

TANGO PASSION

Tango Society of Rochester

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

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From the President's Desk
Yuko Taniguchi

How do you feel about Tango? Not an easy question to answer, to describe a physical movement that is deeply fulfilling, lovely, and frustrating at the same time. Some people could write a book or novel about tango. But TSoR challenged you with a much more concise approach: The first TSoR Tango Tanka Contest. Tanka is a historical Japanese poetry, consisted of 5-7-5-7-7- syllables. The tanka form seemed fitting for this contest because tango, filled with mixed, if not paradoxical, emotions, needs to be placed in a solid home. Tanka's restricted form would function as a solid place where dancers could play with words to discover ways to capture tango experiences. Writing resembles dancing in many ways. A form is there, not to follow as a rule, but to use it to explore and encounter our style. Our exuberance for tango is like boiling hot water, ready to be poured into this solid cup of tanka form. And we, the judges, enjoyed your wonderful cup of tango tanka!

The judges, Joe Marchesani, Rebecca Bamford, and Virginia Wright-Peterson, and I are all writers and avid readers of poetry. Most importantly, we have danced Argentine tango at least once in our life time. One afternoon on Saturday, all the judges met for lunch in my small apartment, and as we enjoyed Thai shrimp curry, we passionately discussed all 49 submitted tankas. Reviewing the submissions anonymously, judges were quite curious about the gender of the writer. Who wrote this? Is this an experience of a man or a woman? Because of the many wonderful tankas, our selection process involved lengthy discussion, taking us all afternoon to decide the winners.

The first place was awarded to Kim Kotila. Judges' commented that this tanka's strong opening line, "Still drying my tears/ Though of course I should have known" lead into a sense of storytelling and

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Good Food...



Birthdays and Holidays..



Friends and football...

A good tango is a great compliment to any wine....



Learning moments ...

TSOR Practicas— why would you miss one? See the back page for dates!



From the President's Desk...

narrative, immediately placing readers in the midst of a drama. While focusing on one moment intensely, the poem still left ambiguity and mystery. We could feel that something happened- perhaps deep disappointment or difficulty on the dance floor. But the speaker continues to move by and not run away. Words were used economically and beautifully; the last two lines played well with the sounds of "s" and "t." The second place was awarded to James Dunn. Judges commented how this tanka contained a vivid and colorful description with specific images and captured the melancholy mood of tango through a narrative focusing on one specific moment.

The third place was awarded to Kristine Westrom. The rhythm of this tanka reflected the movement of the dance while the line breaks create multiple meanings in a conceptually rich format.

Three honorable mentions were selected. To Amy Steinkraus's tanka, judges were intrigued by how this tanka captured the yearning of tango and included a sense of tonality, reflecting the image of tango. The last line of this poem captured how the art of dancing is the consolation of tragedy.

To Kim Kotila's tanka, judges were impressed by the unique use of an extended metaphor with the creative image of static architecture reflecting the dynamics of the dance.

Finally, Rachel Geroux, our youngest writer (13 years old!), delighted the judges by her playful, lively, and fun tanka, which seems to resemble and portray the melody of milonga music.

Congratulations to all our winners, and thank you everyone for your participation and sharing your tango experience through poetry. We hope to conduct this contest again. Perhaps next time, we will challenge you even more, by conducting Tango Haiku contest! TSoR strives to continue provoking your wonderful tango mind!

Tango Historian, Robert Thompson, describes that the best tango narratives include "One basic message: it is just as important to be well danced as it is to be well versed." Good dancing is based on healthy communication. TSoR will continue to encourage and promote a healthy tango environment as we all strive to become better dancers for you.



The color red was presented beautifully at the February Milonga by all of the dancers who came out to share a Valentines Tango Moment.



TANGO TANKA WINNERS

1st Place : Kim Kotila.

(4 free passes to TSoR milongas and publication on our website)

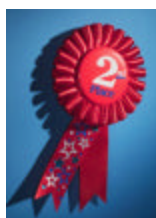
Still drying my tears
Though of course I should have known
I strap on my shoes
Take a deep breath and summon
The strength to soften my heart



2nd Place : James Dunn.

(2 free passes to TSoR milongas and publication on our website)

Fine expensive shoe,
All the way from Tokyo,
Gold and red high arched,
Silenced on my mantle now,
Sill, captive and resentful



3rd Place: Kristine Westrom.

(1 free pass to a TSoR milonga and publication on our website)

Dancing on the edge
of life; misstep, pause, start once
again. Familiar
music first heard in a dream
speaks to my soul in tango.



What are you looking for?

April Dahl and others....

As human beings we are always looking for something— The best wine, good chocolate, the perfect outfit, the perfect shoes to go with the outfit, etc... As dancers we also tend to seek for that illusive perfect partner or dance, one that suits us and who we feel good dancing with. This month we posed this question, “*What are you looking for in a leader or follower on the dance floor?*”

Here are a few of the responses we Received from many of our members. They may surprise you!

I am looking for...

“subtleness. Someone who can clearly lead the steps without being, for lack of a better word, “bossy” about it. Asking someone to do a step should be the same as asking them to dance, you offer the option. With that said, guys,

don't be a pansy on the dance floor either. “

“someone who is not judgmental in attitude but very clear in the lead. Then I get to even do new steps without realizing it! “

“someone who leads a good mix of what I know, and something new and makes me feel like I danced what was lead (i.e. not focusing on what I did wrong) one that puts a smile on my face while dancing (it feels like dancing then, not just walking around), someone who feels the music, someone who likes to practice outside of the milongas.”

“someone who provides a strong lead...who helps me feel relaxed and respected, no matter what level I dance at. If I experience those things, I am able

to respond more confidently and naturally to their leads. “

“a flowing lyrical style, as much open as closed”

“patience, personal motivation, and a commitment to solid technique.”

“What I look for in a Tango partner is...someone who loves Tango enough to look past their own (and their partner's) lack of experience or skill and are willing to experiment and allow failure to be an “exciting adventure” that may lead to something even more beautiful than what they were trying to do in the first place.”

“What I look for in a tango partner is one that respects me, someone that will not show frustration when I don't follow well, and one that smiles and talks between songs”

As you can see, we are all looking for many of the same things on the dance floor—to be respected, to practice, to connect to another human being for a moment. The endless search for these things is exhausting and frustrating. As we list our wishes for our ideal tango “partner,” it is crucial that that we also exhibit the character traits we seek in our partner.” If we want a patient partner—we need to learn patience. If we want to be respected—we need to learn to communicate respectfully. If we want a strong lead—then we need to learn to be strong and confident in our own dancing. Another important consideration is goals. If I find someone to dance with it won't do me any good if they don't share the same vision for their dancing or the partnership.

A few of the goals that were mentioned by our members for their tango dancing are...

“to be able to dance all the styles that are thrown at me, whether it be Valz, Salon, or Milonga. I would like them to flow from one to the next, effortlessly. “

“to be able to follow any lead no matter how subtle - and to 'wait' until I feel that lead “

“to stop thinking”

“to become the best tango dance I can be through focusing on technique, core, and good leading/following skills “

As you have opportunities to dance with others who share your tango addiction, ask questions. Find out what they hope to accomplish in their dancing. Skill can always be learned. It is more important that you find someone who wants to work and who shares your goals. The partnership should always be beneficial to both parties.

In closing—if we want a partner we need to do 3 things. Be the partner we would want, don't always judge based on skill —judge the desire and finally

ASK SOMEONE TO DANCE !

Everyone wants to be asked :))



Tango Passion staff

Editor: April Dahl
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The editor reserves the right to alter any contribution to reflect considerations of content, style, or space.

E-mail: dahldance@msn.com to comment or contribute stories and photos.

2010 TSoR Board:

Yuko Taniguchi, President
April Dahl, Vice President,
James Geroux, Treasurer
Jeremy Anderson, Secretary



2010 Future Events:

- **TSoR March Study Group & Practica** Sunday, March 28th, 2010
Study Group at Dahl Dance Center 5 pm—6 pm **TSOR members only**
Practica— 7 PM to 9 PM—**Open to all**
Location: Marty Hartz's, Cost: \$3 (non-members), Free (TSoR members)
- **TSoR April Milonga.** Saturday ,April 5th, 2010
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)
- **TSoR April Study Group & Practica** Sunday, April 25th, 2010
Study Group at Dahl Dance Center 5 pm—6 pm **TSOR members only**
Practica— 7 PM to 9 PM—**Open to all**
Location: Russell's Cost: \$3 (non-members), Free (TSoR members)
- **TSoR May Milonga** Friday May 1st, ,2010
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)
- **TSoR May Special Offsite Practica** Sunday, May 23rd, 2010
No Study Group at Dahl Dance Center
Practica— 7 PM to 9 PM—**Open to all**
Location: TBA Cost: \$3 (non-members), Free (TSoR members)

Our Members



Name: Jeffrey L. Salisbury
Born: Peru Indiana, raised: Belzoni and Natchez Mississippi (the "Heart of the Delta" - that's the deep South!)

Profession:
Professor and Research Scientist: Cancer biology, centrosomes, centrin, and the cell cycle

Current Feelings on Tango?
Perhaps my feelings on Tango represent somehow a normal state of being. That is - Tango is a genuine path to experience freshness and sensitivity, the simple pleasures of movement, the uncertainty of what lies just ahead, still with a

clarity that you will move through the moment truly engaged with another human being.

Favorite Tango moment thus far?

Pulling out all the stops on a crowded and rowdy bar room dance floor - launching into a tango with Jania to a country-rock tune - and having a young man come to the table afterwards and ask: "Sir, what was that, that you just did?"

What is important to you in a leader?

In Tango, a leader must develop the capacity to translate vision of motion into reality, where feeling is more important than technical strategy, and where giving and reception cooperate to complete a form.

What do you look for in a great tango partner?

Connection and really great shoes

Words of advice for someone looking for a tango partner?

Never, ever, ever give up - they will come..

Jeff Salisbury
Tango Visionary

