into old ways. The custom of making New Year resolutions may stem from old traditions associated with summer and winter solstices. Pagan tribes celebrated the turning of the seasons with human and animal sacrifices. Ancient Celts reputedly put criminals in wicker effigies and burnt them. Druids made sacrifices, and in the Spanish town of Santillan del Mar, a cat (to represent the devil) was thrown to its death from a high steeple (thereby giving the townsfolk a fresh start). In South America, the Inca ran with a burning stick from town to town, to get rid of evil.

## **Change and Growth**

The theme running through this first newsletter of the year 2013 is change - change associated with growth and is the antithesis of atrophy, and evolutionary change that may be so gradual it is only perceived with hindsight.

## **New Performances on YouTube**

You have asked Adrienne & Andrew to do it for years – and finally they have. Some of their lovely tango performances are now on YouTube. Here's the link – share it with friends and give them a taste of the beauty of Australian tango:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nvk11cE1Kk0>

Click regularly on the **Southern Cross Tango1** channel from this site to see what new routines are added.



One viewer described their interpretation of *'La Trampera'* as *'a fresh, joyful and cheeky milonga, just the thing to lift your spirits on a down day. Then you take another look at the video and you see harmony, complex nifty movements, and seamless transitions, and you try to work out what steps they are dancing. These guys are gorgeous.'*

Watching them dance helps in understanding what is meant when people say  $1 + 1 = 1$  in tango. It's about two people with musicality, elegance and connection. You watch the couple, not two individuals. True originality is a rare quality in a tango world. Adrienne and Andrew choreograph routines together, which may explain the pleasing balance of male and female elements. They performed *'La mariposa'* (Demian Garcia's choreography) in Canberra at a music festival, and danced their own *'Oblivion'* at the Christmas Milonga at the Henley Sailing Club in South Australia. *'Primavera Porteno'* is danced by the Southern Cross Tango ensemble (which should serve as inspiration to any dance student who dreams of performing tango, one day), and their *'La Vals a Margaux'* was performed at *Tango on the Hill* in 2012.



(Photo: Pamela & Richard Jarvis, Kylie Clifford & James Moros, Sarah Fletcher & Ed Lomax, Adrienne & Andrew Gill, Anne Rodgers & Aaron Charlton Southern Cross Tango Christmas Milonga performance)

## The power of literature

We believe that the literary arts have value, which is why we support Australian writers. When we publish new works about tango, recommended to us by the convening body of the Australian Tango Poetry and Australian Tango Short Story Competitions, Tango Friends Australia Inc, feedback from our readers tells us that these works make them reflect on their personal experiences.

With the closing date for entries for this year's competitions being February 1, we look forward to being advised of the judges' short lists of writers. On April 19, at *Buenos Aires in the Vales® Tango Arts Festival* the winners will be announced. We will publish the prize-winning works in our May edition of *'Tango Australis'*.

Good writing engages readers. Great writing is memorable and resonates emotionally. What English Lit student of a certain age does not remember and respond to the imagery of that *'host of golden daffodils'* spied as a poet (William Wordsworth) *'wandered lonely as a cloud'* on the shores of Ullswater in the Lakes District. It was actually Dorothy, the poet's sister, who first wrote about the daffodils in her diary, but it was William who immortalized them with the powerful arrangement of words of the poem that we remember.

We're always pleased when somebody at some university does research that confirms things that we already know.

In Classics a rocket boost for your brain (Adelaide Advertiser, 19 January 2013) Paul Bentley reports on Liverpool University research, investigating how people respond to classic literature. They scanned the brains of 30 volunteers to examine response to the literature of Wordsworth, William Shakespeare, and T.S. Eliot, and then compared these results with what happened when the people were given simpler, modern translations of the same works to read.

Shakespeare's original works caused electrical activity in the brain to jump, and volunteers showed increased activity in the part of the brain that deals with 'autobiographical' material' when they read the original poetry.

Simpler modern versions just don't do it for any reader.

## Dance fusion and evolution

**'So you think you can dance'** is a sure-fire format of a TV show for dancers to watch – and the recently screened American version (series 9) had us hooked. Take one cute, charismatic compere bubbling with enthusiasm, a raft of personalities from the dance world with good performance and choreography credentials, and audition to get the best young dancers from different genres from all over the USA. Then train this select group of talent in different dance styles, and, down the track, when the really good ones are starting to shine, get leading-edge innovative choreographers from stage and screen to create customized dance works that blur formal dance genre boundaries, and sit back and watch dance evolve and young dancers grow.

The show is the creation of multi Emmy award winning producer/director/former dancer and choreographer, Englishman, Nigel Lythgoe, who moved to the States to direct *'American Idol'* and *'Pop Idol'*. *'So You Think You Can Dance'* is what might happen at an open-minded dance arts academy, packaged, fast-tracked and filmed, with public voting instead of exams. Some of the routines created for this year's dancers were very exciting.

They had a similar impact to the iconic *'Bolero'* ice-dance done by Jane Torvill and Christopher Dean. It was totally memorable, in part, because it was so different from everything that had preceded it. Was it dancing or was it skating? Viewers didn't care – it was beautiful, passionate and powerful. So what did the skating establishment do?

They panicked, fearing that this sport-art form was about to take wings and fly away from their control. They tightened the rules to prohibit such future artistic routines, and competitive skating took a big step backwards. Torvill & Dean moved away from competitions and became entertainers instead.

Miriam Larici is a fiery professional tango dancer. We met her when she was dancing with Hugo Patyn in an Argentine tango show in New York. What I remember from a festival performance in New Jersey was a breathtakingly fast roll-drop and lots of leg action. Miriam came to the attention of a wider dance audience when she and Leonardo Barrionuevo represented Argentina in the American television series, '*Superstars of Dance*'. Their '*Tanguera*' was acclaimed and Argentina ended up winning the contest.

Nigel Lithgoe created the '*Superstars*' show too – so it is not surprising to see Miriam and Leonardo in the '*So You Think You Can Dance*' stable of choreographers. In the latest series Miriam choreographed a tango-esque routine for Chehon, a trained ballet dancer who ended up winning the men's contest, and Anya. The music was Jesse Cook's "*Breathing below the surface*, a decidedly non-tango piece, and the ballet-meets-tango performance left judges and audience spellbound before they erupted in a standing ovation. Chehon seemed to channel Julio Boca, a famous Argentine ballet dancer who created balletic tango shows. Chehon's dance went beyond traditional tango or ballet, into a different domain – pure dance. As tango lovers, we need to be open to such influences – for this is what happens in the creative interface where one form meets another.

We might see a similar creative fusion process begin to occur at popular level if social dance groups of different styles were to forget about safeguarding their own territory, and come together occasionally for festivals or special occasions. Rules, narrow definitions and strict codes serve to restrict natural developments and cultural fusion in dance.

Interestingly, on the last night of the show, the final 4 contestants were asked to choose the choreography that had been of most significance to them during the season. Chehon chose to dance that tango routine, explaining that it had freed him from the constraints of being a ballet dancer. (You can see his tango on youtube.)

### **And, while we're thinking about developments in dance...**

Dancers come and go all the time, passing through Australia on world teaching tours. Some are OK; some are not. A distinction should be drawn between 'visitors' who just broadcast that they are coming, and other tango professionals, who are invited and sponsored because their distinctive performance or teaching skills and qualities will benefit Australian tango. Sponsored dancers travel on approved working visas – and the organizer pays their airfares, appropriate fees, GST and tax to our government.

Cecilia Gonzalez: fluid, elegant and a notable improviser, is coming to Melbourne and Adelaide



Cecilia Gonzalez is in the invited tango professional category, and we have Bill Jarman to thank for bringing her to Australia, along with Ney Melo, one of today's talented young Argentine tango dancers, as guest artists and teachers for **Tango Bajo's first Festivalito Program, in Melbourne from 21 – 24 February 2013.**

This is exciting news. Cecilia Gonzalez has partnered some of the most famous tangueros: Osvaldo Zotto, Fabian Salas and Mariano 'Chicho' Frumboli, and she is a natural teacher and a very fine dancer in her own right. She uses superb body control to great effect when she dances tango, and she is an exciting improviser.

Cecilia and Ney will join Michelle & Joachim, popular teachers based in Basel, Switzerland, in the Festivalito program. Immersion courses, 8 workshops & 4 milongas will all be held at Tango Bajo's new venue of Holy Advent Church, 30 Kooyong Road, Armadale. Phone 0419 826 061 for the program or Email [tangobajo@gmail.com](mailto:tangobajo@gmail.com) There are a number of different options and packages for the Melbourne Festivalito.

**Cecilia Gonzalez will be in Adelaide for the first time from Thursday 7 – Sunday 10 March 2013.** She will teach Intensive Group Tango Workshops in

Adelaide, and private lessons at Southern Cross Tango studio in Seacliff. Her schedule is: Thursday 7 March, 7 – 8pm: *'The use of weight on the walk, relaxation & tone'* (Open level) followed by Practica till 9.30pm at the Thebarton Community Centre; Friday 8 March, 7 – 8pm *'Turns & disassociations'* (Inter) & Saturday 9 March, 1.00 – 2pm *'Changes of direction'* (Inter), 2.15pm - 3.15pm *'Sacadas for men & women'* (Adv) at Restless Dance Theatre, 234a Sturt St, Adelaide (enter via Arthur St). On Sunday 10 March, 4 – 8pm, Cecilia will be special guest at Tango By The Sea Milonga at the Henley Sailing Club, 1 Esplanade West Beach. (\$12/10 at the door) To book private class or workshops phone 0419 309 439 or email [sctango@bigpond.com](mailto:sctango@bigpond.com)



**Adelaide exhibition & sale of Animals of the World Wildlife drawings**

**Sunday 10 March, 4-8pm at Tango By the Sea Milonga at Henley Sailing Club**

Tango will benefit from the generosity of a supporter of the Arts, a lover of animals and wildlife, and a writer - and of his widow, an artist who discovered tango. Proceeds from the sale of signed limited edition prints of the 'Animals of the World Wildlife Collection' will support the tango arts in Australia and encourage tango artists in their pursuit of excellence. The 22 finely detailed animal portraits have been drawn by one of the finest pencil artists working today, Stephen Mead, who lives in the UK. Dancers may (or may not) be surprised to see familiar elements of social behavior depicted in these studies. The collection will bring joy to anybody who loves animals and the natural world.

**Melbourne launch of the collection: 3 February at Tastes of Summer Tango**

## Beat the blues by dancing to heartbeats of love

A kind of melancholy descends when the family departs and the tinsel and decorations are packed away for another year. The cards stay out so their messages can be read and enjoyed again on quieter days. It is a thrill when friends who live overseas make telephone calls to catch up. Hearing the sound of familiar voices from afar is nice. Sharing the energy of singing Christmas carols, recalling the melodies, picking up the rhythm, and remembering the words awaken happy memories too. Listening to music or a choir sing can be enjoyable, even uplifting spiritually, but it does not engage in this visceral way. A listener remains on the outside, a passive recipient. A watcher is on the outside too. But when you sing or dance you enter the music and it enters you.

*(Photo: Community Tango in Geelong Christmas Milonga)*



Like Aesop's slow and steady tortoise, the Geelong regional tango group is developing and maturing. The Christmas milonga was a happy occasion. People came early to help set up, and sprang into action as soon as the last guest had departed from the free dinner that is served at the church hall before the tango. A transformation was quickly wrought with candles, flowers, decorations and a Christmas tree. Dancers brought and shared great food and wine, and were treated to an exquisite floorshow from their guests, Adrienne and Andrew, who'd driven from Adelaide. A birthday was celebrated. People chatted and mingled. Everybody danced. Pam & Richard think this is how things should be. To have everybody dancing is their goal for each milonga they have. This year they plan to have a milonga on the first Monday of every month, starting in February. For some of the group, the round trip of 140 kilometers to Melbourne and back is as daunting as the prospect of spending the night on the outer at a milonga.

Few experiences are lonelier than Christmas spent without anybody who cares about you, or a milonga where people are made to feel invisible. Many returned travelers rave about the pleasures of tango in Buenos Aires. Few talk of the pain of being ignored or snubbed and yet most dancers experience it. Some choose to forget what it felt like and are unsympathetic to others. In many cities tango seems to have entered a new era in which increasing numbers of dancers judge themselves to be experts at this elusive art. Such self-aggrandizement is often misplaced.

Singing familiar carols on Christmas Eve, brings back childhood memories, of when the world was safe, and the future was a warm glow on the horizon.

The Christmas story tells of the joy that greeted the birth, one starry night, of a baby, destined for greatness. Each birth is a small miracle - a gift of promise to mankind. Innocent children embody hope. Life without hope would be like tango without music.

*'The drumbeats of his army are the heartbeats of our love'* are words from a hymn by Maurice Lawton Wostenholm. Forget drumbeats - but think what a lovely idea it is to move to the rhythm of *'the heartbeats of our love'*.

Isn't this what we do when we dance tango? When the mind is emptied, we can feel and dance to the heartbeats of our love.

## Embracing change in tango

We should not fear change. Living creatures change constantly– adapting to a changing environment, evolving, aging. We are born, grow, develop, get old and die - everything in its season. The practice of tango changes us, and the tango changes with each dance, each generation and every new artist, and under the influence of social and economic conditions and fashion. When it comes to the spirit of tango, we enter different philosophical territory. The tango spirit may be an ideal, or a creature of a subconscious Jungian world – but that is a discussion for another day. In this article we're thinking about more obvious changes... like swapping partners in tango class. Most tango teachers prefer students to change partners occasionally during a lesson. This is not just a matter of working with an imbalance of the numbers. Changing partners ensures good learning by testing leading and following skills (as opposed to what students do when they accommodate a familiar partner). A change of partner can be a steadying influence when frustration levels get high and tempers flare during class. Yes, dear Readers, tango meltdown happens often.

Sometimes change is unplanned. The loss of a good venue creates a headache for tango teachers and organizers who have to find suitable affordable alternatives. In tango's case, good sprung wooden flooring is essential for dancers' physical wellbeing. Finding such floors, however, is increasingly difficult. In earlier days, suburban and country communities had at least one hall suitable for dancing. Social dances for young and old were part of community life.

Most facilities that are being built or adapted these days, supposedly for community and public use, have carpeted floors. It makes a dancer weep to see what could be good multi-purpose spaces rendered useless for dance because carpet has been laid.

Community arts venues are being lost as city properties are put onto the market and bought up by developers. Community arts groups hoped that council amalgamations would mean buildings no longer required for municipal usage would become available for rental at affordable prices. It hasn't happened. Many local councils charge high commercial rates to rent facilities to recreation and arts providers. Clearly, something is wrong when arts officers and, in some instances, whole departments, are employed to foster arts activities in their regions. Some bureaucrats get regular salaries whilst the actual providers of the arts activities, those working at the coalface in the community, struggle to survive. Government help by providing access to affordable venues for small arts, dance and theatre groups is called for. As a well-known Aboriginal musician said, *'The venues are there – we just need the keys to unlock them so we can use them'*.

Bill Jarman, Leigh Rogan and local dancers and visitors bid a fond farewell to Melbourne's most elegant tango venue, the old St Albans Church in Prahran, at the traditional New Years Eve Milonga. The church has been home to *La Mision* Milonga and Tango Bajo classes. It would have been great if the landmark building could have been retained as an arts venue, but its new owners have other plans.

Tango Bajo hosted its first milonga at its new premises in January, and a number of dancers who've been around tango for a long time were there for the occasion. Holy

Advent Church is at 30 Kooyong Road, Armadale and it is a little gem. As you approach along a side street you hear faint tango music, and then you see the glow from beautiful stained glass windows calling you in. There's a fine arched wooden ceiling inside. The wooden floor has not yet had the benefit of years of polishing and grinding of dancers' feet, but Bill and Meg and loyal helpers are working to get it in good condition. Meg is dreaming of winning Tattsлото so she can buy the church – it's on the market. Are there any wealthy tango benefactors around?

Change is also afoot in Adelaide. Southern Cross Tango will have to farewell its main teaching and practica venue, the Deaf Cando Hall in South Terrace. It is being sold too. We will miss the building's wandering ghosts and the long climb to the 'loos', but the memory of that fabulous crazy dress-up night and tango's 'Mighty Boosh' will live on. SCT will move Wednesday classes and Thursday practicas to the new Thebarton Community Centre when it opens. The project is currently under construction, but nearing completion. It is on South Road, next to the historic Brickworks building. One of the architects for the project is Luca Vezzosi, one of SCT's tango students.

Dancers from all over the country and overseas got accustomed to enjoying the relaxed vibe each summer at Australia's most enduring tango festival, *Buenos Aires at the Beach*, at Anglesea on Victoria's Great Ocean Road. But, after 12 years, the Festival directors decided it was time for change. They have no doubt that last year's change of location and state and municipal and tourism jurisdiction was a very good thing.

The festival took on exciting new form as ***Buenos Aires in the Vales***® ***Tango Festival*** in a South Australian vineyard region. Good accommodation options, great locations around the popular McLaren Vale tourism region, unexpected pleasures like Minko's sparkling bubbles at barefoot tango on the beach with tango poetry readings from 'Vita' and 'Virginia', a gallery night and winery restaurant dinner, courtyard luncheon at another picturesque winery, feast of regional food at a farm venue, and farewell breakfast at a chocolate shop enhanced a tango experience of quality. This year's guest artists are the brilliant performer and teacher from Buenos Aires, **Demian Garcia and his partner Fatima**, who are coming exclusively for the festival. ***Buenos Aires in the Vales***® ***Tango Festival*** runs from April 19 – 21, 2013, but there's a pre-festival night on April 18. For details keep checking [www.southerncrosstango.com.au](http://www.southerncrosstango.com.au). Smart visitors arrive early and stay on.

Southwest of Melbourne on Corio Bay, in Victoria's second regional city, the local Community Tango in Geelong group has made a change for 2013. Their venue, the Christ Church hall (with an excellent wooden floor for dancing) on the corner of Moorabool & McKillop Streets, remains the same, but, from Monday 4 February Pam & Richard will be hosting a new milonga **on the first Monday of each month** called **Milonga del Sur** from 8.30pm, to follow the 7.30pm group class.

Geelong tango remains inexpensive (so that everybody can afford to come): \$5 (class + milonga) – and there's supper too. Visitors seeking a friendly tango experience and happy to help a developing regional tango scene will be warmly welcomed.

## Image, age, and tango

A tango lady sent a poem to friends for Christmas, a tilt at serious stuff: treasures lost and stolen by time – maidenly vigor, a neat tiny figure, natural hair color, a taut tummy, and bothersome things like wrinkles, multiple chins, dizzy spells, aching feet, mislaid spectacles, headaches, sore muscles, and the absence of cheering wolf whistles.

Maturity can bring unexpected pleasures and undreamed of freedom. There are also regrets. I wish I had started dancing tango when I was younger and more able-bodied. What a breeze the stagey tango moves would have been in my youth when I was lean and lithe, and could leap and fly through the air, and do acrobatic moves and the ‘splits’ with grace. But, honestly, I am not sure that tango would have appealed to me in those exuberant years when good health, physical fitness and flexibility were taken for granted. There would have been no way my liberated bra-burning young self would have sat around all night waiting for a guy (any guy) to come up and ask me to dance. I was a sporty girl. A dancer’s performing life was not for me. Things began to change in young adulthood when I discovered jazz ballet, and contemporary dance, creative dance, and contact improvisation. I touched on belly dancing, and various forms of folkloric dance. I was surprised to find that I liked dancing and, in time, gradually my attitude shifted further and I became a dancer. In the physicality and creativity of dance I discovered a freedom I loved. Later still, tango found me.

In an article, *My Roaring Forties*’ (Sunday Life 2, 2012) Lucy Cavendish writes of being surprised at her successful dating experiences as a newly single, 45-year-old mother of four. She wonders why her experiences differ from her friends, who are battling the invisible woman syndrome. She ponders what makes a woman attractive to men?

Although today’s woman has more money, power and legal recognition than before, might she not be worse off than her un-liberated grandmother? Cavendish comfortingly quotes Bronwyn Cosgrove, a 46 year-old author and fashion historian: **Attractiveness is about being the best possible you at the age you are.** Beauty fades with age, but attractiveness need not. Accept and embrace your age. Be grateful for what you have and live life to the full.

If regular tango nights disappoint you, don’t give up dancing. Try a different approach. You may have been told that there is a set of rules and one code for behavior at milongas. This is not so. Different milongas cater to different groups of people, even in Buenos Aires. What might be acceptable behavior in some places is frowned upon elsewhere. Couples and groups of friends go to certain milongas, and each one is different. Generally on Saturday nights they sit at tables together, and dance only with their friends. If you’re not having fun at milongas don’t sit around feeling miserable. Throw an occasional tango party and invite like-minded friends and people whose company you think you might enjoy. Later you might brave the milongas again with a supportive group. Or learn to lead. Dancing with another woman can be very nice. To paraphrase Cavendish, success is self-propagating – the more you get asked to dance, the more confident you feel about yourself, the more you get asked to dance. **Nothing is more powerful and liberating than being desired.**

## Anger and tango

Life is too short to bear grudges, or to get uptight when things at the milonga or on the dance floor don't go according to plan. Stress is bad for the immune system and reduces your lifespan. I have yet to meet the tango dancer who goes onto the social floor to deliberately create an incident or cause a collision. I have been told that it happens, but, thankfully, I have not experienced it. But I have suffered many a minor injury from being heel-stabbed, elbow-butted, and crashed into. I have been mortified when I responded to an invitation to dance that was intended for somebody else. I felt so humiliated that I wanted the floor to open up and swallow me.

I have been led to *gancho* a chair leg (and did). I have stabbed my own instep with my own heel and tripped myself up. I have been steered off the floor and into other people. In my early days, before I was told that *boleos* should be adapted for the milonga to trace the floor and not swoop through the air, I was occasionally guilty of kicking other dancers. In rehearsals for shows, I have suffered multiple bruises on my shins from misdirected *sacadas* – and inflicted a few bruises on partners. Once, during a performance, my partner dropped me on my backside.

None of these things was intentional. We all make mistakes occasionally – our concentration lapse for a second or two, and Bang! But it is not a disaster. The thing is, accidents happen. Gracious dancers don't make a big issue of them. Does it really matter who is at fault when there is an incident on the dance floor? – It has happened, and it is best for everybody to get over it and move on. A murmured apology or a conciliatory gesture help smooth things over, no matter who is at fault. It is remarkably liberating to surrender to the dance. One thing that makes people cross is being made to feel insignificant, and there's no excuse for doing that at tango – ever!

Christopher Middleton wrote about anger management consultant, Mike Fisher, in [Don't take it personally – you'll feel so much better](#) (Sunday Age, Jan 6, 2013). Fisher's clients write down a list of things that annoy them. The real problem, he notes, is taking things personally. In order not to be angered by things, you have to accept that they aren't directed at you. The solution? Take a deep breath and walk away (on the tango floor, that means dance on). Step back and look at the big picture. Let go of unimportant things. Don't dump the anger you feel towards yourself on other people.

## Life lessons

Ranjana Srivastava writes *The Doctor is in*, (Melbourne magazine). She wrote about life lessons from the terminally ill. She observed: '*... no-one is invincible and ... indeed, life and death are so intimately intertwined that we could all do with the sagacity to acknowledge it before it is too late*'. She wrote of the need to take a break '*from dealing with recurrent emotionally charged situations ... to catch myself, to auto-correct*'. She thinks '*that when I return in the New Year, it is with a renewed sense of awe at the range of human afflictions, a refreshed respect for life, and a recharged promise to be not just a better doctor but to imbibe the lessons of my patients to become a better individual*'. Tango also renews our sense of awe at the range of human afflictions and frailty. Tango refreshes respect for life, and shows us, through what we learn from its lessons and our partners, how to become better individuals.

## *Tango Festivals & special events*

### **TASTES OF SUMMER TANGO - WORDS, MUSIC & DANCE**

February 3, 2013, 4 - 8pm in Port Melbourne

Tango Friends Australia Inc fundraising party supporting Australian writers

Poetry, singing, music, dancing, silent auction, & delicious seasonal food

Email: [vonniejoy@yahoo.com](mailto:vonniejoy@yahoo.com). Phone 0414 741 460 or 041 753 1619

### ***St Johns Feast of Music* - 10-12 February 2013, Adelaide**

Sunday 10 February, 6.30pm The Night is Tango - Mirko Satto (bandoneon) & Alberto Mesirca (Guitar), Andrew & Adrienne Gill (Tango dancers); 11 Feb 6.30pm: Songs by Beethoven, Schubert & Schumann - Anthony Halliday (piano) & Peter Tregear (Baritone); 12 Feb 6.30pm: All that is Jazz - Allan Zavod (piano). St Johns Anglican Church, 379 Halifax St, Adelaide.

***Experience Tango on The Parade*** - 16, 23 February & 16, 23 March 2013, Adelaide  
Southern Cross Tango performances, live music, mini workshops & outdoor Milongas at various sites along The Parade, Norwood. Free community events, presented by Norwood Parade Precinct Committee [www.facebook.com/TheParadeNorwoodOfficial](http://www.facebook.com/TheParadeNorwoodOfficial) Follow on Twitter @Parade\_Norwood

### ***Tango Argentino Festivalito, Melbourne* - 18 - 24 February 2013**

Featuring Cecilia Gonzalez y Ney Melo / Michelle Marsidi y Joachim Dietker.

Hosted by Tango Bajo. Contact William Jarman 0416 015 327 [williamjarman@gmail.com](mailto:williamjarman@gmail.com)

### ***Cecilia Gonzalez in Adelaide*** - 7-11 March 2013, Adelaide

7 March - Open Workshop & Practica in Thebarton; 8 - 9 March Intermediate & Advanced Workshops in Restless Dance Theatre, Adelaide. Private Tuition in Southern Cross Tango studio, Seacliff. 10 March 4-8pm: Tango by the Sea Milonga, with exhibition of Stephen Mead's 'Animals of the World Wildlife Collection, at Henley Sailing Club, West Beach.

Southern Cross Tango ph: 0419 309 439 [sctango@bigpond.com](mailto:sctango@bigpond.com)

[www.southerncrosstango.com.au](http://www.southerncrosstango.com.au)

### ***Australian Tango Dance Challenge, Sydney***

Amateur beginner & open level categories. Deadline to register 4 February. Qualifying rounds in March 2013, extra rounds for interstate & country couples 29 March. Beginner Finals 29 March; Open Finals 30 March. Ph: 0411 822 258 - [sima@atdc.net.au](mailto:sima@atdc.net.au) <http://www.atdc.net.au>

### ***Easter Tango Workshops in Sydney with Carolina Bonaventura & Francisco Forquera***

Tango Salon & Stage Tango Workshops: 31 March - 1 April & 6-7 April.

Small Group workshops 2-5 April 2013. Easter Friday Milonga at Marickville; Easter Saturday

Milonga at Darlinghurst. 5 & 7 April: Teacher only Seminars.

Presented by Sydney Tango Salon Festival [www.stsfestival.com](http://www.stsfestival.com)

### **BUENOS AIRES IN THE VALES® TANGO FESTIVAL** - April 19 - 21, 2013

Experience the magic of Tango in the beauty of McLaren Vale, South Australia.

International guest artists Demian Garcia & Fatima Vitale, with Fabian & Karina Conca, Andrew & Adrienne Gill, David & Michelle Wheaton, Richard & Pamela Jarvis.

Workshops, Stunning Shows & Milongas, Live Music, Free Community Events, Poetry, Regional food & wine, & a glorious vintage season. A quality event for tango connoisseurs.

[www.southerncrosstango.com.au](http://www.southerncrosstango.com.au)

## *Tango around Australia:*

### **HOBART TANGO**

Jenny & Vince Merlo (0438 300 753 & 0427 479 217) are **Tango Milongueros**. They teach, host regular milongas & practicas, perform, & organize special events. Email to check details: [tangomtas@gmail.com](mailto:tangomtas@gmail.com). [www.tangomilonguerotasmania.com](http://www.tangomilonguerotasmania.com) or Facebook

**Tasmanian Club de Tango**. Email: [tasmaniantangoclub@hotmail.com](mailto:tasmaniantangoclub@hotmail.com)  
[www.tastangoclub.wordpress.com](http://www.tastangoclub.wordpress.com)

### **DARWIN TANGO**

Northern Tango in Darwin contact Kelly (0448 664 593), Belinda (0402 244 483) or Carol (0435 531 995) [northerntango@gmail.com](mailto:northerntango@gmail.com) or <http://sites.google.com/site/northerntango>

### **MELBOURNE TANGO**

**Sidewalk Tango, David Backler @ 327 Swan Street, Richmond. Monday & Wednesday** classes Tango Noir Milongas: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays of every month, \$10. Practica T: Wednesdays 9 till late, \$8. La Practica: 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of month, 3 – 6pm \$5. Summer Workshops: Introductory Basic Tango, Sunday 1 – 2.30pm on 20 & 27 January 2013. Intermediate Technique & Practica, Wednesday 7 – 8.30pm on 23 & 30 January.  
Contact [david@sidewalktango.com.au](mailto:david@sidewalktango.com.au) or [www.sidewalktango.com.au/melbourne-tango-events](http://www.sidewalktango.com.au/melbourne-tango-events)

**Solo Tango**. Alberto & Natalia's milonga, last Saturday of each month at 154 Liardet St, Port Melbourne. For class details [albertocortez@bigpond.com](mailto:albertocortez@bigpond.com) Ph: 0411 665 454

**Tango Bajo**. Bill 0416 015 327 & Leigh 0410 257 855. Events, Milongas every Sat (except last of the month) You can BYOG. Class, 8pm, social dancing 9pm–midnight. 1st Mon of month special workshops. Wed classes, Beginners; Inter & Advanced @ Holy Advent Church, 30 Kooyong Road, Armadale. Email [leighis@fastmail.fm](mailto:leighis@fastmail.fm).

**Tango Tambien**. Tues, Richmond Uniting Church. Thu, @ St Catherine's Church, 406 Kooyong Rd, Caulfield South. Fri, Unitedstyles Dance Studio, corner Chapel St & Brighton Rd, East St Kilda.

**Siempre Asi** (class, mini milonga, light afternoon tea), 3 - 6pm last Sunday of month. \$17 @ Holy Advent Church, 30 Kooyong Road, Armadale. Ph: Leigh 0410 257 855 or [www.tangotambien.com](http://www.tangotambien.com)

**Chris Corby** – Ph: 0423 388 799

**Tango Butterfly**. Dana Parker 0403 192 867 –[info@tangobutterfly.com.au](mailto:info@tangobutterfly.com.au). Mon, Tues, Thurs (with practica), & Sat Classes, practicas & Monday La Milonga de las Mariposas, 1543 High St, Glen Iris. [www.tangobutterfly.com.au](http://www.tangobutterfly.com.au)  
Contact [dana@tangobutterfly.com.au](mailto:dana@tangobutterfly.com.au) to register for classes

**Viva**. Christian Drogo's **Tango Bar Milonga** on last Fri of month. 1/241 Smith St, Fitzroy. Doors open 7.30, open class from 8pm, then social dancing till late. Private Lessons, Group Classes & practice on different nights

**Melbourne Tango** hosts milongas @ Czech House, 497 Queensberry St, North Melbourne on the second Sun of each month – class @ 6.30, milonga from 7.30 pm.

**Project NFT (Neo Fusion Tango)**. [rjh@keypoint.com.au](mailto:rjh@keypoint.com.au) **Third Sunday of month, from 7pm**. Dance to Nuevo tunes on 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Palace Hotel, Camberwell, 893 Burke Road, opposite railway station and on tram route 72, stop 64

**TangoMelbourne** – [reneefleck84@gmail.com](mailto:reneefleck84@gmail.com) or [info@tangomelbourne.com.au](mailto:info@tangomelbourne.com.au)  
Classes, practicas, pop-up milongas

**Melbourne Practica Group Inc** is a non-aligned community organisation running open & structured Sunday practicas and other events that promote social tango at J Studios, 100 Barkly St, North Fitzroy. [www.melbournepractica.org](http://www.melbournepractica.org)

Well-researched tango site [www.verytango.com](http://www.verytango.com) Go to website to advertise a coming event.

**COMMUNITY TANGO IN GEELONG: Learn elegant simple tango for social dancing.** No previous dance experience or partner needed. First Monday of month (starting Feb 4) 7.30 pm Group Class, 8.30 -10.30pm **Milonga del Sur + supper. \$5.** Third Wednesday of month, 8 – 9.30pm, Group Class + practice \$3 @ Christ Church hall, corner Moorabool & McKillop Streets. Private lessons also. Contact: [richardandpam@mac.com](mailto:richardandpam@mac.com) Phone 041 753 1619.

Go to [www.southerncrossstango.com.au](http://www.southerncrossstango.com.au) for links with other Australian & overseas tango groups.

## ADELAIDE TANGO

**TANGO ADELAIDE CLUB** – Milongas & Practicas. **Club Milonga (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month), Saturday 2 February, 8pm – late** at Druid Hall, 2 Cassie St, Collingswood. \$10/7. [www.tangoadelaide.org](http://www.tangoadelaide.org)

**TANGO SALON** – Classes & Milongas. **Comme il Faut Milonga (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday each month) – Sunday 17 February 4pm – 8pm** at Mt Osmond Golf Club. \$10. [www.tangosalonadelaide.blogspot.com](http://www.tangosalonadelaide.blogspot.com)

**SIEMPRE TANGO** – Classes, Practicas & Milongas. **Coriole Winery Milonga – Saturday 26 January, 7pm – 11.30pm**, with live music & milonga, Chaffeys Rd, McLaren Vale. \$20 [www.siempretango.net.au](http://www.siempretango.net.au)

**SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO** – Classes, Practicas & Milongas. **Tango By the Sea Milonga (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month) – Sunday 10 February 4 – 8 pm** at Henley Sailing Club, 1 Esplanade, West Beach. \$12/10.

**Tango Luz Milonga – Saturday 23 February, 8-11pm** at Restless Dance Theatre Studio, 234a Sturt St, Adelaide (enter via Arthur St). \$12/10. [www.southerncrosstango.com.au](http://www.southerncrosstango.com.au)

## EXPERIENCE TANGO ON THE PARADE

**Saturday 16 & 23 February; Saturday 16 & 23 March 2013**

Tango Floorshows by Andrew & Adrienne Gill, with Peter Davies & Anna Kozii, Live Music by Guitarist Aloysius Leeson, mini Workshops & Milongas on The Parade, Norwood. FREE EVENTS!



### **Saturday 16 February, 12 – 4pm: Tango in Norwood Mall**

Tango Performances at 12, 1pm & 2pm with live music & free introductory mini-workshops, followed by social dancing Milonga from 2-4pm. Arrive in time for the beautiful floorshows, and invite a newcomer to dance in the workshops. Continue with elegant social dancing at the Milonga until 4pm.

Venue: Norwood Mall, 166 The Parade.

### **Saturday 23 February, 12 – 2.30pm: Tango in the Norwood Rotunda**

Tango Performances, live music & free introductory mini workshops at 12, 1pm & 2pm. Social dancing between performances. Bring a picnic rug, some tasty supplies & enjoy the spectacle, or get up and experience tango dancing in the Rotunda with friends & family.

Venue: Memorial Park, The Parade (in front of Norwood Oval).

### **Saturday 16 March, 12 – 2.30pm: Tango in Parade Central**

Tango Performances & free introductory mini workshops at 12, 1pm & 2pm. Social Dancing between performances. Venue: Parade Central, 185 The Parade (corner of George St) Norwood.

### **Saturday 23 March, 12 – 4pm: Tango in the Norwood Rotunda**

Tango Performances at 12, 1pm & 2pm with free introductory mini workshop & social dancing at the Milonga from 2-4pm. Bring a picnic rug, some tasty supplies, your dancing shoes, friends & family for a relaxed afternoon of social tango dancing.

Venue: Memorial Park, The Parade (in front of Norwood Oval).

FREE community events, proudly presented by the Norwood Parade Precinct Committee (NPPC), City of Norwood / Payneham Council & Southern Cross Tango.

[www.facebook.com/TheParadeNorwoodOfficial](http://www.facebook.com/TheParadeNorwoodOfficial) Follow on Twitter @Parade\_Norwood

# SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO

## MONDAYS

*New Venue in Norwood!*

**FREE Introductory Workshop: Monday 4 February 2013, 7-8pm**

**8 Wk Course: Monday 4 February – 25 March 2013**

Beginner 7pm; Intermediate/Open 8pm @ The Hungarian Club, 82 Osmond Tce, **NORWOOD**

## TUESDAYS

*New Venue in Aldgate!*

**6 Wk Course: Tuesday 29 January – 5 March 2013**

Beginner 7.30pm @ The Aldgate Memorial Hall, Kingsland Rd, **ALDGATE**

## WEDNESDAYS

*At the brand NEW Thebarton Community Centre!*

**FREE Introductory Workshop: Wednesday 6 February, 7-8pm**

**8 Wk Course: Wednesday 6 February – 27 March 2013**

Beg 7pm; Inter 8pm; Adv 9pm @ Thebarton Community Centre, cnr South Rd & Ashwin Pde, **THEBARTON**

## THURSDAY PRACTICAS

*New Venue - Thebarton Community Centre!*

**Weekly Thursday Practicas starting 7 February 2013, 7-9pm**

@ Thebarton Community Centre, South Rd, **THEBARTON**

## SATURDAYS

**Tango Training for Women: Saturday 2 February 2013, 9am – 10am**

@ Southern Cross Tango Studio, 50 Kauri Parade, **SEACLIFF**

## MONDAY – SATURDAYS

**Private Tuition:** Variable times available

@ Southern Cross Tango Studio, 50 Kauri Parade, **SEACLIFF**

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## COMMUNITY TANGO IN GEELONG (Victoria)

**First Monday of the month:** Tango Group Class 7.30pm, Milonga del Sur 8.30-10.30pm

**Third Wednesday of the month:** Group class & supervised Practica, 8.00-9.30pm

Vic Teachers: Pamela & Richard Jarvis - Ph: 0417 531 619 [richardandpam@mac.com](mailto:richardandpam@mac.com)

@ Christ Church Hall, cnr Moorabool & McKillop St, **GEELONG**

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Southern Cross Tango  
Andrew & Adrienne Gill

Ph: 0419 309 439

[sctango@bigpond.com](mailto:sctango@bigpond.com)

[www.southerncrosstango.com.au](http://www.southerncrosstango.com.au)