

Ricardo Odriozola
(b. 1965, Bilbao, Spain)

TANGO SUITE (2002)

**1 - Seis Anatemas en Busca de unTango
(Homenaje a Mastropiero)**

1st performance 21 November 2003

Gunnar Sævigsalen, Bergen

Ricardo Odriozola & Øyvind Eiksund, violins

Helena Halleland & Glenn Sørskår, accordion

Sven Sandvik, guitar

Ola Andersson, double bass

Daniel Sabbah, piano

**2 - Gualdrapas y Diplonduros
(Milonga Lejana)**

1st performance 14 May 2003

Gunnar Sævigsalen, Bergen

Beate Gulbrandsen, clarinet

Ai-Ling Chiu, violin

Jørgen Adeler, piano

Helene Halleland, accordion

Ricardo Odriozola, el. Bass

3 – Cybertango

(Candombe Corrosivo)

1st performance 26 September 2002

USF, Bergen

Daniel Amaro, voice

Einar Røttingen, piano

Ricardo Odriozola, el. bass

Gabriel Rivano, bandoneon

Synnøve Volden, cello

Eivind Østvik, percussion

4 - Livertango

1st performance 29 September 2002

Sardinien USF, Bergen

Ricardo Odriozola, violin

Gabriel Rivano, bandoneon

Ole Amund Gjersvik, double bass

Annabel Guaita, piano

RICARDO ODRIOZOLA was born in Bilbao in 1965. He started studying the violin at the age of 9 and graduated from the Bilbao conservatoire in 1982. He then spent a year as exchange student in Arlington (near Boston) finishing his high school and serving as concertmaster of the Greater Boston Youth Symphony orchestra. In 1987 he obtained a bachelor degree in performance from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester (NY). That same year he moved to Bergen (Norway) and began teaching at the Bergen Music Conservatoire (now Grieg Academy), where he is now associate professor of violin and chamber music.

Ricardo Odriozola began writing music at the age of 10. The earliest composition he recognizes (a piano sextet) dates from 1984. Since then he has written more than 40 works (chamber music, solo, songs and orchestral music) and arranged a great deal of music by other composers. Several of his

works appear on CD. In January 2015 he released his first CD dedicated exclusively to his music: "Views from my Horse" (www.amethyst-records.com).

Although he has never taken lessons in composition, Ricardo Odriozola has received guidance and inspiration from many prominent composers, particularly from Western Norway, and has built his craft by reading thousands of scores and listening to concerts and recordings. Ricardo Odriozola's music is, however, primarily informed by his wide experience as a performer. He always strives to produce scores that are performer-friendly and music that can communicate directly with the listener without the aid of intellectual filters.

Tango Suite

In April 2002 I was spontaneously asked to be the festival composer for the Third Bergen Tango Festival, which was to take place in September of that year. There was no fee and no guarantee of performance, although the latter aspect was not made entirely clear. All the same, I had recently (in February) finished writing an as yet unperformed cantata for choir and symphony orchestra with a religious text – another commission without a fee. It had taken me nearly eleven months to complete. The tango proposition was as far removed from the world of the cantata as can be imagined. I welcomed it as an invitation to remain creative. Also as a challenge to write in a style that did not run through my blood and in which I had no direct interest. I originally intended to write five pieces, but only four came into fruition.

In preparation for two of the works I immersed myself in the style of two of the ensembles that were going to perform at the festival and which, supposedly, would play my pieces. In the event, they did not and only the two other works received their first performance at the festival, a wonderful event that took place between September 26th and 29th.

The four pieces were not originally intended to form a suite and have, to this day, only been performed as such once. Since each of the pieces uses a different line-up, it is more practical to perform them separately.

They were written in the following order: Cybertango, Seis Anatemas..., Gualdrapas y Diplonduros, Livertango.

Seis Anatemas en Busca de un Tango - Homenaje a Mastropiero (six anathemas - or ana-themes - in search of a tango) is the more overtly tango-like piece in the collection. The title references Pirandello's famous play "Six Characters in Search of an Author", but it also points to the fact that six distinct melodic ideas appear through the work. Johann Sebastian Mastropiero, to whom the piece pays homage, is the fictitious composer associated with the brilliant Argentinean music comedy ensemble Les Luthiers. A quotation from a famous Les Luthiers tune – albeit with one changed note – can be found in measures 85-87. "Seis Anatemas..." explores some of the more typical mores of the tango style such as the heartfelt melodies and the insistent pulse. These are wholeheartedly embraced as swiftly as they are subverted. The music breaks unexpectedly into a waltz (mm. 63-64), embraces faux-Wagnerian grandeur (mm. 74-77) and engages in academic, motivic development in several sections. The ending is deliberately cliché.

Gualdrapas y Diplonduros (Milonga Lejana) is a milonga in 7. In other words, a limping milonga: the meter is missing the first half of its second beat. The second noun of the title is untranslatable: it is simply a nonsense word that appears in a poem by Juan Pérez Zúñiga (1860-1938), an author of whom my late father was very fond. It went (at least in my father's version) like this:

Los diplonduros de la martucancia
no retingonean en el infausto cúlpido

Correct grammar but utter gobbledygook.

This is the most personal piece of the putative suite, as it pays, from a long distance – both in time and space – tribute to my father, a talented man, the development of whose potential was thwarted by circumstances.

Measures 65-66 quote the violin introduction of a song with which I became acquainted at the time of my father's passing in 1990. In mm. 104-107 the accordion plays part of the melody of a Russian folk melody that our town's choral society used to sing, in which my father provided the cuckoo calls, here represented in the piano (mm. 107-108).

Cybertango (Candombe Corrosivo) takes a peek into a modern-day, Internet-based romantic relationship. The Candombe is considered by some to be a forerunner of the Tango. The "corrosiveness" of this particular one can be clearly discerned in the rather caustic lyrics. The narrator is not having a particularly good time with this almost entirely virtual liaison. He counterbalances his powerlessness with a sharp (virtual) pen, drenched in a barely concealed bitterness. It is quite plain to see that he does not get the girl in the end. Not this time and, probably, not ever. The music fleetingly and obliquely references Nick Drake, Robert Wyatt and, appropriately, the Peter Hammill song "Just Good Friends".

Livertango is, in spite of its title's obvious send-up of a famous Piazzolla number, a rather serious piece. It quotes three famous tunes (the first two in an unmusical, mechanical manner) from the canon and incorporates micro literary quotations from Meyrink and Ionesco. The music proceeds at an almost glacial but relentless pace, drawing its inspiration from three valedictory-type pieces: King Crimson's "Requiem", Henry Cow's "Deluge" and Robert Wyatt's "New Information Order". The ending is desolate and sombre.

The score of **Livertango** can be seen as a starting point for further elaboration. If more instruments than the ones on the score are available, they may contribute with diverse effects.

Ricardo 9. September 2024

Cybertango (Candombe Corrosivo)

Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena-na-na

¡Mal me habés acostumbrado!
¡Me habés acostumbrado mal!
Cada vez que abro el buzón
del pequeño iMac dorado
me encuentro varios mensajes
de tu pluma virtual.
¡Ay! qué contento me pongo
no más que el nombre de vos
aparece a la izquierda
del *asunto* en la *in-box*.

Llevamos ya varios meses
para atrás y para a'lante,
y no es tan gratificante
como en un principio fue.
Lo hemos hecho casi todo
a través de los teclados,
(la bendita informática
nos trae bien amparados):
ajedrez y al escondite,
inter alia, hemos jugado –
pero poco hemos ganado
con tan vana ocupación.

Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena-na-na

De vez en cuando nos vemos,
eso también es verdad,
mas, a veces, me pregunto:
¿de veras estamos juntos,
ó es esto una broma
que este mundo pos-moderno
hace pasar como ejemplo
del vivir sentimental?

Ya no puedo más, querida,
de los juegos ya estoy harto
pero, a pesar de todo
aquí estoy hincando el codo
y del iMac no me aparto
ni a las horas de comida.

Por las noches cuando, sólo,
poco a poco me desnudo
y en la cama me desplomo
casi cascándome el bolo
me pregunto pa' qué coño
me esfuerzo tanto con vos.
En un ataque de tos
de repente os imagino
abrazando a algún boludo,
compañero ó vecino,
mientras yo a duras penas
me releo tus mensajes
manteniendo el equilibrio
sobre esta silla de ruedas.

Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena, nena, nena
Nena, nena-na-na

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Cybertango (Corrosive Candombe)

Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey-ha-ha

You have been spoiling me!
Oh! How you have spoiled me!
Every time I open the post
in my little golden iMac
I find several messages
from your virtual pen.
Oh! How happy I become
every time your name
appears to the left
of the *subject* on the *in-box*.

It's been several months
backwards and forwards with us,
but it is no longer as much fun
as it was in the beginning.
We have covered just about everything
through the keyboard,
(holy goddess Informatica
has been looking out for us):
we have played chess & hide-and-peek,
among many other things –
but, alas, little have we gained
through occupation so vain.

Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey-ha-ha

We do meet every now and then,
if the truth be told,
yet, sometimes I wonder:
are we really together,
or is this just a hoax
this post-modern world
would pass as an example
of sentimental living?

I'm pretty fed up, darling,
up to here with all the games.
And yet here I am,
elbows firmly on the desk,
and can't pull away from the iMac
even at meal times.

At night-time when, alone,
I undress slowly
and fall onto my bed
almost cracking my head
I wonder why the #x%\$
I make such efforts with you.
Amidst a coughing fit
I suddenly imagine you
embracing some arsehole,
maybe a friend, maybe a neighbour,
whilst I with great effort
reread your messages
trying to keep my balance
upon this wheelchair.

Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey, honey, honey
Honey, honey-ha-ha.

*(english translation
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