

*"The playing by this quintet – modeled on the one Piazzolla himself led – is brilliantly assured."  
– BBC Music Magazine*

# The Passionate Sound of Tango is Brought to Life by Quinteto Astor Piazzolla at The Soraya

**Thursday, October 3 at 8pm**

(Los Angeles, CA) July xx, 2019 – The soul-stirring sound of tango in its most authentic form comes to The Soraya, brought directly to Los Angeles by Laura Escalada Piazzolla, the wife of the late maestro Astor Piazzolla, on Thursday, October 3 at 8pm. Formed by the Argentinian composer during the '60s, the quintet caused a sensation with its provocative performances which elevated the earthy, sensual sound of tango to a sophisticated high art. After the composer's death, the ensemble carried on the legacy with five virtuoso soloists capable of interpreting the vast body of work left by Piazzolla. The upcoming *Revolucionario Tour*, named after their recent album, will play throughout the Americas, Asia, and Europe.

Tickets (\$36-\$79) for the one night only performance of [Quinteto Astor Piazzolla](#) are currently on sale at The Soraya, (818)677-3000.

## **About Quinteto Astor Piazzolla**

The first Quintet ensemble, which consists of violin, guitar, piano, bass and bandoneon was formed during the 1960s, causing a sensation among the young public with its provocative and melodic sound, calling upon Astor Piazzolla's music which has an elaborate and intellectual style. After the composer's death, the Astor Piazzolla Foundation was formed with the objective of bringing his legacy to the public. Piazzolla's widow, Laura Escalada Piazzolla decided to create a new ensemble with five virtuoso soloists capable of interpreting the vast body of work left by the composer who revolutionized tango.

The quintet has toured the world for more than 20 years. It has been acclaimed by the international press as the only musical ensemble with the ability to represent the unique and inimitable style of the great Astor Piazzolla. Quinteto Astor Piazzolla is Lautaro Greco (bandoneon), Sebastian Prusak (violin), Cristian Zarate (piano), Sergio Rivas (contrabass) and German Martinez (guitar).

## **About Astor Piazzolla**

Astor Piazzolla was a prolific composer and the foremost composer of tango music. He wrote more than 750 works including film and theatrical scores, operas and concertos. In addition to his compositions, he was also a band leader and a virtuoso of the bandoneon (a hybrid of the

accordion and the concertina – tango music’s principal instrument). He is credited with inventing “the new tango” in the 1950’s, an expanded and modernized version of Argentina’s signature passionate dance and music style, which blended tango with elements of jazz and classical music.

In a 1986 review, the *New York Times* said, “Mr. Piazzolla is a meticulous composer who has thought hard about the modernist harmonies, shifty rhythms, contrapuntal devices and structural extensions he has added to the tango...To hear Mr. Piazzolla's tangos as musical marvels is beside the point...As edgy lines and long-breathed tunes defy and embrace one another, the tangos suggest that even in the modern world, romance survives.”

Piazzolla was born on March 11, 1921 in Mar de Plata. In 1925, his family migrated to New York, where Astor was raised until he was fifteen. In this bustling city, he received his father’s bandoneon, and began to study the instrument with Adrés D’Aquila. He then met Carlos Gardel and got a small role in the movie *El Día que me Quieras* (1935). With the return of his family to his home country, Argentina (1936), Piazzolla began to join various orchestras; in 1939 he joined the bandoneon line of Anibal Troilo and soon after got promoted to the position of arranger for this group. Parallel to his group activities, he continued his studies with Alberto Ginastera and Raul Spivak, and in 1942 he married Dedé Wolff, with whom he had two children – Diana and Daniel. His arrangements began to show much more complexity than what Pichuco had likened, in such a way that in 1944, Piazzolla left the group and moved on to direct the accompanying orchestra for singer Francisco Fiorentino. The musical collaboration with Fiorentino lasted about two years, but this short period of time was enough to register notable versions of works like “Viejo Ciego” and “Volvio una Noche,” among others.

In 1946, Piazzolla formed his own orchestra, with which he recorded thirty pieces, including compositions such as “Taconeando,” “La Rayuela” and “El Recodo,” as well as five of his own original compositions.

From this point forward, Piazzolla’s creative compositions began to flourish, having some his pieces such as “Para Lucirse,” “Contratiempo” and “Triunfal” which become part of the repertoire of orchestras such as Troilo, Francini-Pontier and Osvaldo Fresedo. In 1949, Piazzolla decided to dissolve his orchestra and distance himself from tango for a while. He searched for his musical identity in the works of Bartók, Stravinsky, jazz music and other styles. He abandoned the bandoneon and began studying conduction in orchestra. In 1953, his work titled *Buenos Aires* (three symphonic movements) won the first award in the Fabien Sevitzyk Contest and sparked an intense debate among the public for the incorporation of the bandoneon in a formal orchestra setting.

Funded by the Paris Conservatory, Piazzolla moved to France in 1954 to study music with composer and famous pedagogue Nadia Boulanger, who, according to Astor, persuaded him to not abandon the bandoneon or tango; she asked for him to “never abandon the true Piazzolla.” Following her words of advice, Piazzolla stuck to his style and recorded sixteen pieces, accompanied by the Paris Opera Orchestra and pianist Martial Solal. This is how tango pieces such as “Nonino” (the antecedent to “Adios Nonino”) and other pieces such as “Marrón y Azul” and “Chau Paris” came to be.

Piazzolla then moved back to Argentina and formed two new bands: one of them, an orchestra of bandoneon and strings; the other, the Buenos Aires Octet. With such exceptional high-level musicians and a unique formation of bandoneons, violins, contrabass, cello and electric guitar, the octet began the initiation of the contemporary tango, with a style branded for the compositional innovations and interpretations that separates itself from the classical model of the typical orchestra; of the singer and dancer. The group recorded two albums until its dissolution in 1958.

Piazzolla then traveled to New York, where he experimented with tango jazz, and in 1960 he returned to Buenos Aires to form the Nuevo Tango Quintet, which would be one of his most symbolic ensembles. He recorded numerous original compositions with this quintet, such as "Adios Nonino," "Decarisimo," "Introduccion al Angel," "Muerte del Angel" and much more. In 1965 he registered two important albums: *Piazzolla at the Philharmonic Hall in New York*, and *El Tango* (built around the poems of Jorge Luis Borges, with voice narration by Edmundo Rivero). The small opera, *Maria de Buenos Aires* (of 1968), is the fruitful harvest of his creative collaboration with Horacio Ferrer, with whom he composed, among many pieces, "Balada para mi Muerte," "La Bicicleta Blanca" and "Chiquilin de Bachin." The most popular piece from this duo is "Balada para un Loco," featuring vocals by Amelita Baltar. This popular musical work went on to sell 250,000 units in a short amount of time.

In the years that followed, Piazzolla recorded his *Concert for Quintet* LP, and in 1972 he formed the band Conjunto 9, with which he edited contemporary music from the City of Buenos Aires. Soon after, he moved to Italy, where some of his works like "Libertango" and the album *Renuion Cumbre* (recorded with the saxophonist Gerry Mulligan and an orchestra of Italian musicians) became well-known. He also wrote a series of musical works for the disputed Mundial de Futbol in Argentina 1978. From then on, Astor joined the ranks of huge international musicians such as Gary Burton, and became a cultural figure in jazz festivals. In 1986 his music made it to Broadway, where it was featured in the hit show *Tango Argentino*. His ensembles gained international recognition, and one of the highlights was a concert performed at Central Park in New York 1987, with a quintet made up of Pablo Ziegler on piano, Fernando Suárez Paz on violin, Horacio Malvicino on guitar and Hector Console on bass.

In August of 1990, while Piazzolla was staying in the city of Paris, he suffered a cerebral thrombosis and passed away in Buenos Aires on the 4th of July, 1992. He has left behind a powerful legacy of more than a thousand musical compositions, material made for more than forty films and a powerful musical influence clearly evident in the generations that came after. He has received immense praise and tribute from figures such as Yo-Yo Ma, Kronos Quartet, Gidon Kremer and Al Di Meola, among many others.

### **Calendar Listing for Quinteto Astor Piazzolla**

**Date:** Thursday, October 3 at 8:00pm

**Venue:** Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)  
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

**Tickets:**

**Prices:** Starting at \$36. Prices subject to change.

**By Phone:** (818) 677-3000

**Online:** [TheSoraya.org](http://TheSoraya.org)

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### **About Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)**

The 2019-20 Season marks the ninth year for the award-winning Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts which has quickly become one of the cultural jewels of the greater Los Angeles region. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, The Soraya continues to expand its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The Soraya presents a wide variety of performances that not only include new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world appealing to all of LA's rich and diverse communities.

Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya's season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family, and international events that have served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as "a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events."