



I lived in Uruguay for a year. Uruguayans (like Argentines) will tell you that they invented the music and the dance that is the Tango. While there, I learned to dance the Tango. The first lesson of the Tango is that the man leads the dance. He telegraphs every flourish, controls every spin of the woman - all with the subtle signals of his right hand at the woman's back and the movements of his chest and feet.

The second thing you learn is that if you let her, the woman will walk all over you; controlling the dance, indulging her whims - all of which will make a fool of both of you.

The key to the dance is that the woman is the focal point with the man imposing structure, precision and reason to the dance. When the flute and guitar come together the roles are the same and often with disastrous results. Invariably, the guitarist plays a secondary role, as it simply cannot compete with the beauty of tone, breadth of line and control of phrasing capable on the flute. At best, the guitarist serves as the composer's conscience, enforcing structural demands and maintaining forward motion while the flutist spins her lines in and around the guitarist's arpeggiations and occasional flourishes.

Due to the standing of the guitar in the classical musical community, you will rarely find a guitarist capable of commanding enough respect of his flutist to enforce such structure. Denis Azabagic, unquestionably one of the bright stars of the guitar, commands this respect. Victor in more competitions than any other guitarist in decades, Azabagic understands that his role as guitarist in the duo is secondary, but his extreme precision and clear ideas afford him the luxury of guiding the flutist through the compositions. One can hear this best in Alejandro Yague's **Confidencial No. 2**. The longest piece on the CD, Yague's composition is beautiful and lush and interesting and its musical structure, episodic though it may be, is elucidated and regulated by the sure hands of Azabagic.

Azabagic's clarity is rewarded by the lush and passionate lines played by Eugenia Moliner. Her rendering of *Cape Cod* from **Towards the Sea** by Takemitsu is delightfully melancholy and provides the most sensitive moments on the disk. Like all of the composers on the CD, Takemitsu writes music that is often misunderstood and badly played - but not here.

The strongest playing on the CD comes in the opening performance of **Histoire du tango** by Piazzolla. They truly dance their way through these pieces with Moliner flashing back and forth through the precise, rhythmic and controlled lines of Azabagic. All of this says nothing of their superb ensemble - something which they allow you to take for granted which in turns allows you to listen to the music without fear that one or the other will misstep.

A reviewer must be honest, so I will say that I came to this CD with reservations, as I have yet to hear a flute and guitar in combination that made sense anywhere but a dinner party or a wedding. But these two were made to play together, and when they play it is music not of an overbearing flute and a reticent guitar. They have a convert in me and hopefully this is the first of many discs from them.