



## Astor Piazzolla

"The world's foremost composer of tango music."

(March 11, 1921 – July 4, 1992)

Piazzolla was born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1921, the only child of Italian immigrant parents, Vicente "Nonino" Piazzolla and Assunta Manetti.

In 1925 Astor Piazzolla moved with his family to Greenwich Village in New York City, which in those days was a violent neighborhood inhabited by a volatile mixture of gangsters and hard-working immigrants.<sup>[5]</sup> His parents worked long hours and Piazzolla soon learned to take care of himself on the streets despite having a limp. At home he would listen to his father's records of the tango orchestras of Carlos Gardel and Julio de Caro, and was exposed to jazz and classical music, including Bach, from an early age. He began to play the bandoneon after his father spotted one in a New York pawn shop in 1929.<sup>[6]</sup>

In 1932 Piazzolla composed his first tango, "La Catinga". The following year he took music lessons with the Hungarian classical pianist Bela Wilda, a student of Rachmaninoff who taught him to play Bach on his bandoneon. In 1934 he met Carlos Gardel, one of the most important figures in the history of tango, and played a cameo role as a paper boy in his movie *El día que me quieras*.<sup>[7]</sup>

In 1936, he returned with his family to Mar del Plata, where he began to play in a variety of tango orchestras and around this time he discovered the music of Elvino Vardaro's sextet on the radio. Vardaro's novel interpretation of tango made a great impression on Piazzolla and years later he would become Piazzolla's violinist in his Orquesta de Cuerdas (String Orchestra) and his First Quintet.

Inspired by Vardaro's style of tango, and still only 17 years old, Piazzolla moved to Buenos Aires in 1938 where, the following year, he realized a dream when he joined the orchestra of the bandoneonist Anibal Troilo, which would become one of the greatest tango orchestras of that time. The next five years, and wrote his first classical works *Preludio No. 1 for Violin and Piano* and *Suite for Strings and Harps*. Piazzolla married his first wife, Dedé Wolff, an artist, with whom he had two children, Diana and Daniel.

In 1946 Piazzolla formed his Orquesta Típica, which, although having a similar formation to other tango orchestras of the day, gave him his first opportunity to experiment with his own approach to the orchestration and musical content of tango. That same year he composed *El Desbande*, which he considered to be his first formal tango, and then began to compose musical scores for films, starting with *Con los mismos colores* in 1949 and *Bóldos de acero* in 1950, both films directed by Carlos Torres Ríos.

Having disbanded his first orchestra in 1950 he almost abandoned tango altogether as he continued to study Bartok and Stravinsky and orchestra direction with Hermann Scherchen. He spent a lot of time listening to jazz and searching for a musical style of his own beyond the realms of tango. He decided to drop the bandoneon and to dedicate himself to writing and to studying music. Between 1950 and 1954 he composed a series of works that began to develop his unique style: *Para lucirse*, *Tanguango*, *Prepárense*, *Contrabajando*, *Triunfal* and *Lo que vendrá*.

He suffered a cerebral hemorrhage in Paris on 4 August 1990, which left him in a coma, and died in Buenos Aires, just under two years later on 4 July 1992, without regaining consciousness.

*Libertango* is a composition by tango composer Astor Piazzolla, recorded and published in 1974 in Milan. The title is a portmanteau merging "Libertad" (Spanish for liberty) and "Tango", symbolizing Piazzolla's break from Classical Tango to Tango Nuevo.

Although *Libertango* was born as an instrumental piece, in 1990 Uruguayan poet Horacio Ferrer, added lyrics in Spanish language based on the theme of freedom.

According to the performance database at *All Music Guide*, the composition has appeared on over 500 separate releases.<sup>[2]</sup> Grace Jones's song *I've Seen That Face Before (Libertango)* uses the same music, as does Jazz Mandolin Project's song "Jungle Tango", Guy Marchand's song "Moi je suis tango" and Kati Kovács's song *Hívlak*.

In 1997 Irish folk musician Sharon Shannon recorded a cover of Grace Jones' *I've Seen That Face Before (Libertango)* for her third album, *Each Little Thing*.<sup>[3]</sup> Featuring session vocals by Kirsty MacColl it also appeared in 2001 on *The One and Only*, a compilation album released after her death.<sup>[4]</sup> Shannon re-released the recording as the title track of her 2005 compilation.<sup>[5]</sup>

Cuban-American singer/composer Luisa Maria Güell added lyrics in the theme of the "Libertango" title and recorded it for her 2007 album 'Una'. A more recent version in Spanish of *Libertango* lyrics belongs to the Argentinian singer, lyricist and composer Lili Gardés, who describes the loneliness of city life. This version was approved by Edizione Cursi/ Pagani SRL. and it was part of the show *Zombitango*.

All information and written by -[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astor\\_Piazzolla](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astor_Piazzolla)

### **Libertango by Astor Piazzolla.**

**Here is the link to the arrangement**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJ2VAoOd-5s>**

