

TANGO PASSION

**Tango Society of
Rochester**

Your best and only source of Argentine tango in Rochester, Minnesota

Volume 1 Issue XI

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Thoughts from the President... by Jeffrey Salisbury

As I reflect back on the past several months, I am struck by the realization of just how well things went – before I assumed the privilege of serving as TSoR President! That is, I can now fully appreciate how the organizational skill and the grace by which our past TSoR President (Yuko Taniguchi), together with the resourceful efficiency of our past TSoR Board members, operated to provide the TSoR community with three years filled with electrifying Argentine Tango. And, to do so – making the experience of our vibrant dance community seem to arise as an effortless venture on their part. Now, I recognize just what a stroke of good fortune it was to have them when we did.

Good fortune has again blessed the TSoR community! First with the continued active participation of past TSoR Board members, Jim Geroux and April Dahl, and with the addition of three tireless enthusiasts, Amy Steinkraus, Maren Johnson, and Kyra Anastasiadow, to the Board. I will not detail the extent of their giving ‘blood, sweat, and tears’ to ensure the success of TSoR – but I wish not to simply thank them, but to proclaim to our membership just how grateful I am for their supreme effort and their support. Without each of you, TSoR would surely falter.

And did we dance?

There was an exciting and wicked Tango held in a Minneapolis loft (thanks to Lisa Ann), followed by a romantic dinner and dance to a Mandrágora Tango orchestra at the

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Review on The Heartland Tango Festival:

She Said & He Said By Yuko Taniguchi & Jeremy Anderson

She Said:

The Heartland Tango Festival was filled with inspiration, wisdom and discoveries. Out of many great moments and lessons, these are my highlights:

Movements are like tools. Each tool has several mechanisms, and depending on how we use them, we can accomplish quite a bit. At the session on weight shifts, unwinding, crossing & uncrossing the follower, taught by Somer Surgit and Florencia Taccetti, I was dipped into the depth within a tool, how many and various possibility each tool contained. Instead of the collector of many tools, the owner of one tool with deep understanding of mechanisms can function much more creatively. This session reminded me of my experience of standing in front of the huge tool section at Home Depot. I was considering purchasing a complete set of power tools, thinking that owning them will be useful somehow. But owning tools without understanding the mechanism is useless, so I ended up going home with three simple tools. In the midst of tango lesson, I was glad that I did not buy those fancy tool sets!

Be honest: During the session on volcada and colgada taught by Somer Surgit and Cecilia Gonzalez, I insisted on following each partner as attentively and honestly as possible. This caused a bit of frustration in some leaders who verbally explained what my feet should do. Moving my feet on my own may be easier than remaining honest. But I was determined to be honest; we are not on the dance floor to create shape or movement alone. If I did not feel the energy circulate, if I did not comprehend the energy released by the leader, as silly as I might have looked, I admitted my confusion on the dance floor. In the end of session, I felt as though I fought a battle against “getting through a class safely.” My honesty was crucial for my own dancing.

Risk your life: “Who is this man in front of me?” Cecilia asked, standing in front of Evan Griffiths who was co-teaching the session on musicality. “This man is not just a leader, or a dancer. He is a real person. I am trying to get as much information as possible from him. Don’t just dance with your partner. Risk your life.” Risk your life- this is how it feels to be a dancer. We take a risk by going to the dance, asking a complete stranger for a dance, by sharing the energy through leading and following, by getting closer to find a connection. Dancing is filled with possibilities of being wrong, rejected, getting hurt, miscommunication, and misunderstanding. “Would you like to dance?” actually means “Would you risk your life?” Not asking for a dance means he or she was too afraid to die. Cecilia is aware that we are sensitive beings and that we are constantly working with our own fear. I can certainly relate; there are two people inside me- one who is afraid and the other who whips my fearful being to get out there to receive what the world would offer. If I want my life to be about trying something unknown or reaching out, if I wanted to live fully and honestly, I cannot avoid any emotions that were to be a part of my life. In the end, risking in itself becomes the heart of joy in tango. The gift is having the opportunity to embrace and be embraced by the real person in front of us.

He Said:

The Heartland Tango Festival was amazing. The instructors were all top notch, it was very well organized, the show was good, and everything ran smoothly. The workshops I attended – taught by various combinations of Somer Surgit, Florencia Taccetti, Cecilia Gonzalez, and Evan Griffiths – gave me plenty of fluff and technique to practice. But the big lesson I learned through the weekend had nothing to do with dancing moves or techniques.

Friday evening Yuko and I skipped our last workshop to go to dinner with one of the organizers, Sandra Uri, and her partner, Stephen Peters. I had an amazing time of food, conversation, and laughs. That dinner remains my fondest memory of the weekend, but it would take a couple of days for me to figure out why.

Then Saturday evening, I was in the show as a part of the TangoDales piece. Performing is nothing new to me. What was new was that I participated alone, and not as part of a couple. Throughout our rehearsals, and prior to the show itself, I had a great time with these tango men. All of them intelligent and funny in their own ways. I’ll always treasure being a part of this piece for the connection I made with these gentlemen.

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Thoughts from the President...cont...

Loring Pasta Bar. Oh, what a night! And then, on the evening of the holiday that commemorates the victory of the Mexican militia over the French army at The Battle of Puebla in 1862, a TSoR demonstration and Tango lesson, expertly guided by our emerging Tango Master (Jim G., you devil, you), drew the attention of widely diverse downtown 'Thursday on First' fans, despite the nippy and frosty evening. A perfect Sunday for a Practica with Rita and Terry set the stage for an evening of dining and dance at Sontes that drew a whole new and 'young' crowd from out of the woodwork. A romantic evening of Tango in the Dacha garden included a thrilling thunderstorm, an alluring social with our TSoM tango aficionados, and an expertly DJed set by Christopher Everett. Finally, another Sontes' evening gave our membership a dance haven to tie on their shoes and dance the night away.

Yes, we danced. And that is why we do what we do. We dance Argentine Tango.

There were other special TSoR activities – some which only come once in a lifetime – and some that, if one is lucky, come in glorious succession. In particular, I will conjecture that when one senses a moment appropriate for the exercise of an amague – you then step out to take the floor.

With every good wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

*Jeff Salisbury
President TSoR*



New TSOR President, Jeff Salisbury with his beautiful wife Jania

One Woman's Thoughts on Tango...

By Lois Donnay

I often hear from women about their frustrations with the tango scene.; about not enough men, about not getting asked to dance, or getting their requests denied, irritation with men who teach on the floor. or about how they feel invisible at some dances and are not dancing enough.

I believe part of this is cultural. My minor was in intercultural communication. Of course, two people can talk to each other for days and never really understand each other, even when they share a common culture! When we adopt tango, we are not just adding another dance to our repertoire. We are entering another culture. This culture is quite different from other cultures, is very reflected in the milonga, and we had better start understanding it or the beautiful dance of tango will always elude us. I am going to try to explain to you what tango means to the Argentine, and to the Argentine woman in particular.

Argentines feel happiness is very important. And this is a happiness that is within themselves, not derived through the approval of others. Americans often are more into pursuing happiness. Wherever they are now, if they just work harder, they could be better, get more attention and approval from others, and therefore, be happier.

Tango isn't about a performance. It isn't about how many other people are looking at you. It isn't about judgment. It is about sharing your dance and the music, heart and soul, with another person for 3 minutes. The chance to forget the world, escape into an embrace, feel the music through each other, catch a "tango moment".

Argentine women are adamant about this. They would rather sit all night than dance with someone who doesn't understand this. They are not worried about following everything so the man will be pleased. It is the leader's job to please the follower. Argentine men know this. In order to bring honor to himself, he knows that he must bring honor to the woman. A man who is trying new moves he can't lead, teaching on the floor, dancing for himself - that man is not worth dancing with. Better to sit with your friends and chat.

Another aspect of the Argentine culture is that they are very good at letting things go. The tanda can be very intense, very exciting, but then it's over. No regrets, on to the next. This is actually freeing. That means you can give your partner everything,

be totally there for and with them, but when the dance is over, it's over, and both parties can move on with the assurances that no promises were made, no agendas, no embarrassing "I didn't mean it that way".

To dance like an Argentine, it is important to remember this: "For a tango to be successful it has to be desired by both partners in the dance. To dance tango for courtesy could cause a "failure tango" to occur, and this would be an embarrassing situation that both partners would wish to avoid."

Ballroom, swing, salsa, are danced for fun, for show, for others to watch. I love those dances! But tango, for me, is danced for "feeling", for each other. It's a different way to think about dance.

So I hope that this will alleviate some of those frustrations. Tango isn't just a dance, it is a social event. It's about getting together with your friends, not getting the most dances. It's about having that one amazing dance with your good friend, not 40 mediocre or bad dances.

Oh, and if you want to learn to lead, great! So long as you are leading to make your partner happy!



August Practica Hosted by Tom and Karyn Hughes



Wanted : Your Thoughts!

We've got the space and you've got the ideas! What would you like to see printed here? TSOR Newsletter is looking for passionate tango dancers who want to share their thoughts with Rochester! Any subject : food, music, shoes, etc... What makes you think tango? Articles or ideas can be submitted to the editor at : dahldance@msn.com

We look forward to hearing from you!

She Said & He Said cont ...

Fi-

nally, Sunday afternoon, I attended the workshop taught by Cecilia Gonzalez and Evan Griffiths, and Cecilia asked, "Who is this man in front of me?" and continued with, "This man is not just a leader, or a dancer. He is a real person..." And I learned my lesson of the weekend. Why did I enjoy dinner so much when I was at the Festival for tango? Why did I enjoy being a part of the TangoDales, even though the dancing, choreography, etc., where really nothing new or special? Tango is not only about dancing. It's about relating to another human being. Far too often we – myself included – forget that we are dancing with someone else. We get lost in the step we are trying to learn, we get lost trying to "express" the music while totally neglecting our partner. Or worse yet, we get lost in some vague goal of becoming a better – or the best – dancer on the floor. Then we lose sight of our partner. When we lose sight of the person we are dancing with – when we forget to relate to that person in front us – are we really dancing tango?

As a high-level competitive dancer, I often get lost in the goal of becoming better. Of being ready for the next competition. Cecilia's comment reminded me that without my dance partner, I cannot achieve any dancing goal, even if it's just to enjoy one dance. So the lesson for me was one of human connection and appreciation of the person kind enough to dance with me.



Jeremy Anderson (far left) and the brotherhood of the tangodales.
Heartland Tango Festival 2010

Dancing in the Garden
By Lisa Doherty

We all relish every opportunity to dance, but the Dacha Garden Milonga (graciously hosted by Jeff & Jania) adds a truly magical element to the dance that we all cherish so much. It was a stunning combination of good food, great wine, outstanding music (by master DJ, Christopher Everett), gorgeous moves on an outdoor dance floor, and a wonderful blend of Tangueros and Tangueras from Rochester to Minneapolis. The ambiance of lighting, chickens, fireflies, and the country setting all helped make the night feel like our own private argentine tango utopia, removed from the rest of the world.

It started as a beautiful evening for the annual Dacha Garden Milonga. Despite the strong storms that afternoon in the twin cities, we had a great turnout from the Minneapolis Tango dancers. It did not take long to fill the dance floor with leaders and followers of every experience level, background, and age- but all with a common passion for the argentine tango. Towards the end of night, the weather changed and scattered sprinkles and our "nice breeze" gave way to heavy downpours and forceful winds. Even a strong thunderstorm (and a partially flooded dance floor) could not stop the whirlwind of ochos, colgadas, sacadas, ganchos, and cruzadas on the dance floor. The weather did not dampen the dancing nor anyone's spirits, and everyone left with the feeling of contentment of a night well spent. We were privileged to be part of two very special events during the evening. Nora Fong (newborn daughter of longtime TSOR members Jolene Nelson & Luis Fong) made her milonga debut; and Nick Aguilar, from our neighbors to the north, MN Tango Society celebrated his birthday with us.

We thank and appreciate our ever generous and welcoming hosts for this event, Jeff Salisbury and Jania Trushina. This event is one of the highlights of the year for TSOR members, and we look forward to next summer's garden milonga.

TSOR presents Florencia Taccetti and Evan Giffiths**Saturday,
September 25th, 2010**

All classes held at the
Rochester Athletic Club, 3100
19th St NW, Rochester MN

Noon - 1:30 pm: **"Introduction to close embrace":** Develop a close connection to your partner and to the music.

1:45 pm- 3:15 pm: **"Introducing**

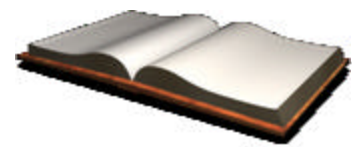
Colgadas" Exercises to learn how to balance your partner's center of gravity

3:30 pm - 5 pm: **Creative Colgadas**

(Intermediate Level)

Tuition for Saturday
Classes (per student): **\$35**
Register online at :
tangosocietyofrochester.com

Private lessons available on
Sunday between 11 am and
5 pm at Dahl Dance Center
with either Evan or
Florencia.
Call 507-269-0976 to
schedule an appointment.



The TANGO DICTIONARY....
Learn the Language of the dance
you love.

"Apilado Style"

Piled on: As used in tango, the reference is to the way a jockey is "piled on" his horse, when racing—hugging the neck.

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The editor reserves the right
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content, style, or space.

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2010 TSoR Board:

Jeff Salisbury, President
April Dahl, Vice President,
James Geroux, Treasurer
Amy Steinkraus, Secretary
Committee Members: Kyra
Anastasidou, Maren Johnson



Our Members

Name: Behzad Ebrahimi

Hometown: Tehran, Iran
(my Tango Hometown
Ann Arbor, Michigan!)

Occupation: Postdoctoral
Fellow at Mayo Clinic

**What motivated you
to begin learning?** Well,
one of my very good
friends was a member the
University of Michigan
Tango club. I knew many
of the people from tango

- 2010 Future Events:**
- **TSoR September Study Group & Practica** Sunday, September 19th
Study Group at Dahl Dance Center 5 pm—6 pm **TSOR members only**
Topic will be a review of Chicago Tango weekend
Practica— 7 PM to 9 PM—**Open to all**
Location: TBD
 - **Special Rochester Tango Weekend—September 25th & 26th 2010**
Workshops, South American cuisine and amazing music at new tango
venue! Mark your calendars!
 - **No October Milonga at Sontes!**
 - **TSoR October Study Group & Practica** Sunday, October 31st
Study Group at Dahl Dance Center 5 pm—6 pm **TSOR members only**
Spooky Tango Nuevo Topics
Practica— 7 PM to 9 PM—**Open to all**
Location: TBD
 - **TSoR Novmber Milonga** Saturday, November 6th
8:30 PM—9:30 pm (lesson), 9:30 PM to 12 AM dancing
Location: **Sonte's**, 4-3rd St SW, Rochester.
Cost: \$10 (non-members), \$7 (TSoR members)

community through him and I used to go to their gatherings. I can say I was a member of that community in every way but dancing! Eventually I decided to give it a shot and I signed up for the beginners' class.

What do you enjoy most about dancing? There are many things I enjoy about dancing. In close embrace tango I enjoy how nice, accurate and precise good leaders and followers communicate through a simple chest connection. It is amazing how much information is exchanged this way. Not just the lead, you are telling so much about yourself meanwhile. If you think you are good in hiding you mood or feelings, try it with your tango partner especially if you are a leader. It is

almost impossible to hide anything especially if the two people know each other and have danced with each other before. I enjoy the honesty of this dance.

It is very relaxing and at the same time very challenging. I like both aspects! Most of the times, it is like break time from the stress and anxiety of life and work. When I am dancing my mind is focused on that. The challenge comes in to the picture when I try to be creative. I love to add to my tango vocabulary!

What is the most frustrating part of the learning process for you; and how do you stay focused? Communication. For me it is so frustrating when I initiate a step and my follower responds to that in a way completely different than what I had in mind or expected;

however, once we figure out the correct lead/follow, it becomes the most joyful moment of my day.

What "words of wisdom" would you share with a new dancer? Tango is a social dance. Very often you dance with someone who is different in dance skill or style. Such a dance may not be a memorable one for you, but it shouldn't be the worst dance memory of your partner either. Don't reflect dissatisfaction into your dance. Put as much effort as you can into it so at least you show your partner respect. Most of the time, if both sides try hard and compromise a bit; you will find something in between that makes you both happy and satisfied at the end.