

TANGO AUSTRALIS

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Season's greetings and Christmas wishes



People of different backgrounds celebrate this season with friends and loved ones, and exchange gifts. Those we buy will be from small shops, local food producers, and Australian tango providers. Although a new TV advertising campaign encourages people to shop locally and buy from small businesses, it seems that most stuff in the shops is made overseas and imported. The success of the creative young mothers who started Piccadilly Markets shows that people will pay for local handmade goods.

Photo: Tiffany stained glass window, known as the Peasant Madonna (Madonna and Child) in a garden, in The Church of the Covenant in Boston)

The small and 'local' message can embrace sustainability. Gifts can be made from what grows in suburban gardens – jars of preserved lemons (lemons and salt), dried branches of bay leaves (from the tree), sachets of '*fines herbes*' for classical French cooking (parsley, chives, tarragon & chervil & sometimes marjoram), muslin bundles of '*bouquet garni*' (parsley, thyme sprigs, bay leaves and a few black peppercorns), geraniums struck from cuttings, fragrant potpourri of garden flowers, bags of rose petals to throw in the bath, sachets of lavender to keep away moths (and keep tango shoes smelling nice), room or linen spray made from water and a few drops of lavender oil in a spray bottle, homemade sweets, chocolates, mini Christmas cakes, jams, pickles, preserves & cordials, pretty aprons, pots planted with strawberries, tomato and basil, herbs, rocket or salad greens grown from seed.

If you're not creative or green-thumbed, visit a local market and buy things somebody else has made or grown. A basket or a recycled container (from an Op shop) filled with fresh market produce is an attractive and useful present. Antique markets are full of quaint pre-loved items that make interesting containers.



Photograph: Abundance in Boston – P Jarvis

A promise of a special meal cooked in somebody's home is a nice gift too, or a spot of gardening, flower arranging or house cleaning, a basket of ironing attended to, a shopping excursion, baby- or 'grannie-sitting'. Pampering is good. A foot or shoulder massage, or manicure or pedicure is a treat for any body.

And don't forget tango presents. You could take a special person to a milonga and make arrangements in advance to make sure they have many good dances.

Teachers can provide gift vouchers for a private lesson or a full tango course. See the directory towards the end of Tango Australis for contact details of teachers close to you.

A gift of lasting value for serious dancers would be the 'CAMINITO', a single day's tango journey, with Australia's highly respected and critically acclaimed professional tango teachers Andrew and Adrienne Gill, in Australia's Festival City of Adelaide. Couples will learn new skills and explore ideas and concepts in a program that incorporates intensive technique classes, practica for leaders, a themed workshop carefully designed for the group. There's a gourmet lunch, and social dancing in a relaxed and friendly environment included too. Check dates for your level in the article on page 6 of this Tango Australis. Book early as each CAMINITO is limited to just 5 couples.

Here's my Christmas wish list ...

- More quiet, still time to do nothing
- Time to prepare for things and reflect on them
- Time to remember loved ones who have passed on
- More time to read and write and listen to music
- A ticket to the next Leonard Cohen concert
- Time to see my garden develop and my grandchildren grow up
- More time to enjoy the small sweet things of life
- More time to sleep when I am tired
- More time to dance
- A trip to Adelaide to do the May 'Caminito' with my partner

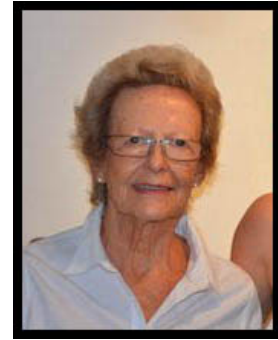
In memory

ANNIE KIDMAN 1934 – 2013

An artist, a dancer, and a friend

By A. Gill

I was saddened to recently hear of the passing of Annie Kidman, an inspiring artist, a beautiful dancer, and a warm gregarious friend whom I admired greatly. Annie danced with us for many years, opening up her beautiful home in North Adelaide for tango soirees & milongas in the summer heat.



When Annie wanted to travel alone to Buenos Aires, we arranged for the handsome young dance professional, Demian Garcia, to look after her and accompany her to nice milongas. Her hotel arranged for a chauffeur to drive her around the city and wait for her while she shopped for tango shoes. She had a wonderful time.

Modern dance & art were always a passion for Annie. She established the long-running Chinook dance school in South Australia and was a founding committee member of the Friends of the Art Gallery of SA. I fondly remember inspiring days of life drawing with Annie in her home, sharing our artistic ideas and discussing the problems of the world. It was a pleasure to finally share an exhibition of our tango inspired works in early 2012. The exhibition was part of the inaugural Buenos Aires in the Vales Tango Arts Festival.

Annie Kidman was the granddaughter of cattle king Sir Sidney Kidman, who built a pastoral empire of 68 stations covering over 25 million hectares. ABC television program 'Dynasties' featured the Kidman Dynasty. How wonderful that Annie wanted tango dancing to be included in the filming as an important part of her life & passion.



La Boca – Painting by Annie Kidman

Boston, 2013

A city grows strong in the aftermath of tragedy

Our Boston experience, after the dreadful attack that shattered innocent bodies and destroyed lives at the finish of the famous marathon race, was surprisingly positive. Art is being used in a healing way. In the square in front of Trinity Church is an installation of a row of large globes that different artists have painted. The brightly coloured globes can be touched, and kids can climb into one. On a church fence, hundreds of cloth prayers flutter, like butterflies, in the breeze in a moving tribute to the city's loss.



Photograph: Boston Strong – P Jarvis



Photographs: Boston Prayers – P Jarvis

On a city sidewalk we encountered a living installation. Young people, who might have been drama or contemporary dance students, created a tableau, a human still life - a frozen moment of urban existence. They held their poses for a while, and then, in unison, moved in slow motion to a different configuration. It was a transfixing performance. Might work for tango in public places too.



Photograph. *Boston still life* – P Jarvis

‘Play Me, I’m Yours’

‘*Play Me, I’m Yours*’ might sound like a tango mantra, but it is actually a travelling art installation, first commissioned in Birmingham, UK in 2008. Over a period of three weeks, over 140,000 people played or sat at one of 15 painted pianos placed in public spaces around the city. The artist Luke Jerram got the idea at his local launderette, where he saw the same people each weekend, not talking to one another. He thought of the hundreds of invisible communities like this in a city, of people spending time together in silence. He put a piano in the space and it changed the dynamics, acting as a catalyst for conversation.

Knowing nothing of this project, we were surprised to hear piano music late one night, on a deserted promenade on the waterfront in the newly developed precinct of south Boston. We followed the sound to a patio, where a woman was playing a painted piano. As we walked through other parts of the city on subsequent days we discovered more painted pianos, all inviting anybody so inclined to ‘*Play Me, I’m Yours*’.

In big cities, hundreds of good, working second-hand pianos are thrown away every year. Jerram transports dozens of them annually to countries where the piano is rare and more valued, for the public to enjoy. After being presented in an installation many of the pianos are donated to schools and community groups.

It was great to stop and talk to the street pianists of all ages, and other people watching. Each city where the installation is presented has a website where the public can upload and share their films, photos and stories of their interactions with the pianos (i.e. www.streetpianosla.com). As public art, ‘*Play Me, I’m Yours*’ has exceptional reach, internationally of an estimated 5 million people.



Photographs Play Me, I'm Yours pianos, Boston – P Jarvis

And guess what? ‘Play Me, I’m Yours’ is coming to Melbourne in the summer of 2014. Warren Smith, Andrew James, and other tango pianists and keyboard players who read this article, please seek out a painted piano and play tango music in the streets - and then people can dance tango all over the city of Melbourne.

But sadly, there was ‘no tango me’ in Boston

We had one free night to connect with tango. It was my birthday, and we decided to cut short our time at the closing event of the huge IBA conference, to go to a tango night in Cambridge. It was a bad call – the closing party at Boston’s historic Public Library was a ‘blast’, and the tango in Cambridge was a ‘fizzer’, characterized primarily, not just by lack of eye contact, but by the utter indifference of the local dancers (and organizer) to a couple of Aussie tango visitors.

Not since a bad night in Rome, had the cloak of tango invisibility so enshrouded us. One bright spot came as we were leaving that dismal scene. Actually, it came as we were attempting to leave. We phoned for a taxi (on our mobile), and we were told that, unless we would give the voice at the end of the line a local American phone contact number,

he would not send a cab for us. That's when a young Tanguera (also a visitor) from Chicago took pity on us, booked our cab from her phone, and waited with us until it arrived. By the time we got back to the city, the party at the Public Library was over.

Boston's Public Library is full of wondrous things – books, of course, statues, prints, drawings, a corridor of murals by Puvis de Chavannes, a gallery of John Singer Sargent murals, a great children's section, all accessible to anybody. At the party we missed, a band of old jazz veterans had played up a storm. Should have stayed there and danced.

Lessons in good teaching practice from Jamie Oliver

People love breezy, English celebrity cook and TV presenter, Jamie Oliver, or hate him. Home cooks tend largely into the first category, chefs the latter. Christopher Bantick, a senior literature lecturer at a prestigious Melbourne boys' school, a rave review of the teaching skills Jamie exhibits - *'plenty of scope in how to teach: not just cooking, but what excellent pedagogy looks like'*¹

Tango teachers can learn from Bantick's assessment and analysis of Jamie's teaching methods. Jamie teaches well because he is committed to enhancing the learning of others, passionate about communicating what matters to him, can do so with clarity, and shows deep pleasure in what he is demonstrating and exploring.

A good teacher knows his stuff (content) and understands his materials (and methods), and can thus be a versatile, adaptable and creative teacher. Prodigious subject knowledge gives a teacher confidence to innovate and be highly original in presentation. Jamie's enthusiasm is infectious. He can hold an audience and make learning fun. He knows his audience and what they are capable of achieving, and he cares about the outcomes of his teaching. He inspires, reassures and encourages his students.

How high achievers learn

High achievers are good learners. Mark Bouris writes² that such people have a *'universal response to a hole in their knowledge'* – They find someone who knows, they ask and they listen. They sign up for courses, do degrees, and go to conferences to hear from experts and specialists. Ideas are their currency, and energy and a sense of urgency are components of the psychology of achievement. *'You have to give a damn. Life unfolds in a moment.'* (There's that 'mindfulness' again). Spreadsheets and business plans, bank statements, and, indeed, videos of tango performances, are all just snapshots of some other moment. Create your own!

¹ Enthusiastic Oliver provides lessons in good teaching, Christopher Bantick, The Age, Education, Monday November 11, 2013

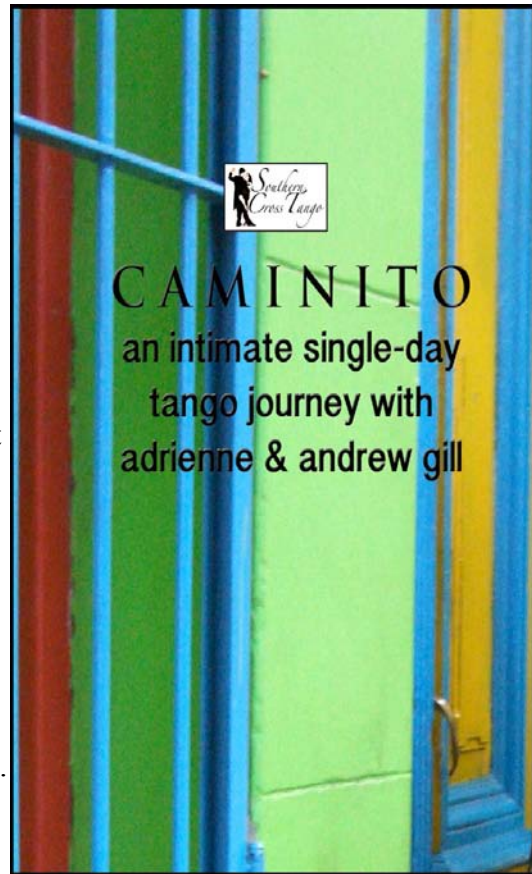
² Achievers show distinct qualities, Mark Bouris, Sunday Age, November 24, 2013

‘Caminito’

A day’s journey into tango
For those who are serious
about dancing well

Australia’s highly respected and critically acclaimed professional tango teachers Andrew and Adrienne Gill have developed ‘Caminito’, an innovative and exciting new project that offers dancers an intimate, customized, single-day journey into tango that promises to be a fantastic tango experience.

Dancers will learn new skills and explore ideas and concepts with fellow students of tango. The day will incorporate intensive technique classes, practica for leaders, a themed workshop carefully designed for the group, a fully-catered lunch, and social dancing in a relaxed and friendly environment. ‘Caminito’ offers a fabulous in-depth tango journey for all involved.



Upcoming Caminito dates:

Intermediate Group: Saturday 1 February 2014

Beginner Group: Saturday 15 February 2014

Advanced Group: Saturday 3 May 2014

Early bookings are recommended - groups are strictly limited to 5 couples. Cost: \$75pp.
Phone 0419 309 439 Email sctango@bigpond.com or www.southerncrosstango.com.au



Photo: Adrienne & Andrew Gill

Tango: it's in the touch

The name meant nothing, and the face in the photograph didn't look familiar, but Ursula's enthusiasm was catching, and she sang the praises of the dancer she'd invited to teach workshops for the fledgling Melbourne Tango Events group. We had a frantic couple of weeks, and our only free time was on the evening that the teacher from Buenos Aires, Eduardo Saucedo, was conducting a workshop on '*Exploring both roles in Tango – Understanding the roles and creating empathy with your partner*'.

For most of the session, Tony was the only male student. Richard arrived late and joined in. **Every leader in Melbourne should have been there to experience how beautiful and effective a gentle lead can be.** Eduardo's workshop was conducted with clarity, enthusiasm and skill. His teaching manner was engaging and encouraged confidence. We changed partners (and roles) frequently. Eduardo danced with all participants to fine-tune our technique. This pleased me because I believe it is the only way that a teacher can truly gauge whether a student is doing something properly in tango.

When the workshop was over, Eduardo came to me, and said that he remembered dancing with me at Confiteria Ideal in Buenos Aires.

Those of my age will remember the Pointer Sisters singing about wanting a lover with a slow hand and an easy touch – a man who would spend time and not come and go in a heated rush? Well, that was the song that came into my head after I had the loveliest tanda with a tall and gentle young man at a milonga in Buenos Aires, years ago. I did not remember the details of his appearance – just the feel of his crisp cotton shirt that afternoon, and the ease with which he led and danced with me.

When Eduardo danced with me at the practica after the workshop in Melbourne my body remembered that tango in Buenos Aires long ago. Tango is in the touch. I am flattered that he remembered me.



Photo: Milonga in Confiteria Ideal

NEW AUSTRALIAN TANGO WRITING

Short Story & Poetry Supplement sponsored by Tango Friends Australia Inc
Published in 'Tango Australis' December 2013

Cabaret Tabaris

By David Olds

Victor was in trouble. He'd chosen his partner carefully, but it wasn't working. More than anything, he needed to demonstrate that he was safe – safe to dance with, safe to be with. He'd watched the room carefully for the first few tandas, looking for the right woman. He needed someone who danced precisely and well, but not adventurously, not too flashy. He'd chosen an elegant, mature woman who had been dancing with an older man, perhaps her husband. She wore fashionable American clothes, understated, but expensive-looking. When he'd approached her, she'd looked at first a little surprised, glancing at the man sitting beside her, but then she stood gracefully to face him, closer than he'd expected. His plan was to dazzle her, the way he always did, with his aristocratic Spanish jaw, his dark brooding eyes. He would lead her with precision, and push her just a little beyond her comfort. She would respond, grow confident, and they would look good together.

The tanda was made up from Canaro's slower tangos, still popular with the *salon* crowds. They were easy to dance to, but there was always space for a little adventure. *Griseta* followed *La Quebrada*, and then one of his favourites, *Sentimiento Gaucho*. But tonight it was hopeless. He was terrified, and there was too much to think about. General Maschio was seated at his usual table, but he had more hangers-on than usual; soldiers mostly, lounging insolently, their tunics half-unbuttoned, their guns conspicuous and ugly. They were taking too much space. The *Revolución Libertadora*, three months on, was holding, and these men were growing daily more confident and self-important. The girl was there, paying attention to a young, arrogant aristocrat.

In tango, connection is everything. The world shrinks to nothing beyond awareness of your partner, and your place in the music. Here at the Cabaret Tabaris, there was more space, more sophistication than in the cafés Victor was used to. Here they danced the smoother *salon* style, with space for adventurous moves. Tonight though, he was pushing his follower woodenly around the floor, looking over her shoulder at the General and the girl, glancing anxiously at the chosen exit point. The rhythm of the music was in his soul, but now it may as well have been a marching tune. The woman, at first pliant, leaning close to him, was becoming stiff, and moving back from his embrace, her smile gone. His lack of attention was palpable, insulting. It was all going wrong.

The tune ended. Victor would not have blamed the woman if she had left him standing on the floor, a public and justifiable insult. In spite of it all, Victor was a dancer, not a guerrilla. He leaned in towards the woman, whispered an apology.

* * *

Victor was a simple man. His work at the Justicialista plant was undemanding. He would sometimes dream of driving one of these sleek cars, a hand draped nonchalantly over the wheel, the other arm around the beautiful young girl beside him. An assembly worker was not well-paid, but in Perón's Argentina anyone could dream.

Victor knew nothing of the political and social tensions, bubbling under the surface as Perón pushed at the aristocracy and the wealthy establishment. Some of Perón's critics had disappeared into jails, but conditions for the poor were better than they'd ever been. The trouble in June, when Perón had been excommunicated for challenging the authority of the Church, had seemed to die away, and Victor didn't care about squabbles over power. His sister Agustina, going through an adolescent religious phase, had been angry about it, but Victor had never bothered to understand why she was so passionately vocal, or even whose side she was on.

To Victor, even the Generals' *Revolución* a few weeks later held no interest. The income from the factory was opening up a new world to him, of Milongas at the better cafés, long Sunday afternoons laughing with his friends over a cup of Yerba Mate. He wasn't home very much, so Agustina's disappearance seemed at first not very serious. He was sure she'd had some sort of argument with their father; she seemed to be so volatile lately. He imagined her at her friend's place, fuming over the blind stupidity of old people. When her body was returned two days later, mutilated almost beyond recognition, Victor could not seem to absorb the reality of it. He wandered numbly about the house, avoiding his weeping mother, his silent, stone-faced father. His beautiful sister was too spirited, too alive, to have been taken from them like this.

Victor's friends were avoiding him, their fear palpable. His fellow workers were keeping their distance, and Victor didn't care, lost under the baffled grief that hit him anew every morning. Then one day Luis, his shift supervisor, handed the new batch of process forms to Victor. Six pages in was a note: 'Reject Bin 2, 4:00. Alone.'

He went, less out of curiosity than a kind of somnambulant lassitude. Gabriel Aguilar was there, waiting for him. Aguilar watched Victor's arrival, checking the yard for movement. Victor knew Aguilar as some kind of labour organizer, a loud, always angry man. When Victor reached him, Aguilar's gentle greeting surprised him. Aguilar said 'We know what happened to your sister. We can't talk here, but you should meet us tonight at the café – the Dorrego. Come alone.' Gabriel strode off, not looking back.

It was at the Dorrego that Victor was recruited. He found Gabriel Aguilar and three strangers sitting around a back table. He'd been unable to comprehend what was going on – he thought Agustina had been attacked by some drunken maniac; he didn't understand why there would be any need for this cloak-and-dagger stuff. Aguilar changed that.

'Your sister joined a group of students organised by one of her teachers. They were putting out Perónist pamphlets – protesting about Perón's excommunication. She was delivering a batch when she got stopped by a bunch of General Maschio's men. Our guy saw it. They were just pushing her around, asking for kisses, calling her 'pretty little girl'. She got angry, shouted at them, and things turned nasty. They hit her, and she dropped her bag. One of them ripped it open and found the pamphlets. A Cabo hit her with his rifle, and she went down. They kicked her and then dragged her off. They threw her into their truck, and drove away, towards the old Caseros prison. We have people outside the prison, but nobody saw the truck arrive. We think they took her down to Puerto Madero, killed her and dumped her there.'

A surge of rage erupted over Victor. He leapt up, spilling drinks, but one of the men grabbed him, dragged him back down. 'You need to stay calm. You can't get to these people; they are protected by the Generals. People are being taken off the streets. The only way to get at them is through resistance – armed resistance.' Victor listened as these men opened an entire new world to him - stories of injustices, accounts of crimes against the poor and powerless, corruption at the highest levels. Aguilar talked about

Perón's egalitarian policies, redistributing wealth away from the aristocracy, and into the hands of the people whose work had created all these riches. He talked about the rage this fomented among the wealthy.

'When the poor rise up, these rich people become enraged. They burn with a desire to kill as many peasants as they can. It gets personal for them. But that sort of thing can't go on forever. Eventually the poor get pushed so low they don't have anything to lose. Then a revolution begins. The *Revolución Libertadora* was not a revolution. It was pushed down onto us by the rich to make sure they hung on to their wealth. But we will have a real revolution soon, and then the poor will have their revenge'.

At home, Victor lay on his bed, thinking. He was appalled to realise that Agustina knew about all this stuff, while he had just been breezing along, ignorant, disengaged, not caring. His grief was turning slowly to shame, as he thought about Agustina's courage, her spirit. By the end of a sleepless night, a need had been born: to make amends for his facile lifestyle, to stand up and be a man.

Over the next few weeks, Victor met regularly with Aguilar and his friends. He began to notice things. His beloved tango was under attack. Tango was not just a dance, a style of music: tango was entwined with what it meant to be a citizen of Argentina, a worker in Buenos Aires. Many famous tango performers and musicians were being imprisoned. Everywhere the tango clubs and cafés were closing, as the new curfew took hold. Tango had always been the focus for suspicion by the rich. They thought it vulgar, and they didn't like the idea of a lot of impoverished young men meeting and perhaps discussing politics. Many venues were switching to rock-and-roll, to avoid trouble. This cultural change was pushed by the generals. Minors could get into rock-and-roll nightclubs, but they were strictly banned from the tango clubs. If the rich had their way, tango would disappear forever.

One evening it all came together. Aguilar's informants mentioned Maschio's regular visits to the Cabaret Tabaris. Maybe Maschio was vulnerable there, but nobody could come up with a way to get at him. Too many soldiers, too many guns. Then someone mentioned Maschio's daughter – she was often there too, and the General sometimes let her dance with the safer tango leaders. It was Aguilar who hit on the idea of grabbing the daughter. 'Then we'll make the General pay!' Suddenly, Victor found himself at the centre of a desperately crazy plan.

* * *

Victor danced. His partner seemed insubstantial, and yet she became the entirety of his universe. He was the conduit between the music and the movement of his follower, responding to both with no conscious intent. When the woman closed her eyes, Victor knew he had won her back; she trusted him. As the flow took them past the General, Victor led her into a few simple but elegant figures – nothing elaborate but executed cleanly and with precision. He hoped the General and his daughter had noticed. Victor thanked the woman and again apologised. It was clear that she had forgiven him. His charm was working.

Later, as he approached the General's daughter, Victor had recovered his sense of calm, but the rabble of soldiers lost some of their slovenly lassitude; they were more alert than they had seemed. One of them reached for his rifle, and Victor froze. Perhaps they somehow knew. But now was the moment. He addressed the General:

'General Maschio, may I have the pleasure of dancing with your daughter?'

The soldier with the rifle made to stand, automatically threatening violence. Involuntarily, Victor stepped back. That instant, as the General began to form his reply, his daughter leaned towards him, whispering urgently. The General paused, looked more closely at Victor.

‘You danced with Signora Nieves.’

Victor nodded, assuming that was his earlier partner.

‘Very well.’ Maschio nodded curtly to his daughter. Accustomed to her father’s mercurial moods, the girl sprang to her feet and stood in front of Victor. There was a final moment of terror as Victor, trying to maintain respectful distance between himself and the girl, found himself pulled towards her in a close embrace. Her smile was mischievous. There was an endless wait for the music to begin, all the while Maschio’s eyes blazing into Victor’s. At last, Victor was able to move into the *salida*. He was relieved to find that she moved gracefully, following him easily and without effort. It would have been much more difficult if the spoiled bitch couldn’t dance.

The capture was planned to happen near the end of the *tanda*. Victor needed to keep the girl happy, not knowing whether she would bother with the usual well-mannered conventions. If she didn’t like dancing with him, she could just walk off the floor mid-tune. Jesus, she could have him shot. The thought made him angry, and, since in tango, the emotions hover near the surface, his anger found an outlet in rather curt, aggressive moves. The girl just smiled and stayed with him. He found a small space and used it to turn her and lead a stopped forward *ocho*. This is a peculiar moment in tango. The leader hands over control to his follower, not knowing what she will do, not knowing how long she will retain control, needing to be ready to instantly pick up the lead and move into the next figure. His decision will take milliseconds, and he will need to signal his intention to his partner. She will need to respond just as quickly. When those moments work, the magic of tango becomes overpowering, as two individuals merge their wills in an act of pure courage and trust. This one worked. It was as though a switch had been thrown, letting them revel in their shared experience, and for the rest of the dance, Victor and the girl existed only for each other and for the music, locked simultaneously in a duel and a complete spiritual merging.

The tune finished when they were some distance from Mischio.

‘I’m María.’

‘Victor.’

‘I know.’

Victor froze. If she knew his name, maybe she got it from her father. Maybe Mischio knew who he was, who his sister was. Maybe he was being set up.

‘My friend Esperanza told me – you danced with her at Akarense. She fell in love with you.’

‘Of course – all the girls do.’

María thumped him on the chest, open-palmed, smiling.

‘I haven’t fallen in love with you.’

‘That’s because you’re too young – and besides, we’ve only danced one tune’.

Unfazed, she said, ‘I’ll be eighteen soon, and anyway, I want to fall in love a dozen times before I fall in love with you.’

This brought Victor back to the reality. As the music began again, he wondered whether this girl would reach eighteen, let alone fall in love. She was the daughter of a shallow opportunistic political animal – what did Victor care about her? Agustina was dead at the hands of this girl’s monster of a father. Better finish this family off now, before they spread their poison into the future. Even so, she was just a girl, full of life like Agustina had been. These power-hungry men had no right to destroy innocent young girls. But then, what was he himself doing?

Victor was a son of the tango tradition. It was in his bones – the leader is responsible for the safety of the follower. There is no excuse. And now, here he was, on the tango floor, actively seeking to harm his follower, a girl of seventeen.

He’d been dancing mechanically, and a minute had gone by. Perhaps two minutes of this tune remained. He had to get near the exit, then turn some steps in place, waiting for the moment. But that didn’t seem right, when the music called to him, when the girl danced so lightly, following him like a shadow. The plan was burned into his being. He had to get the girl over to the exit, then bundle her off the floor into the hands of his compatriots. They would make her disappear, out into the country, a hostage to their demands for justice, for a voice, for an end to the cruelty of this new regime of self-obsessed little men.

But this was tango. The girl trusted him totally. Their dance was not spectacular – he was distracted, and she was too young and inexperienced to feel the deeper resonances. Victor wished she would have the chance to refine her natural affinity, to season her dance with the heartbreaks of lost love, with the arrogance of conquest, with a deeper insight into the complexity of the music.

Victor had led María into a pause where she was stopped, and they were leaning out from each other, swaying about a common axis, waiting for the music to call for a resolution. She stepped over his foot, then swung round close to him. Victor opened a space that she had to go into, but straight away, as she moved there, he was somewhere else, stepping into the place where María should have been, but she was gone, already swirling around into an empty place where he could lead her into an entrada so intimate that the General would have shot him. When María wrapped herself around his thigh, moving slowly, and yet perfectly into the next moment, Victor was lost. It was unforgiveable to betray this girl, but even worse, this was a betrayal of tango. The leader does not expose the follower to danger.

A small floor space opened in front of them. Victor moved into it fast, María like a wraith in front of him, smiling at the sudden forcefulness, flowing without effort as he powered forward. He worked his way aggressively around the floor, back to where the General lounged in his drunken stupor. He pushed the girl away from him, into the slack forms of the soldiers, seeing her pleasure switch to confusion as she fell to the floor.

‘She’s in danger – get her out of here,’ he shouted, turning and running along the edge of the dance floor. Even now, respect for the dance would not allow him to run into the paths of the dancers. He had a vague sense of soldiers struggling to their feet, wrestling rifles into place.

The shot could have come from anywhere. Soldiers drunk and trigger-happy would see no reason to hold back in a crowded room. Aguilar would know that the integrity of the resistance was at risk. Victor fell dead on the tango floor.

David Olds is a South Australian writer, who says he is trying to learn to tango. He won the Imprints Prize for Fiction in 2009, and the Richard Conyers Prize for the highest scoring Humanities thesis in 2010. He is currently writing a PhD thesis about the *Nation Review* newspaper and its role in Australian society. David's 'Cabaret Tabaris' was awarded second prize in the 2013 Australian Tango Short Story Competition. This is a longer version of the story published in *Tango Australis* in June.



Photograph: Buenos Aires at the Beach 2008

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Tango Friends Australia Inc raises funds for the prize money for the Australian Tango Poetry & Australian Tango Short Story Competitions, and to cover the cost of publishing fees, as a sponsorship program to develop a genre of Australian tango writing and take it to a readership of tango lovers across Australia and around the world.

Entry forms for the 2014 competitions will be available in the New Year, with contact and other details announced in the January edition of *Tango Australis*.

KARIN ANDERSON

Flame Fingers

You're my patient cobbler
caring and repairing
my old flat-black-tacked shoes
steering me through safe streets.
My legs swing rhythm of
years in soft shoeshine lasts.

If I swap shoes to
snazzy tap tappers
in dare-devil red
to tango on roofs
and tip topple down

will you catch me
to rise again
as notes climax
tango passion

and pluck my
heart with flame
fingers to

both learn

tango

NOW?

Karin Anderson © 2013

(A Tritina Poem)

Tango In The Rain

Eye me as blue irises and spritz me in nimbus rain;
let our hearts now dance for our health, my old love
as lips kiss bud's youth in spring's flower press.

Take me now, slow slow, quick quick, as you press
in tango's cadence, then carousel in scent's rain
as we sheen in shower's gold sojourn of hot love.

Dance tangos sultry flame steps with tremulous love
where beating hearts drip red to sensually press
passion, then leg hook and pivot in trembling rain.

We're tango renewed in rain, my love, as lips press.

Karin Anderson © 2013

Karin Anderson finds the tango fascinating to watch, although she doesn't dance tango. She lives in Adelaide and is a member of S.A. Writer's Centre. Her poem 'Flame Fingers' was awarded a Judges' Commendation in the Australian Tango Poetry Competition in 2013.

She wrote the following in her biographical notes ... *'It has been a joy to write poetry for 20 years and I have qualifications in copywriting and writing for Public Relations. I have been a member of a poetry group called Wordweavers and we have published three poetry books. Since retiring from the work force a few years ago, I have found more time to write. Currently I am published in Sketchbook, an online international site, where most of my poetry is used as Ekphrastic Expressions (combined with music and images). Also 'Positive Words', 'FreeXpression and 'The Mozzie' (three Australian publications). I am a member of a dance group called 'Dance for Health' where we enjoy folk, square, and bush dancing and I also attend a zumba class.'*

AVRIL BRADLEY

Illumination

I know why

this kitchen moves its walls when
the bandoneon plays.

I am back in Buenos Aires ancient halls
joining the dancers as my body sways.

I know what

the caged bird feels above
this squalid sink.

I see loose limbs and flashing heels.
Imprisoned here I think

I know how

you, my love, so faraway,
keep walking in the grit of city's night as
stars shine down from darkling grey.

I know why

men grasped in poverty's grim fight
pursue their dreams in tango dances and
dance away the barren hours of days without delight.

For this is when

dim hope spreads in fractured hearts, furtive glances
beneath the glare of neon light
a room full with tango dancers
captivated by the music of the night.

Barefoot Tango (a sonnet on the sand)

Leave the dancers in the heated room.

Discard the shoes.

Breathe the fresh of outside air.

With hoisted skirts and trousers rolled

take the tango to the ebbing tide.

Soft sea shallows shush the

curled up toes soothe

in ripples music, lapping ankles

in wave and spray and light, smooth

the boundless air above.

A gentle breeze hums harmonies

around the bodies whirling joy

facing toe to toe and hand to hand

they strike elegant tango poses on the sand.

Avril Bradley's *'Memory on Water'* won Second Prize in 2011 Australian Tango Poetry Competition. In 2013, with an exceptional body of work, Avril was awarded First Prize in the Australian Tango Poetry Competition for *'Tango Villanelle'* and Second Prize for *'Recipe for Milonga Dressing'*. These two poems were published in *Tango Australis* in May 2013.

Avril's poetry is regularly published in magazines and anthologies Australia-wide. She has published three collections: *'Poems from the Wilderness'* (2008) and *'a china shop in a bull'* (2010), and *'inter alia'* with Ginninderra Press (2012). Avril was awarded First Prize in the Open Section of The Bridge Foundation's Poetry Competition in 2011, and was runner-up in the inaugural Bard of the Stables Competition organized by Stone's Winery, Yarra Glen.

She performed at the Melbourne writers' Festival for three years as part of Poetry Idol, and one of her poems was interpreted and performed by actors from RMIT as part of the Fringe Festival 2011. Now retired from teaching and Academia, Avril lives on the seashore in Frankston.

She has read her poetry to audience acclaim at a number of tango events.

ANNE M. CARSEN

Beach *Milonga*

Ventnor, Phillip Island, Victoria

Sand-drag slows our steps, forces
deliberation into our movements.
Slow languorous tango, bodies salted,

sated with sun and water. The slap
of waves is our percussion, then *bandoneon*
squawk from the throat of a gull our

accompaniment. You hum a few bars
and the tune leaps between us, lithe like
that other spark, drawing us closer.

We people our salon with others *tangueros*,
fall into line of dance. Circling the
sandy *pista*, we enter the world of our

private tango, tuned to each other, the rise
and fall of chest, the way intention lives,
energy coiled in the solar plexus. All my

senses open to you, as wide as the day.
The *ochos* are hard but I manage to make
a clumsy pivot seem intentionally languid,

even elegant. The *giros* are harder still,
scoring giant grooves into the sand.
With each revolution we sink deeper

and deeper into connection, into the soul
of the dance. Thoughts go the way of the
wayward wind; the body and its knowing

reign. Impossible to summon measures of
melancholy when the sun shines so brilliantly,
pushing cares and memories aside.

But explicit or not we bring our whole selves
to the *abrazo*, all the ways life has stamped us
with loss, the tyranny of its transitoriness.

There will be other days for the profound
existential gesture, for infusing the *caminada*
with gravitas and pathos, the nostalgia for

we know-not-quite-what. Today's tango
is playful, sexy, delighting in the way
the dance makes us hum in anticipation.

JANET BREEN

That Tender Space

Fresh blood glistened on old cobblestones,
Blue haze swirled in the hot, lamp lit alley,
And Carlos played from a window far away.
With eyes closed and heads poised
Lovers danced, oblivious
To death at their feet.

- shoes sliding, legs gliding –

A silver handgun in the gutter.
A mournful cry from the bleeding man
Darkly beautiful like the leader.
His eyes closed, his dying head poised
Towards that other space.

The space where life meets death.
That space – between – where souls truly meet.
That space from which essence both pours
And lies waiting for the encounter –
In the dance,
And in death,

- bodies turning, skin burning –

A dress softly brushes the thigh
As young lovers too merge in that space,
That tender space – between – on bloodied glistening stone.
Transported, united, suspended
In timeless bliss of dance sublime.

Life and death came together that night.
The mystery of tango,
The shot of a gun,
When that space opened wide
And gave entry
- Poised and blue hazed –
To three souls chanced upon that lamplit,
Cobblestone lane.

Anne M. Carson is a Melbourne visual artist and writer who has been published in the USA, Japan and widely in Australia. She has won and been commended in a number of poetry prizes, most recently she was commended in the Max Harris Poetry Competition. This year her first full-length poetry collection, *Removing the Kimono* was published by Hybrid Publishers. She also works as a project-based creative writing therapist and has edited three volumes of writings from these projects.

Janet Breen has been writing for most of her adult life, but it is only recently that some of her works have been published. Having a degree in philosophy, writing is the vehicle by which she records and explores that fascinating thing called the 'Human Condition'.

When she and her husband Paul became involved with Community Tango in Geelong, tango took her by surprise. She discovered that tango was not only physical movements on a dancefloor, it engaged the deepest emotional levels of the dancer. (She has also discovered that just because she might 'get' tango, it doesn't necessarily mean that she can 'do' it!)

Janet was awarded First Prize in the Australian Tango Short Story Competition in 2013 for *'The Gatekeeper'*. Her story *'Melbourne to Buenos Aires'* received a Judges' Commendation in the same competition. Her poem *'That Tender Space'* received a Judges' Commendation in the Australian Tango Poetry Competition.

She has been a yoga practitioner for many years and adores walking, both on the beach and in the bush.

Time to get writing – in Spanish and English

A delicious change-of-pace comes with holidays, languid summer days and warm evenings. If the poems and short story that you read in *Tango Australis* inspire you, why not put pen to paper and get writing new tango-inspired works.

Tango history is recorded not only in dance and music styles, performances and personalities, or photographs. Since the beginning tango has inspired writers, poets and philosophers. Sponsorship programs of **Tango Friends Australia Inc** encourage people to participate in our own evolving tango culture. Tango Friends raise money for competition prize money and support the publishing of new works.

To further strengthen community links, Tango Friends Australia Inc has extended its sponsorship to provide for an additional category in the 2014 Australian tango literature competitions, with **a new category for poems written in Spanish**. The 2014 tango literature competitions are: Australian Tango Poetry (in English), Australian Tango Short Story (in English), & Australian Tango Poetry (in Spanish).

To qualify for the competitions, writers must be primarily resident in Australia. The prize-winning poems and short stories will be published in *Tango Australis*. Entry forms available in January & entries will be accepted until 31 July 2014. Judges' short list will be announced in September 2014, and prizes awarded in October 2014. For information Email richardandpam@mac.com with Convenor Australian Tango Literary Competitions in the header.

Melbourne City Summertime 'Dancing in the Streets'

Free twilight classes & dancing at St Paul's Court, Federation Square (next to Fed Square Information Centre), Fridays 5.30 – 7pm – 13 December, 10 & 24 January, 7 & 21 February, 7 & 21 March – for more info Email david@sidewalktango.com.au

FREE 'Tango 100' Milonga on Sunday 9 February at the Deakin Edge, 2 – 6 pm

Tango around Australia

DARWIN TANGO

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

HOBART TANGO

Tango Milongueros, Jenny & Vince Merlo (0438 300 753 & 0427 479 217). Classes, milongas & practicas, performances & lovely events. Email: tangomtas@gmail.com
www.tangomilonguerotasmania.com or Facebook

Tasmanian Club de Tango: tasmaniantangoclub@hotmail.com & www.tastangoclub.com
Milongas, Practicas, Special events. April 2014 Easter/ANZAC break 'Tango on the Island'

PERTH TANGO

Champagne Tango www.champagnetangoperth.com Email:
info@champagnetangoperth.com Sabrina Elias Phone: 0404 264 557 Perth: Monthly Milonga (4th Saturday), classes & events.

MELBOURNE TANGO

Rina Joy Koseki & Nadim Sawaya - group classes, courses, & private classes at Tango Butterfly in Glen Iris and a at 456 Nicholson St, North Fitzroy – www.rinajoy.com Email rinakoseki@yahoo.com.au

Sidewalk Tango, David Backler @ 327 Swan Street Richmond (Tiki Bar). Tango Noir Milonga 1st Friday of month 8pm - 1am. Fully licensed bar - \$15 includes supper; Practica 'T' Wednesdays 9 – 10.30pm \$8. Classes Mon & Wed in Richmond; Tuesdays in St Kilda End of Year **Christmas BA Milonga, Sunday 22 December**, 3 – 7pm @ Tiki Bar, \$20 includes BBQ & glass of wine. Summer Workshop Program 2014 (25th & 26th) & Australia Day BBQ Milonga, Sunday 26 Jan, 3-6pm. Practicas 22nd & 29th Jan & 5th Feb. Normal class schedule resumes 10 February www.sidewalktango.com.au - Email david@sidewalktango.com.au

Solo Tango – Alberto & Natalia's milonga, last Sat of month, 154 Liardet St, Port Melbourne. Class details albertocortez@bigpond.com Ph: 0411 665 454

Tango Bajo, **Bill 0416 015 327**, La Mision Milonga Sat, Class 8.30, dancing 9pm till late (usually \$15), Wed classes, 73-75 Union St, Armadale. Enquiries 0419 826 061

Tango Tambien, Leigh Rogan, classes different venues, Siempre Asi Milonga last Sunday of month 3-6pm, Dance Be In It Studios, 73-75 Union St, Armadale www.tangotambien.com
Email leighis@fastmail.fm

Chris Corby, group & private classes, Essendon. Chris_corby@hotmail.com Phone 0423 388 799.

Tango Butterfly, Dana Parker 0403 192 867 – info@tangobutterfly.com.au Classes, practicas & Monday La Milonga de las Mariposas, 1543 High St, Glen Iris
www.tangobutterfly.com.au and dana@tangobutterfly.com.au

Viva, Christian Drogo's Tango Bar 'La Milonga de Fitzroy', last Friday of month, 1/241 Smith St, Fitzroy. Doors open 7.30, open, class 8pm, then social dancing till late. \$15 – BYO drinks & nibbles. Private lessons, group classes and practice on different nights. Phone 9415 8166 or 0419 361 859 www.vivadance.com.au Email info@vivadance.com.au

Melbourne Tango hosts Milonga at Czech House, 497 Queensberry St, Nth Melbourne, 2nd Sunday of month, class 6.30pm, Milonga from 7.30pm

Melbourne Practica Group Inc, a non-aligned community organization running open & structured Sunday practicas, 3-6pm, at Centrestage Performing Arts School, 15 Albert St, Brunswick East – and other events www.melbournepractica.org

Project NFT (Neo Fusion Tango), 1st & 3rd Sunday of month from 7pm, 1st floor, Palace Hotel Camberwell, 893 Burke Rd, opp. railway station & on tram route 72, stop 64
rjh@keypoint.com.au

Tango Melbourne, classes, practicas and Friday milongas, reeneffleck84@gmail.com and info@tangomelbourne.com.au

Melbourne Tango Events, a new organization, hosting visiting dancers from Buenos Aires & special events
melbournetangoevents@hotmail.com.au www.melbournetangoevents.com.au

Community Tango in Geelong,

December 'Put sparkle in your Tango' at Christ Church, corner Moorabool & McKillop Streets, Geelong: Monday 2nd with Pam & Richard & Wednesday 18th December with Adrienne & Andrew, 7.30 – 9.30pm. - \$25 for 2 nights. Email your registration.

Regular schedule resumes in February - 1st Monday of month, 7.30 – 10.30pm group class + Milonga del Sur + supper (\$5) - 3rd Wed of month, 8 – 9.30pm (\$3) group class + supervised practice. The focus is on elegant tango & vals and dynamic milonga for social dancing.

Occasional events, workshops, community activities & private lessons – Ph: 041 753 1619, richardandpam@mac.com and www.southerncrosstango.com.au

Central Victorian Tango – Regular classes in Shepparton start 4th December - \$10. Social event planned for late February 2014. Email brunogiorgio@internode.on.net

Good tango site www.verytango.com

Links with other Australian & overseas groups, www.southerncrosstango.com.au

ADELAIDE TANGO

TANGO ADELAIDE CLUB - Milongas & Practicas. **Tango Adelaide Club Milonga - Saturday 7 December**, 8pm -12 at Druids Hall, 2 Cassie St, Collingswood. \$10. **New Years Eve Milonga – Tuesday 31 December**, 8pm – 12.30am at Druids Hall, 2 Cassie St, Collingswood. \$10. Free for members. www.tangoadelaide.org

TANGO SALON - Classes & Milongas. **Comme Il Faut Milonga – Sunday 15 December**, 4pm – 8pm at Mt Osmond Golf Club. \$10. www.tangosalonadelaide.blogspot.com

SIEMPRE TANGO - Classes, Practicas & Milongas. **Super Practica Christmas Milonga, Thursday 12 December**, 8pm at North Adelaide Community Centre, 176 Tynte St, North Adelaide. www.siempretango.net.au

SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO – SUMMER 2014 PROGRAM

Tango Magic – Christmas Milonga, Saturday 14 December, 8pm – 12 at Henley Sailing Club, 1 Seaview Rd, West Beach. Featuring tango floorshow by Andrew & Adrienne Gill, incredible magician, cabaret & street performer James James, the premiere of Southern Cross Tango ensemble's brand new group choreography, social dancing all night & some magical tanda surprises... Bring a plate of festive supper to share & dress with Magical Elegance - Stylish Decadence. Book your tickets now! \$20. Bookings E: sctango@bigpond.com or Ph 0419 309 439.



Summer Tango Refresher!

6 Wk Summer Tango Course begins on Wednesday 8 January 2014,
Beg 7pm - **FREE** Introductory Class on 8 January; Inter 8pm, Adv 9pm
At Thebarton Community Centre, cnr South Rd & Ashwin Pde, Torrensville.

Dance Socially every Thursday!

Launch of Southern Cross Tango's Thursday Practica / Milonga – Thursday 9 January 2014, 7pm – 9pm at Thebarton Community Centre, cnr South Rd & Ashwin Pde, Torrensville.
\$7. All welcome. Thursday Practica / Milonga will continue weekly throughout the year.

Tango by the Sea Milonga – 2nd Sunday of the month

Tango by the Sea returns on Sunday 12 January 2014, 4pm – 8pm at Henley Sailing Club, 1 Seaview Rd, West Beach. Bring a plate of supper to share. Drinks from the bar. \$12/10. \$5 newcomers.

FREE Summer Milonga in Stirling!

Tango in the Stirling Rotunda – Saturday 18 January 2014, 12 – 3pm at the Stirling Memorial Reserve, corner of Mt Barker & Avenue Rd, Stirling. Bring picnic supplies & your dancing shoes.

Tango Classes return to the Adelaide Hills!

6 Wk Summer Tango Course begins on Tuesday 21 January 2014, 7.30pm
FREE Introductory Class on 21 January.
at Aldgate Memorial Hall, Kingsland Rd, Aldgate.

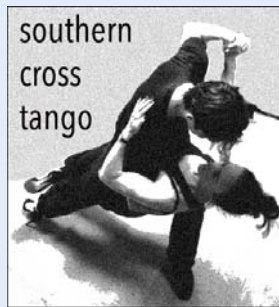
Tango Luz Milonga – 4th Saturday of the month

Tango Luz Milonga returns on Saturday 25 January, 8pm – 11pm at Restless Dance Theatre, 234a Sturt St, Adelaide (enter via Arthur St). \$12/10. \$5 newcomers. Byo drinks & snacks.

Caminito – An intimate single-day tango journey with Adrienne & Andrew Gill

Intermediate Group: **Saturday 1 February 2014, Beginner Group 15 February 2014**
Limited numbers, Bookings now open.

www.southerncrestango.com.au



MONDAYS

3 Wk Course: 25 November – 9 December 2013

PRACTICA Y for Men 7pm; Open Level 8pm 'Dancing to the Orchestras'

4 Wk Summer Course: 3 – 24 February 2014

FREE Introductory Workshop on Mon 3 February, 7-8pm

Beg 7pm, Inter 8pm @ The Hungarian Club, 82 Osmond Tce, NORWOOD

TUESDAYS

6 Wk Summer Course: 21 January – 25 February 2014

FREE Introductory Workshop on Tues 21 January 7.30-8.30pm

@ The Aldgate Memorial Hall, Kingsland Rd, ALDGATE

WEDNESDAYS

3 Wk Course: 27 November – 11 December 2013

Beginner 7pm 'Introduction to tango, milonga & vals'

'Dancing to the Orchestras' – Intermediate 8pm; Advanced 9pm

6 Wk Summer Course: 8 January – 12 February 2014

FREE Introductory Workshop on Wed 8 January, 7-8pm

Beg 7pm; Inter 8pm; Adv 9pm

@ Thebarton Community Centre, cnr South Rd & Ashwin Pde, TORRENSVILLE

THURSDAY - PRACTICA

Weekly Practicas until 12 December 2013, 7-9pm

THURSDAY PRACTICA / MILONGA launches on Thursday 9 January 2014, 7-9pm

@ Thebarton Community Centre, cnr South Rd & Ashwin Pde, TORRENSVILLE

SATURDAYS

HEAD OVER HEELS - Tango Technique Training for Women with Adrienne Gill

Saturday 7 - 14 December 2013; Saturday 11 – 25 January, 8 & 22 February 2014

9am – 10am (Open) @ Southern Cross Tango Studio, SEACLIFF

MONDAY to SATURDAYS – Private Tuition

Various times available @ Southern Cross Tango Studio, SEACLIFF

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

@ Christ Church Hall, corner Moorabool & McKillop St, GEELONG

Southern Cross Tango - Andrew & Adrienne Gill

Ph: 0419 309 439 sctango@bigpond.com

www.southerncrosstango.com.au