

TANGO AUSTRALIS

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Do you remember how it felt to see clouds dancing, and feel a warm breeze on your skin?



When did you last take time to marvel at the industry of bees...



Or realise that the colour purple has a fragrance?

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Tango and Clive James' shifting skies

It is interesting to examine the trajectory of an older writer's life and body of work. Clive James was born in Australia in 1938, but has lived in the United Kingdom since 1962. He is well-known as an author, journalist, critic, broadcaster, poet, translator and memoirist, and presenter of TV chat shows and documentaries. He married Prudence A. Shaw, an emeritus reader in Italian studies and Dante scholar at University College, London in 1968. The couple have two daughters. The marriage ended in 2004.

In recent years, Clive James achieved a different kind of fame, as a passionate tango dancer. Tango women, in several countries, have laid claim to being a favoured, or even his favourite, tango partner. Clive James has been seen dancing at milongas around Australia. In 2011, he confirmed he was suffering from B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia. In 2012 he thought he was 'near the end'. Still alive, albeit somewhat embarrassed, in 2015, he thanks an experimental drug treatment for still being here in 2018.

Clive James has been busy. His new book has just been published by Picador: an epic poem, 122-pages long, called *The River in the Sky*. *The Australian* newspaper published an extract of the poem, accompanied by an article by Geordie Williamson¹. What leapt from the page, after a scene-setting description of a grand house on a hill in Buenos Aires and a flagstone courtyard that swept down to the River Plate, were the following lines:

*The tango dancers gathered in the dusk
And as the night came on, the burning lamps
Killed insects while the dancers brought to life
The spirit of their lovely craft.*

Clive James felt blessed, an interloper amongst home-grown adepts. The most elegantly gracious dancing lady on the floor was blind. He got up courage and invited her to dance. His description of what he experienced as they danced together will be evocative to other tango dancers. What resonated, particularly, were these lines:

*...But this one gave me all her confidence
Gave me her life, in fact. Beyond that night –
Beyond, indeed, the third dance of our tanda –
I saw her never once again ...*

Clive James didn't dream of the woman after that event, although she had given him her 'life' in their *tanda* of three tangos. This did not bother him. What remained, the legacy of that dance coupling, was wonder at the fact that the woman was blind; that she had never once seen anything. Blindness, trust, surrender, the end of the dance, the parting.

¹ The Australian review, September 15 – 16, 2018, pp 16 - 17

Tangueros say that, when you have danced one *tanda*, you know a partner's life...that you cannot tell a lie in tango...that you must leave what you find in tango. We talk to our tango students of trust and of learning to see with their skin. An Australian *Tanguera* speaks of dancing a wonderful *tanda* with a man at a Buenos Aires milonga. The man put a sign on his table that read something like this: *'Please ask me to dance. I'm blind'*. She did.

On older men and memory...

...Or, what if Leonard Cohen had written tangos?

Instead of *La cumparsita* played as the last track in the last *tanda* at a *milonga*, we might end our tango nights with *Dance me to the end of love*.

*Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin
Dance me through the panic till I'm gathered safely in
Lift me like an olive branch and be my homeward dove
Dance me to the end of love*

'Dance me to the end of love' by Leonard Cohen

Some songs tap deeply into the roots of memory. You want to hold those songs in your heart, forever. Astor Piazzolla's *Milonga del angel* is another such a composition, evoking life's final dance in the embrace of an angel. Leonard Cohen wrote *Dance me to the end of love* in 1984. If its slow, haunting rhythm makes you want to move, that is probably because the form of the song is that of a Greek dance with an ancient pedigree: the *Hasapiko*. Music is universal, and the best music is timeless and ageless. Cohen lived on the Greek island of Hydra for years. *Dance me to the end of love* sounds like a love song, and it is often sung as such, but its genesis came from Cohen's readings on the Holocaust, death camps, and the *Lager Kapellan*, Jewish musicians of Auschwitz, who were made to play as people were marched into the gas chambers. That song is Cohen's memorial tribute to the lives of those people. It is the prayer and the blessing that the tango, *Plegaria*, with its association with despots and death camps, can never be.

Cohen's song is a love song also, passionate and erotic. A timeless celebration of life and love:

*Let me see your beauty when the witnesses are gone / Let me feel you
moving like they do in Babylon / Show me slowly what I only know the
limits of ... Dance me very tenderly and dance me very long ...*

How we yearn to find such passionate expression in a tango song, or a tango partner's arms. People say that tango music is romantic, and that is what we'd like to believe. Certainly, some tango songs are romantic, in a regretful kind of way, but the lyrics of many are morose and self-pitying, and some are downright vulgar. I find romance in some *tango vals* music, which is why I enjoy dancing this form, and in instrumental arrangements of some, but not all, Pugliese and Piazzolla compositions. Generally speaking, however, for me, the romance of tango lies, not in the words or music as such, but in how the music is viscerally connected to my imagination and the memory of what I experience dancing in the arms of somebody who cares about me. This is what I

remember of the good dances; this is what I want to experience again; this is why I keep dancing.

One way of looking at the tango, is to view its oeuvre as a musical timeline, strongly rooted in the past, nurtured in the present, and sending new tendrils into the future. Ventura Lynch (1850 – 1888) was an Argentine musician, painter, writer and folklorist. He was one of the early writers of material relating to tango, publishing the *Buenos Aires Songbook* in 1883, towards the end of his life. He wrote about the cultural roots of tango, and the genesis of the *milonga* in the *candombe* gatherings of Afro-Argentines. He wrote of rural and *gaucho* music and oral traditions that fused with new music to create what was initially described as *criolla tango*, and came to be known simply as ‘tango’.

In ‘*Stages*, from the ‘*Can’t Forget*’ souvenir album of The Grand Tour’, an aged Leonard Cohen thanks his audience for its generosity and tells them about a conversation he had with guys in his band, talking about the stages a man goes through in relation to his allure to the opposite sex. It might make for interesting discussion in tango circles, given that a more common topic, today, is the invisibility of older women at *milongas* and in society in general. Cohen was speaking for and about older men.

‘You start off irresistible /and then you become resistible / Then you become transparent / Not exactly invisible but as if you’re seen through old plastic / And then you actually do become invisible / And then, and this is the most amazing transformation / You become repulsive / But that’s not, that’s not the end of the story / After repulsive you become cute...’

My partner and I went to a Leonard Cohen concert on his Old Ideas tour. I grew up with Cohen’s poetry and songs. Like the tangos of the Rio de la Plata region, his music helped define a generation and an era. Mostly, I knew his songs from the recordings of other artists, often the same song, like *Hallelujah* recorded by many different artists. Leonard, as a young performer, was not as much on my radar as Bob Dylan, Donovan, or Tom Waits. The singer of ‘I’m your man’ was not the guy of my youthful dreams. But, I fell for the old man, who became increasingly reflective about his own life and life in general. As a poet, songwriter, and, much later, as a singer of mature years, Leonard was certainly up there with the best.

Tango has its own history and stars: singers, composers, orchestra leaders, musicians, lyricists, and dancers. I did not see Piazzolla perform live. I wanted to, and I almost did. He was to come to Melbourne for the Spoleto Festival in 1992, but he suffered a stroke, then died. We saw a tribute tango show, with flashy dancing but without the maestro.

Argentina has a continuing tradition of almost 140 years of tango. In Australia, where tango is a new kid on the block, we are making our own tango history and storing up our memories. We have fine professional tango dancers and teachers, but fewer tango musical artists of note. Many local musicians claim to play tango, but it is often concert-style tango, rarely the tango they dance socially to in Buenos Aires. We are into our second generation of social tango dancers. Some of our finest, older Australian dancers, have dropped out of the tango scene and no longer go regularly to *milongas*. In conversations, some say, sadly, that they feel unwanted, past their use-by-date, or, even worse, invisible. Older dancers feel this way because that is how, mostly, they are treated. According to the Leonard Cohen effect referred to in *Stages*, after ‘invisible’ will come ‘repulsive’, and, finally, ‘cute’.

I'm not sure if Argentine culture has a 'Cohen effect. Old dancers were respected for their wisdom and skill, knowledge of tango, and the part they played in its development. Old dancers and musicians are custodians of tango's living history. With each death, tango memories are lost. In recent years, there have been efforts to interview old dancers, and record their stories, but it is too little too late. So much of the past has been lost. It is ironic that too much of the present, some, let's face it, quite mediocre, is being recorded and circulated *ad infinitum* on YouTube.

Seeing Leonard Cohen perform was an unforgettable experience. 'The man', then old in years, on stage in his wrinkled flesh and dapper clothes, channeled worlds of experience into his poems and songs. He looked frail, but was so energized and alive, and connected and respectful to an adoring audience of all ages. It was wonderful to hear the poetry and songs. His voice was that of an old man, sometimes seeming to come from a distant place. It was deep and gravelly, notched like an ancient tree, like the grumbling bandoneon in *Oblivion*. Cohen was backed by a very good band of talented musicians, and the ethereal, sweet, young voices of the Webb sisters and the marvelous Sharon Robinson. The balance of youth and age, male and female, seemed just right.

When Leonard Cohen sank to his knees, it may have been a signal for his band to play softer, but it seemed the audience was being invited into a ritual, a kind of confessional, in which a man was unburdening his heart and soul, talking to his God. Kneeling, with his head bowed like a supplicant, dressed in his sharply tailored suit, fedora and shiny shoes, the Rat Pack rabbi sang. His songs address eternal themes: desire, regret, suffering, love, hope, and hamming it up.² He could have been a great tango writer and dancer too.

"He refused to be held like a drunk / under the cold tap of fact"

How time shapes sound

What determines the characteristics of the way orchestras and ensembles play music? Many musicians of today lament the homogeneity that has crept into orchestral playing, and the loss of the idiosyncrasies that once distinguished ensembles.

If you listen to the New Year's Concerts, you will recognize what is described as 'the Vienna sound'³. You may find it hard to define just what that is. It is a plush, warm, rich, sumptuous sound. In 2014, musicians of the Viennese Philharmonic Orchestra sat down with reporters and videographers to discuss and demonstrate how a combination of playing traditions and a preference for atypical instruments rarely heard outside Austria, (like the Viennese horn, tuned in F only), shape their sound. The Viennese horn is difficult to play, but it makes a loud brassy sound at a volume that does not overwhelm the orchestra. Viennese oboes are different too, shorter than French oboes, with wider inner bores, different fingering systems and shorter reeds. Obstinacy to change has kept the Viennese Philharmonic different from other orchestras in the world. The musicians still play instruments of the type their forefathers played: clarinets, horns, trumpets, timpani.

² Kitty Empire, Observer, 21 January 2012, quoted in 'I'm your man, the life of Leonard Cohen'

³ Vulture, In Vienna, time shapes the sound, by Michael Cooper, in International New York Times, Friday August 1, 2014

The Viennese orchestra plays a waltz, not in strict $\frac{3}{4}$ time as other orchestras do, but with a lilt caused by rushing the second beat a little and hesitating before the third beat – hence 1,2,...3, and not 1-2-3. And it is not always the same. Every piece is different; it comes from tradition, from feelings, from what the conductor wants to express. The uncertainty and unpredictability create a pleasing tension for a listener. The hesitation is beautiful.

Tango is like this. Little wonder, that orchestras and groups, outside Argentina, dependent on sheet music, often get it so wrong when they play tango music.

Ready availability of recordings, of Astor Piazzolla's concert renditions of his tango compositions and arrangements, has established a stylistic bench-mark, explaining why many aspire to a similar style. However, unless the ensemble has a bandoneonist, who can play like Piazzolla, and other musicians, who understand the art of improvisation in tango music performance, it is a pretty sure bet that the standard will be disappointing.

Piazzolla came to international prominence when he decided he wanted to put tango music onto the concert platforms of the world. He did this very successfully, reigniting the tango flame amongst music lovers on all continents, performing with his own ensembles of chosen musicians, and playing as feature solo artist in concerts with orchestras in many different countries. But for the tango dancers of Argentina and the world, Piazzolla is just one of their tango musicians and orchestra leaders, and by no means the most significant.

Tango dancers love and admire the music of many *orquesta tipicas* of the past: Pugliese, Troilo, Canaro, Fresedo, di Sarli, De Caro, D'Arienzo, D'Angelo, to name just a few. In Buenos Aires, currently, a popular tribute band, The Juan D'Arienzo Orchestra, plays in the style of the original popular D'Arienzo band. In order to be able to do this, the musicians have researched how, and why the earlier musicians played as they did, taking on board issues such as the dynamics of personality, and demands of audiences.

Each orchestra had a distinctive style, determined by its leader, other musicians, and fashion. A personal experience of dancing to Color Tango Orchestra made us realize something that countless other tangos danced to recordings had not taught us. When an orchestra and its musicians play live for dancers, they react to one another – the music, dance steps, and figures, become a shared conversation, a dialogue, and a reflection of time, space, and place.

The conductor and musicians of the Viennese Philharmonic Orchestra understand it well, and so did the traditional tango orchestras: playing music for dancers is not a matter of sticking to a regular metronomic beat. It is hesitations, and anticipation of the unexpected, that make the music so beautiful to listen to, and challenging and rewarding to dance to.



Each lemon growing on a tree looks and tastes different. It is a product of environment, heritage and chance. Tango dancers are like lemons. Or wrinkled sultanas. Each fruit tastes and looks different; each is marked by its own memory of the season, the rain, and the kiss of the sun.

Slow down, dancers. Hesitate. Anticipate. Take time. Breathe. Listen. Touch. Move. Savour differences. Enjoy the experience.



Photographs: Andrew & Adrienne Gill; Dancers at Tango by the Sea Milonga, courtesy of Jessica Scheno Photography 2017.

ABC problems are nothing new

Barry Hill, was Poetry editor of the Australian for 10 years, won the Premier's Award for Non-fiction and Poetry, and was The Age radio critic 1978 – 1990. In 2014, he wrote a blistering article about the extinction, he called it 'beheading', of the ABC radio program 'Poetica'.⁴

He laid blame for *Poetica's* demise on managerial corporate ethos, celebrity culture that saturates all judgments of value, and habits of mind that go with the ideology of post-modernism. They axed a show that had 60,000 listeners a week.

He wrote, the musical aspect of language has long been the heartland of poetry. '*Poetry is a manifestation of our fullest social being, and in so doing it is the finest verbal instrument we have of our inner life.*'

⁴ [The death of poetry on our ABC](#) by Barry Hill, Sunday Age, November 30, 2014

Tango perspectives

Perceptions of tango are as varied as human experience. Each dancer and every couple create their own tango from a sensory emotional kaleidoscope. Like shards of coloured glass, and bits of discarded pottery amphora rescued from the Aegean Sea, the fragments combine to reflect and refract realities, helping us realign our world.

It's not only people like Clive James, who write interesting stuff about tango. We want to bring to readers' attention the work of lesser-known Australian writers. To be a poet is to take a solitary, and generally unrewarding path. Even if a poem is published in an anthology, in a collection, or as a book, chances are that the volume will sit on a shelf in an obscure part of a bookshop, where almost nobody will notice it, let alone take it down, fan through the pages, read a little, and purchase it. To redress this, we will continue to publish selected original new tango writing, submitted by Australian authors.

This poem, *Desire*, was written by Jean Bohuslav, a participant in a recent writers' workshop. We thank *Tango Friends Australia Inc* for sponsoring the publication of this poem, and the following one, *Demeter's Dance* written by Avril Bradley.

Desire

Hold those reins tight
Red nails
Flashing like a lighthouse
Lips and eyes resisting
Hot flourishing movement

Iced lemonade near the window
His fluid body approaching fast
Lush eye brows
Olive skin
Foreign breath

What! She took the last cold bottle
I stepped sideways
Buzzing fans rippled my skirt like a hot breath
Morning swims had toned my muscles
Humid air frayed my resistance

He is coming again
Can I resist?
Where is that bloody drink?

Jean Bohuslav

Avril Bradley, a poet who let herself be embraced by tango

Argentina has a vast collection of literary works about tango - lyrics of thousands of tango songs, written to accompany the music of generations of hundreds of tango composers; writings by tango poets, romantic, historic, critical, and avant-garde; works by playwrights and novelists, journalists; articles by social historians; academic writings by psychologists and philosophers. The spirit of tango lives on their words, long after the music has faded.

Tango Friends Australia Inc has been supporting the building, recording and archiving Australia's evolving tango culture. Avril Bradley came to attention when she entered an Australian Tango Poetry Competition. Subsequently, she won this competition, and has remained a loyal supporter and friend of our tango literary program ever since.

Avril was born in England, and lives in Frankston. She has taught extensively in England and Australia, from kindergarten to tertiary level. Her poetry wins awards and is published in a number of books and collections. Avril was inspired to write the poem, *Demeter's Dance*, after reading about Pam and Richard Jarvis's work teaching tango to people with a diagnosis of dementia.

Demeter is the earth mother goddess of Greek mythology, goddess of grain, agriculture, harvest, growth, nourishment and fertility. She presided over sacred law and the Mysteries, and the cycles of life and death. Demeter's daughter, Persephone, was abducted by Hades and taken to the underworld. Whilst Demeter searched for her daughter across the earth, the seasons halted, plants stopped growing, and things began to wither and die in an endless winter. Demeter's Roman equivalent is Ceres.

The poet Robert Graves believes that Persephone is the younger self of Demeter, one of the Triple Goddesses: Kore, the youngest, the maiden signifying green grain; Persephone, in the middle, the nymph, signifying ripe grain, ready to be harvested; and Hecate, the crone, the harvested grain. Three ages of tango women?

There are layers of meaning to unravel in Avril Bradley's poem. Here are three depictions of Demeter from antiquity. The first is a detail from a Greek fresco, dating from the 1st century AD, the second is a statue of Demeter from the National Roman Museum, and the third is Demeter of Knidos, dating from around 350BC.



Demeter's Dance

'Where words fail, music speaks'

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Dance day at the care home

I arrive promptly.

My mother a muddle

of dull drubbing words,

fingers fuddle my hand.

Her world tipples into fog.

She is Demeter underground,

but knows not her Persephone.

Slow, slow, slowly

In subterranean caves

she waits. Waits. Springs

unbound, to spin

with others, safe together

in a shared and distant wilderness.

Up from Hades

I watch my mother. Single her out,

words sluice away,

music translating the hum in her head,

Tango turns her one-two

in the circle of herself.

Dance decodes the drift

of her precarious mind.

Her partner gentles

the tangle of half missed steps.

Two bodies fuse

swing, swoosh, flick

the room awash

in a flash of dance

fluent moves accomplish

what words cannot

Avril Bradley

Un-sponsored, unsolicited

This poem is for *Tango Australis* readers, written by our editor...a gift from a woman who has danced tango for a long, long time, and has no intention of stopping.

When I am really old

[Thinking of Hecate]

I might wear purple

...or I might not.

Perhaps a sparkly dress to catch the light
and grab attention,

Or something swirly to fishtail and kiss my fishnets
as I swivel seductively in endless *ochos*,
tracing an infinity of beauty.

I will keep dancing

...until I die, and, hopefully, beyond.

My eyes will cloud, focus fade.

But I see with my skin.

Look for me in my temple

under a new moon

executing a *cruzada* at cross roads,
dancing a *media luna* with emasculated men,
walking a *camino*
in Lagina
with a dog.

I might wear purple.

...or I might not.

P.M. Jarvis



This is Hecate Chiaramonti, depicted as the Tripple Goddess. It is a Roman sculpture, in the collection of the Vatican Museum, after a Hellenistic original, probably dating from the 5th century BCE. Hecate was a virgin goddess.



On learning to dance tango, gently

As a young teacher-in-training, I heard a mathematics lecturer claim he could teach calculus to a child in a prep class. His method was to peel the subject content back to a point of the child's understanding, and build subsequent lessons in comprehensible components, step by step. An essential prerequisite was that the teacher should have a deep understanding and working knowledge of his subject material.

Much is said and written about standards of 'teaching', but there may not be enough focus on the lifelong process of 'learning'. As teachers, we break down complex skills into simple components that can be taught and built upon. Teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their learning, and are there to support them. But what happens when students go out into the world? Who guides them then?

After decades of learning to become competent tango dancers ourselves, we took on the responsibility of teaching others. Our own learning will continue till we die. Some of our most challenging and rewarding tango teaching involves working with students, who have a diagnosis of dementia or other health matters that impact on the quality of life, and their partners. Dementia is not a natural part of ageing. It is most common in people over 65, but it also affects younger people.

We're not medical experts, but we make a point to learn as much as we can about diseases prevalent in our society. The file grows weekly with research findings, each one looking at a little bit of a bigger issue. We have a particular interest in working with older people, with the goal of improving their quality of life. We are interested in the lifestyle guidelines, presented as helpful in delaying the onset of disease symptoms. We believe that learning to dance tango is an effective means of maintaining and improving physical and brain health. It makes sense to take on board commonsense guidelines, being confirmed by research. Good diet, the right kind of exercise, mobility, different types of mental and physical activity, and social connection, enhance health and well-being for everybody.

When dementia affects the brain, there is a progressive decline in a person's functioning. Symptoms can include problems with memory, thinking, planning, concentration, confusion, perception, language, social skills. Pain that can accompany other diseases can drive a person into a bad place, and fear of that pain can lock them in.

A diagnosis of dementia, or a terminal disease, does not mean that people cannot lead active and fulfilling lives, with dignity. We encourage people, of all ages, to develop new interests with partners and family members, and make new friends. A disease diagnosis does not mean that a person cannot learn and benefit from doing new things.



Some of our students have problems communicating and difficulty following a conversation or understanding and following verbal instructions. Some get confused about time and dates. Others have difficulty judging distances, and in learning patterns of movements that change direction.

We work gently through these and other difficulties. Students soon understand that dancing tango feels good, and gives pleasure to a partner and self. Our anecdotal evidence suggests that our students find new ways to connect with their partners and with others, and their experiences are making new shared memories. They are taking pride in their achievements. Dare we hope that these experiences may be making new connections and creating new pathways in the brain, in addition to the more obvious effect of enhancing feelings of well-being, rebuilding self-esteem, and strengthening personal relationships?

Other practitioners are also noticing these things. In universities world-wide, researchers are investigating the physical, mental and psychological effects of learning to dance and improvise Argentine tango, and of participating in regular social tango dancing activities.

We concentrate on what seems to work best. We know that maintaining and increasing mobility is beneficial for older people. Tango exercises train body and mind, improve coordination, and help improve balance. Too many residents in aged care facilities spend too much time confined to chairs, with their world growing ever smaller. We get to know our students as individuals, and seek out the most effective ways to connect with each one. We choose music to enhance mood, to relax or to energize. We use different techniques- we demonstrate, describe, and tell stories to impart relevant knowledge. We devise different activities to develop rhythmic and musical intelligence and spatial awareness. We use touch and visualization exercises to train muscle groups and the body and brain to work in particular ways, to enable tango movements and develop the ability to create improvised tango dance.

We developed the 'Tango Project' as 6-week trial courses, in conjunction with Alzheimer's Australia (Geelong), now Dementia Australia (Geelong). Some participants expressed interest in continuing to dance tango, so we expanded the trials into weekly 'Gentle Tango' morning sessions, and decided to include other people, for whom regular night classes would be unsuitable.

What we do, seems to work, and what works in our special classes, also works in our regular classes. Some of it is common sense, and would seem to be too obvious to have to be the subject of a research project before others take notice.

In classes, we apply theories of learning. We consider students' needs. We set tangible achievable goals, for ourselves and for our students. Learning does not occur in isolation, and past experiences, current conditions, environment, and personalities, are



important. We work to create conditions conducive to quality learning, and we present alternate ways for students to acquire and retain information.

Individual differences are respected. We do not expect, or even want, everybody to be the same. We do not want our students to dance tango in the same way as anybody else. We want them to develop basic skills, suited to their own level, and use these as building blocks to dance tango expressively and creatively. For some, it is enough to simply move with the music.

We like our students and we respect them. We enjoy working together to achieve common goals. We look forward to classes. A warm welcome sets the scene for productive tango experiences. A welcome to class is not just a manifestation of old-fashioned manners. It might not be PC, but we believe that manners form a predictable framework for a permeable structure of gentle discipline based on mutual respect. Manners, and a regular schedule, help everybody know what to expect and how to behave in a group situation, and facilitate social connections.

We acknowledge the strengths and attributes of our students. Such recognition confirms that each person and every life has value and dignity. We share the human condition.

We appreciate simple aspects of hospitality, and so do our dancers, things like a clean tablecloth and seasonal flowers. Home baked goodies and an attractive table setting can trigger memories of pleasant social rituals enjoyed in the past, times spent with loved ones. Recall of happy times can facilitate communication and conversations.



Presenting food so that it looks appetizing and enticing, makes people want to eat it.

Nobody learns well in an ugly, smelly, stuffy, tense, unhappy or critical environment. So we try to create a pleasant and calming environment. Learning and laughter should be companions in class. A happy state of mind results in a body that

does not feel tense. Tension is the enemy of natural movement, creativity and tango. When an experience is positive and enjoyable, students feel good, and want to repeat it. From our observations, the memory of what has been done in a happy class is better retained and recalled.

As adults, we develop eggshell egos. We forget how hard it was to develop the core strength and physical skills needed to roll over, sit up, crawl, stand, balance, walk, run and jump. We forget the stumbles and the hundreds of falls. Many men and women, successful in careers and jobs, have, unknowingly, over years of working life, been building up layers of resistance to new learning – the eggshell ego. They have worked hard to be good at what they do, and they like the feeling of confidence in their own

ability that this instills. Yet, deep down, they feel uncertain when faced with things outside the range of their experience.

Disease and the changed circumstances that result from illness, can exacerbate feelings of fear and uncertainty. Learning to do something new with caring support, something that other people can't do, something that presents a challenge and has an achievable goal, like learning to dance tango, is very empowering. Learning anything new takes time. Even when suffering poor health and changed circumstances, learning is possible. Dancing tango induces a state of mindfulness, and this can be a helpful tool in addressing health problems.

We encourage students to get onto the dance floor, try something new, have fun. Students rest when they want to. We encourage a positive approach to making mistakes. We acknowledge and laugh about it, when we make mistakes. Respected Argentine tango dancer-teacher, Julio Balmaceda, uses a similar teaching technique. Fear of failure is an impediment to learning. Students are encouraged to believe they can do things.

Some adults, who come to learn tango, are not prepared for how much practice they must do to learn a new skill: 10,000 repetitions to become expert. In Buenos Aires, they say it takes at least ten years of tango training to be other than a beginner. Not many of the new generation of confident young tango dancers understand that. Yet, our older students do. They are happy to work at a slower pace and practise. They like tango gentle, and slow, and they know that teachers and helpers will support and encourage them.

Finding effective methods to enable individuals to learn as well as they can, is the ongoing task of any dedicated, professional teacher. The task becomes more complex when individual students are in a group class, with a range of physical abilities, different stages of readiness to learn, different personality types, and various social and health issues. Working with kids is hard enough, but, working with adults takes things up another notch.

For people, who have to come to terms with a diagnosis of a life-changing medical condition or disease, and for the people who love and care for them, life can suddenly be very different. A diagnosis of a disease that can't be cured, or treatment with unpleasant side-effects and uncertain outcomes, can knock the foundations out from under you. Activities once enjoyed may no longer be suitable, or available. We can shift the focus from what has been lost and can no longer be done, to what can be done in present circumstances. It can be a good time to try something different, to expand the world of possibilities, not reduce it.

Teachers are there to help. Being able to work with receptive students, who really want to learn to dance tango, and who fall in love with tango along the way, is a real pleasure. Seeing the joy of people dancing tango, in a happy group, is so rewarding.



Pam and Richard Jarvis teach weekly Gentle Tango classes to a mixed group in Geelong. New people can be taken in at any time. If you, or somebody you know, would like to participate in these mornings, please contact Pam on 041 753 1619 to discuss needs and expectations.

Pam Jarvis has been invited to present a paper, on the virtue of tango dancing on dignity and physical well-being, at the 'Living and Dying With Dignity' Palliative Care Forum in Geelong on October 18, 2018. This annual event is organized by the GP Palliative Care Special Interest Group and facilitated by the Western Victoria Primary Health Network.



Photo: Pam and Richard Jarvis dancing tango

TANGO IN AUSTRALIA

Tango Links & information at www.southerncrosstango.com.au

DARWIN

northerntango@gmail.com <http://sites.google.com/site/northerntango>

QUEENSLAND

General listings of tango schools & milongas throughout Queensland
<http://www.tangonut.com/news.html>

CANBERRA

Tango Social Club of Canberra – includes a listing of tango teachers in Canberra
<http://www.tangocanberra.asn.au>

SYDNEY

General listings of tango schools & milongas throughout Sydney:

Tango Australia: <http://www.tangoaustralia.com.au/p/finding-tango-school.html> Sydney

Tango Calendar: <http://www.sydneytango.com.au/WebModules/Calendar/Calendar.aspx>

Port Macquarie: <http://www.argentinetango.com.au/argentinetangoportmacquarie.html>

Bowral: <http://www.tangoencanto.com> Newcastle <https://tangonewcastle.wordpress.com>

HOBART

Tango Milongueros: tangomtas@gmail.com www.tangomilonguerotasmania.com & Facebook

Tasmanian Club de Tango: tasmaniantangoclub@hotmail.com & www.tastangoclub.com

PERTH

Champagne Tango: www.champagnetangoperth.com info@champagnetangoperth.com

Port Macquarie Tango – tango.wendy@gmail.com Perth Tango Club - <http://perthtangoclub.com>

Mi Serenata: <http://miserenatatango.com>

MELBOURNE

Melbourne Practica Group Inc. www.melbournepractica.org

Melbourne Tango host milonga 2nd Sunday of month @ Czech House, Queensberry St, Nth Melbourne <http://www.melbournetango.com>

Project NFT (Neo Fusion Tango) (Hawthorn) Rod – rjh@keypoint.com.au

Robles Dance Academy – <http://roblesdance.com>

Sidewalk Tango – Dianne's TANGUERIA (Richmond) – tangodi@icloud.com.au 0418 331 638

Tango Bajo – Bill Jarman (South Yarra, Windsor, Gardenvale) – tangobajo@gmail.com - 0419 826 061- www.australiantango.com.au Facebook: www.facebook.com/TangoBajo

Tango Escencia – Rina & Nadim Sawaya (Richmond, Lower Templestowe)-
rina@tangotherapyaustralia.com.au - www.tangoescencia.com.au

Tango Melbourne – reneefleck84@gmail.com tangomelbourne.com.au

Tango Tambien (Woodend, Gardenvale/Brighton, Clifton Hill) – Leigh Rogan –
info@tangotambien.com – www.tangotambien.com

Victoria Tango Australia –Leonel - www.victoriatango.com.au - leonelcolque@hotmail.com

Viva (Fitzroy) – Christian Drogo – www.vivadance.com.au info@vivadance.com.au

GEELONG

Community Tango in Geelong - richardandpam@mac.com www.facebook.com/CommuityTangoInGeelong
www.southerncrosstango.com.au

For a listing of international guest teachers touring Australia in the coming months, & Australian & NZ tango school links go to: **Gotanz Connect Australian & New Zealand Tango Directory** – Meg Thomson – gotanzconnect@gmail.com<https://www.gotanzconnect.com> Facebook: <http://fb.me/anzdirectory> Mob: 0419 826 061

FABIAN SALAS & LOLA DIAZ
ADELAIDE 11-14 OCTOBER 2018

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E: sctango@bigpond.com [facebook.com/SouthernCrossTango](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCrossTango)
Proudly presented by Southern Cross Tango

Tango in Adelaide

TANGO ADELAIDE CLUB: Club Milonga on Saturday 6 October, 8pm – 12 at Spicer Church Hall, 44A Fourth Ave, St Peters. www.tangoadelaide.org

TANGO SALON: Comme Il Faut Milonga – Sunday 28 October, 4pm – 8pm at Mt Osmond Golf Club. \$10. www.tangosalonadelaide.blogspot.com

SIEMPRE TANGO: Weekly Practica on Thursdays 8-9.30pm at North Adelaide Community Centre, 176 Tynte St, Nth Adelaide. \$5. 'Practica Domingo' on Sunday 7 October 4.30 – 6.30pm at Eastwood Community Centre, 95 Glen Osmond Rd, Eastwood. \$5. 'SuperThursday' Practica on Thursday 25 October 8-11pm at North Adelaide Community Centre, \$10. www.siempretango.net.au

SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO: Weekly 'Tango Practica' on Tuesdays 8pm – 9.30pm at Roxy Centre, cnr South Rd & Anzac Hwy, Everard Park, \$10pp or \$5pp for beginner students. 'Tango by the Sea Milonga' with Floorshow by Fabian Salas & Lola Diaz on Sunday 14 October, 4-8pm at Henley Sailing Club, 1 Seaview Rd, West Beach. \$25. 'Fabian Salas & Lola Diaz' Tango Seminar 11-14 October, featuring 6 workshops at Unley RSL, tango parties, social dancing & private lessons. Full program at <http://www.southerncrosstango.com.au/guest-teachers.html> 'La Calesita Milonga' on Saturday 27 October 8-11pm at Thebarton Community Centre, South Rd, Torrensville. \$15. Keep dates free for Christmas Milonga – Saturday 8 December, 8pm – 12 at Henley Sailing Club, 1 Seaview Rd, West Beach (tickets on sale soon) & 'Southern Cross Tango's 20th Anniversary Tango Celebration, Sunday 27 January 2019 in McLaren Vale. Details coming soon! www.southerncrosstango.com.au

SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO - Class Schedule (South Australia)

MONDAY @ UNLEY RSL

8 Week Tango Course: Monday 8 October – 26 November; Workshops Mon 3 December 2018

Beginner Class 7-8pm, followed by Practica 8-8.30pm; Open Level Class 8.30 – 9.30pm @ Unley RSL, 29 Arthur St, Unley

TUESDAY @ ROXY CENTRE

7 Week Tango Course: Tuesday 18 September – 6 November; 4 Wk Tango Course starts 13 November

Beginner/Open level Class 7pm - 8pm followed by **Weekly PRACTICA** with Andrew Gill 8pm – 9.30pm
@ Roxy Centre, 1-80 Anzac Hwy (close to corner of South Rd & Anzac Hwy), Everard Park.

WEDNESDAY @ THEBARTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

8 Week Tango Course: Wednesday 19 September – 7 November; 4 Wk Tango Course starts 14 November

Open level class 7pm – 8pm; Advanced level class 8pm – 9pm @ Thebarton Community Centre, cnr South Rd & Ashwin Pde, Torrensville.

PRIVATE TUITION @ Southern Cross Tango Studio

Private Lessons with Andrew & Adrienne Gill (by appointment). Please telephone 0419 309 439 to book.

Tango Technique Training for Men & Women @ Southern Cross Tango Studio, 50 Kauri Parade, Seacliff.
New course dates coming soon. To register your interest, E: sctango@bigpond.com or Ph 0419 309 439.

COMMUNITY TANGO IN GEELONG (Victoria)

Venue: Christ Church hall, corner of Moorabool & McKillop Streets, Geelong. First Monday of the month: Tango for Pleasure, supper & social dancing, 7.30 – 9.30pm Other Mondays: Open level group classes, 7.30 – 9.00pm Thursday mornings: Body conditioning & dance training for women Group tango lessons, private lessons, seasonal salon events. Vic teachers: Pamela & Richard Jarvis – 0417 531 619 E: richardandpam@mac.com <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityTangoInGeelong>

SOUTHERN CROSS TANGO - Andrew & Adrienne Gill



Phone: 0419 309 439 Email: sctango@bigpond.com
<https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCrossTango>

www.southerncrosstango.com.au