



TANGO PASSION



TANGO SOCIETY OF ROCHESTER



Wine, Chocolate, and Tango: Grand Milonga 2011.....What a Night!

From the President's Desk.....Camp Tango

I've been thinking a lot lately about the perfect Tango moment.... and like the taxi that appears from just around the corner on a cold rainy night.... that brief instant when Tango works so well and you realize that it wasn't created by some overt act of your own.... but rather, a chance passing simply seized upon as it rose before you. This happened to us recently in a most unexpected way.

At the end of summer we found ourselves cabin camping at an "all inclusive" family camp up north. One evening, maybe the second or third, well after midnight, we were trekking back to our cabin along a moon lit trail and came upon a group of fireside campers singing rock and folk tunes recalled from their collective youth. Two guitars, a fiddle, a harmonica, and spoons played on knees accompanied the singing and drew us to the edge and then into the group warmed by the fire and spirit of the evening. Dylan, the Beatles, Greg Brown, Croce, and Van Morrison provided lyrics for a late night camp karaoke. We sang along scating lines we could not recall, while rapping the fireside bench to keep time. When Neil Young's "Harvest Moon" began I looked at my sweetheart and said - "that's a *Tango*" - I handed a flashlight to the crooner next to us and asked him to shine on a cleared area just outside the fire ring. With the full moon rising we were charged with an irresistible urge to dance the

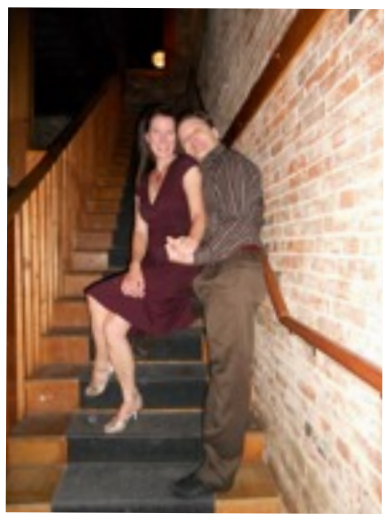
night away but we also knew well the moment would passage quickly.

I drew my love a little bit closer as we collected our stance. I stepped side left, then forward right outside her, then diagonal forward left, and crossing behind right with a lead for a series of ochos. I move forward using a syncopation of accentuated steps and halts, ending with a subtle move right then a change in direction at the last second to lead her to step side-back-side-forward into a windmill *Molinete*.... I pivoted on a new center to face her as she continued around me...and then we repeated the movement, which sent our linked form back on the pattern itself. My foot pursued hers as we moved into a *Mordida* (a favorite Tango step I learned early on) trapping her momentarily before she stepped out, around, and to a *Gancho* (which brought a cry from the crowd and several comments at breakfast the next morning!). We finished with a falling step where she tilted forward off her axis as I caught a beautiful leg drop and held her for a long moment. To my great fortune her embellishments and flourish accentuated the beauty of the deep night and I could sense by the eyes of our fellow campers that all on a harvest moon appreciated the fireside Camp Tango.

With every good wish, I am,

Jeffrey Salisbury

ACTIVE LISTENING IN DANCE



by Gerry Girouard & Rebecca Abas

In improvisational dance, whether it is social dance or an improvised performance, the dancers involved must listen to each other to build a dialogue around a particular set of movement choices. However, with so many choices how do you organize your ideas around a movement topic? One does so by actively listening to the other person.

Rebecca and I come from two different worlds of dance experience. Rebecca draws off of her decades of training in ballroom and social dance with some studies in movement-theater and contact improvisation. I have a high school gymnastics background that led to German expressionistic style of modern dance and Capoeira. It is our common love of improvising and Argentine Tango that drew us together. In trying to understand each other and determine what we wanted BODYTALK to be, we were pushed to listen to each other, both in dancing and as two artists in physical dialogue with each other.

In all styles of dance improvisation that are done with other people, one dance move can have many meanings to the other dancer, so one must pause to let the other dancer reflect and respond to that single move. The importance of pausing to listen is the first step towards building a connection and starting a dialogue. This process in verbal conversation is: propose, listen, reply. In BODYTALK it can go like this: make a statement of one move, wait and listen to the reply, then choose to further respond or make a new statement.

The first thing to build awareness is coming together and slowly sharing each others weight as an act of listening. Rebecca and I use a "Push-Neutral-Pull" concept as a warm up to help dancers tune into their own body and start listening to the other person and how they share weight. The dancers, as couples or trios, go between "Push-Neutral-Pull" at their own organic pace. Then, music is added as an organizing aid to pace the couple as they go between the "PNP" on counts of 8 or 4. Then, the dancers find various shapes and steps as they go through PNP as they gently warm-up the body, and build a continuous non-verbal connection.

What is essential is, through each movement or step, to feel and see what happens with the other person. Ask yourself: "How am I changing the current balance while I am changing my position?" "Is there room to grow?" These questions can be asked aloud as the dancers are doing the exercise. The second important point in this exercise is to not throw yourself to the end of a push or pull, rather meter out the tension between each other so you can listen to how the other(s) are responding in the moment. Once this visceral comprehension is discovered, the couple can begin a dialogue or BODYTALK with each other.

Simple variations include: 1) Trying to use a traditional dance frame and then varying it. Find the subtleness of the Push-Neutral-Pull through degrees. 2) Connect with a body part that you might not be familiar or comfortable with. Above all else listen to how your new choice affects the mutual balance and do not sacrifice that balance for the sake of going towards your choice. Listen to your partner so you can make supportive movement choices.

Review of TSoR's Grand Milonga Sept. 17, 2011

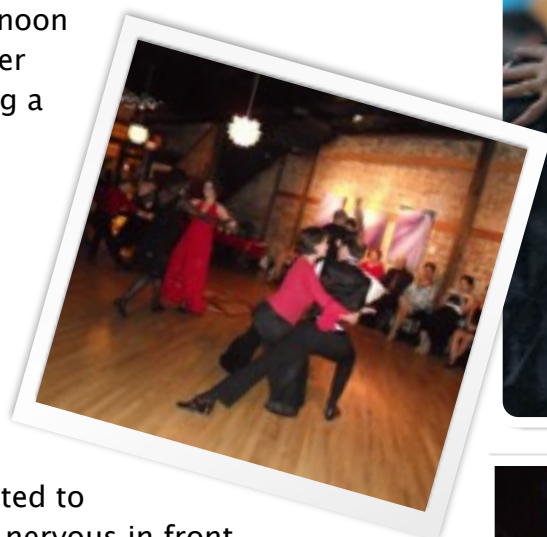
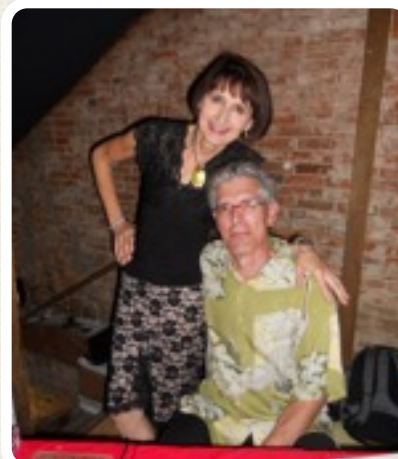
By Amy Steinkraus (Amy is secretary on the TSoR Board)

'I wonder how many will join us?'...a question I've asked many times as I eagerly anticipated another milonga. Last year we enjoyed a very successful event, but this time...well, everyone seemed so busy and this weekend was particularly so. Our pre-dance dinner at Sontes was a happy if intimate affair with only about ten fellow dancers. However, to our delight over the course of the evening, we greeted one after another of our elegantly attired friends, many from the Twin Cities. Studio 324 provided a spacious hardwood floor, attractive lighting, and lovely abstract floral photos on the walls of the historic 1867 building. Our DJ for the night was a favorite of Rochester tanguero/as: Paul Lohman (a.k.a. Pablo), who provided us with his usual fine mix of traditional and alternative tunes; he kept the energy level high and continually drew us onto the dance floor. With a total of about fifty people, the space became quite warm, and it was nice to have a selection of water and treats at the back of the room.

Having taken part in the fascinating BodyTalk workshop that afternoon at DDC, I knew that our teacher Gerry Girouard would be doing a demo with his dance partner Rebecca Abas. How mesmerizing to watch them perform the spontaneous creative blending of modern, tango, and other dance forms that is their unique version of "contact improv."

When they finished, workshop attendees were invited to perform in pairs. At first a bit nervous in front of the crowd, soon I felt transported by the challenge of translating the rhythmically compelling music with my tireless partner Joey Ray. People sometimes speak of having a tango moment; I experienced a similar feeling of transcending time and space, if only briefly, with this amazing dance expression. As we took turns moving each other's limbs in the "sculpt, sculpt, shape" of BodyTalk, it felt as though we were creating ephemeral art. Occasionally we'd break out into tango or west coast swing, as the spirit moved us. It was a delight, and apparently the audience loved it.

The night ended with a return to Sontes's for the "after glow" of a wine bar, where some of us enjoyed a delicious flight of Argentine wines and assorted cheeses. All in all, it was a most memorable evening!



SCENE & HEARD



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Tango Passion Staff
Editor; Maren Johnson
Contributors: Jeff Salisbury, Amy Steinkraus, Gerry Girouard, Rebecca Abas
Photography: April Dahl, Behzad Brahimi

The editor reserves the right to reflect considerations of content, style, or space.
Email: marenrj@hotmail.com to comment or contribute stories or photos.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**SPECIAL VALENTINE
MILONGA WILL BE HELD
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY
18. LOCATION AGAIN
THIS YEAR IS THE
BEAUTIFUL SALEM GLEN
WINERY, ROCHESTER!**



Upcoming TSoR Events

TSoR Website: www.tangosocietyofrochester.com

- TSoR November Milonga: Saturday, November 5, 2011
8:30pm - 12:00 am (1 hour lesson at 8:30)
Location: Sonté's, 4 3rd Street SW, Rochester
Cost: \$10 non-members, 7\$ members
- TSoR November Study Group & Practica: Sunday, November 27, 2011
5:00-6:00 pm Study Group at Dahl Dance Center (TSoR members only)
7:00-9:00 pm Practica (Open to all!)
Location: Rosebud & Lewis Roberts
- TSoR Holiday Milonga: Saturday, December 3, 2011
Dress in your holiday best!!
8:30 pm - 12:00 am (1 hour lesson at 8:30)
Location: Sonté's, 4 3rd Street SW, Rochester
Cost: \$10 non-members, 7\$ members
- TSoR December Study Group & Practica: Sunday, December 18, 2011
5:00-6:00 pm Study Group at Dahl Dance Center (TSoR members only)
7:00-9:00 pm Practica (Open to all!)
Location: To be determined