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Bandoneon Pure: Dances of Uruguay

René Marino Rivero



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The World's Musical Traditions 5

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Bandoneon Pure: Dances of Uruguay René Marino Rivero

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. El choclo <i>tango criollo</i> 1:55 | 15. Vieja morena <i>paso doble</i> |
| 2. Miriñaque <i>milonga uruguaya</i> 1:58 | <i>académico</i> 2:51 |
| 3. Corazón de oro <i>vals oriental</i> 1:52 | 16. Norma <i>foxtrot</i> 1:48 |
| 4. Mate amargo <i>ranchera</i> 2:05 | 17. Las margaritas <i>ranchera</i> 2:08 |
| 5. Camino al don <i>foxtrot canción</i> | 18. Los ejes de mi carreta <i>milonga</i> |
| 1:42 | 2:21 |
| 6. Milonga de mis amores <i>milonga</i> | 19. Canaro en Paris <i>tango</i> 3:13 |
| 3:08 | 20. Milonga que peina canas |
| 7. Sentimiento gaucho <i>tango</i> 3:15 | <i>milonga</i> 2:26 |
| 8. La puñalada <i>milonga</i> 1:55 | 21. Desde el alma <i>vals boston</i> 1:45 |
| 9. La loca de amor <i>vals criollo</i> 2:16 | 22. Polca de bordalesa <i>polca</i> 1:26 |
| 10. Polca de Zamora <i>polca</i> 2:24 | 23. Taquito militar <i>milonga orillera</i> |
| 11. Gaucho de Florida <i>ranchera</i> 2:18 | 2:55 |
| 12. Maxixa <i>maxixa</i> 1:48 | 24. Baile de los morenos <i>candombe</i> |
| 13. El pericón <i>pericón</i> 3:55 | 3:24 |
| 14. Sacate la caretita <i>corrido</i> 1:35 | 25. El choclo <i>tango criollo</i> 1:56 |

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Total playing time: 58:24

Commentary: Maria Dunkel. Recordings: Tiago de Oliveira Pinto

All musical arrangements by René Marino Rivero



0 9307-40431-2 7

René Marino Rivero has played the bandoneon, or square headed accordian, since he was a child. Now an internationally known master of the bandoneon, he performs 24 traditional Uruguayan dance pieces on this compact disc in the "pure" style he prefers — transparent and natural, without electronic modification. Recorded in 1991 in Northern Uruguay and extensively annotated in an enclosed 80 page booklet.



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No special thematic limits have been set for this compact disc series. Each issue centers on those forms of traditional music that have been the subject of musicological research and is accompanied by an extensive scholarly commentary of an ethnomusicologist who deals with the particular subject matter from the point of view of her or his primary experience in the field. Each issue contains a description of the music of a certain region, of a particular type of ensemble, of an individual musician or of a musical genre. The content of a disc refers to rural, urban or popular aspects of the music concerned including both oral and written traditions. Taking any one traditional musical culture as a whole, a compact disc may present autochthonous, acculturated and transformed genres, folk music as well as art music. The musical examples and the information given in the booklet aim at providing a deeper insight into both general as well as particular aspects of musical cultures, explaining, for example, the imbedding of musical traditions in a certain sociocultural context, the role of these traditions in a changing (musical) world and their function as a mean of musical self-expression.

BANDONEON PURE: DANCES OF URUGUAY

RENÉ MARINO RIVERO

Commentary by Maria Dunkel
Recordings by Tiago de Oliveira Pinto

I. PORTRAIT OF RENÉ MARINO RIVERO

René Marino Rivero considers himself an Uruguayan, but not in a nationalistic way. While many Europeans may regard the La Plata states (Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay), as a homogeneous cultural area, Marino Rivero perceives a distinct regional culture in Tacuarembó, his native community. Lying in Uruguay's northern part near the border to southern Brazil, Tacuarembó is spread over 21,015 km², making it the largest of Uruguay's Departamentos; with 3.7 inhabitants per km², it is also the least densely populated.

Marino Rivero feels that he has been marked by this community's dialect, folklore and above all by its music, in which he was steeped from an early age.

Born in 1936 in the region of Cerro de Batovi, Marino Rivero has childhood memories of hearing his mother play the guitar, which he then attempted to play himself. The young boy also practiced on the single-row *acordeón campero*, as well as on any other instrument he could find. Marino Rivero decided already at the age of six to become a musician. Although his mother was opposed to his choice of career—thinking of all musicians as incurable drunkards—Marino Rivero's parents nevertheless paid for his violin lessons with a teacher of Italian descent. At his son's request, Marino Rivero's father obtained a 130-note bandoneon from a music teacher named Marquez, which he learned to play with the help of a printed tutor and under the guidance of his violin teacher. Several problems confronted him, one of which was that there were twelve notes too few on his instrument, as the instruction book was designed for a 142-note bandoneon. In learning the practice pieces, he was thus forced to rely on his own invention to a certain extent in order to ensure that there were no gaps in the music.

At the age of nine Marino Rivero was already so advanced on his instrument that he was able to earn money from his playing. His favorite piece was the *ranchera* "Las margaritas" (no. 17). When he was twelve years old, he became a member of an ensemble of two bandoneons, a violin and a double bass, which played in the city of Tacuarembó. When a bandoneon class was established at the conservatory there in 1950, the fourteen-year-old joined it. The

bandoneonist Edgardo Pedroza (b. 1926 in Carmelo, Soriano, Uruguay) came every week from Montevideo, ca. 400 kms away, to give the lessons; when he was absent, Marino Rivero stood in for him, being already ranked as an advanced student. At that time, roughly one hundred students between the ages of seven and about fifty were registered for the class. It seems that the conservatory in Tacuarembó was the first in Uruguay to integrate the bandoneon into its curriculum, and in addition to taking lessons on that instrument, Marino Rivero also studied violin, piano, composition and conducting. In fact, some of his teachers strongly advised him to switch to a more "serious" main instrument, considering him to be musically gifted as well as intelligent. However, Marino Rivero felt the most affinity for the bandoneon—the breathing box—with its physical and sonorous plasticity. At a guest concert at the conservatory, he heard for the first time the bandoneonist Alejandro Barletta from Buenos Aires, whose repertoire and performance opened up a whole new dimension for him. In 1960 Marino Rivero participated in a fifteen-day advanced course held by Barletta in Montevideo. Two years later he studied intensively with Barletta again, this time for one month in Buenos Aires. Then, in 1965, at 30 years of age, Marino Rivero left Tacuarembó in order to develop his career as a musician in Montevideo. He now concentrated strongly on composition and interpretation, and some of his works written since this time have been successfully performed in Latin America and Europe and have been published on recordings.

In 1982 Marino Rivero founded the "Taller de Música Contemporánea," a studio for composition and interpretation, in the

capital city. Apart from his activities in Montevideo, the musician has been making European tours regularly since the mid-1980s, and these have taken him up to now to Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland and Germany.

For three decades, Marino Rivero worked exclusively in the field of composed concert music. In his concert use of the bandoneon, he has focused mainly on the artistic aspects of the music rather than on the perpetuation of a particular tradition. However, after being confronted with the views and clichés prevailing in Europe, he realized that an information vacuum exists regarding not only the bandoneon but also the traditional music of his homeland. The restrictive linkage of the bandoneon with the tango and its propagation as a symbol of "Argentinidad" seems to him both one-sided and unjustified (Taylor 1976). This image ignores from the outset Uruguay's bandoneon culture, as if regional manifestations were nonexistent. Also, he considers the conventional association of the bandoneon with the lower classes and laborers of an urban society—*bandoneón arrabalero*—to be too narrow and definitely not applicable to Tacuarembó. Looking back on the 1950s, Marino Rivero recalls that bandoneon playing in that city had not limited itself to the empty imitation of the capital's favorite pieces, but rather had continued and cultivated its own performing style in response to its audiences' demands and as a result of the ability of some very good musicians.

He also finds the question of the "ennoblement" of the bandoneon totally irrelevant. To what extent does the instrument need such a distinction? Its originality cannot be taken away from it, and the

fact that it is a comparatively young instrument (with only a 150-year history) is less a deficiency than it is an opportunity. From the moment that the bandoneon started to put down roots in Uruguay, it acquired its own special Uruguayan character as people incorporated it into their existing musical practice by adapting it to meet their own needs.

Marino Rivero stresses that when he plays the dances of the mid-century repertoire as solo pieces on the bandoneon, it is not simply an act of nostalgic reminiscence on his early life. For him the revitalization of the music of his homeland is much more a reflection of youth and of tradition, similar to a clarifying and enlightening catharsis. He used to explain his personal affinity to the bandoneon as stemming from aesthetic and artistic considerations, but he has now realized that his feelings also grew out of the traditional music and its specific context in Tacuarembó.

Marino Rivero has been intensively involved with the bandoneon for more than forty years. What is the ideal sound that he seeks?

His answer involves two aspects, namely tone and breathing. He strives for an ethereal, disembodied expression in his tone and its nuances. Through breath—that is, the movement of air through the bellows—Marino Rivero prepares the tone for its journey into the atmosphere, since the bellows could make the sound seem unending. They react to the player's slightest movement and turn those movements into vibrations—in both the physical and spiritual sense. At the instant the formed air stream is converted into sound, it leaves the instrument in order to once more become air. In the same way that the act of breathing is made up of two opposing

processes—inhalation and exhalation—which form an organic unity, so the bellows movements of pressure and suction reflect the cycles of musical movement and forge them into a whole.

In presenting on this CD his selection of music from his homeland Uruguay, Marino Rivero has two aims: firstly, he wants to make it possible to experience bandoneon “pure,” in a transparent, natural sound that dispenses with resonance effects, multi-tracking and other studio techniques; secondly, he wishes to give the listener an insight into the repertoire of the Tacuarembó region of the 1950s and to document its features and style of performance.

II. BANDONEON ORGANOLOGY

René Marino Rivero plays an instrument of German manufacture. It is about sixty years old and came from the "Alfred Arnold Bandonion und Concertina Fabrik in Carlsfeld," Saxony (figs. 1, 2). Some of the internal wooden components are marked with a production number which allows the date of manufacture to be traced. In addition, there are a number of external design features, such as the fretwork, the inlay and the housing dimensions, which also provide information as to its origin and age. It was not yet customary in the early 1930s to label the bandoneon because the manufacturers were still able to rely on the knowledge of their customers across the world and their ability to differentiate between instruments of different proveniences. From that time on, however, the disintegration of the market loomed as a result of an



Figure 1

increase in dubious practices on the part of dealers and exporters, including the forgery of labels and price-undercutting. This threat to the proper identification of instruments forced the Carlsfeld manufacturer to protect his good reputation by clearly marking his instruments on the outside. Thus, bandoneons were marked with a branding iron, for example as follows:

“Este es el unico y legitimo Bandonion aleman AA”

“Reg. 77037”

But, as we know, a mark of identification still does not provide any real protection, and copies of instruments have played an integral role in the history of musical instrument making, as have

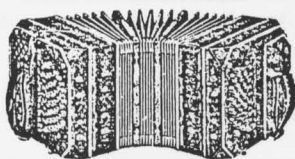
Bandoneones legítimos alemanes

DE LAS AFAMADAS MARCAS

ALFRED ARNOLD (Inh-Alfred u Paul Arnold)-CARLSFELD-(Alemania)

FABRICANTES DE LOS MEJORES BANDONEONES Y CONCERTINAS
QUE USAN EN LA ACTUALIDAD LAS MEJORES ORQUESTAS DEL MUNDO

VOCES DE ACERO
AFINADAS A MANO



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CORRESPONDENCIA EN ALEMÁN, ESPAÑOL, FRANCÉS E INGLÉS

Figure 2

forgeries with intentionally misleading ascriptions, made with the aim of maximizing profits.

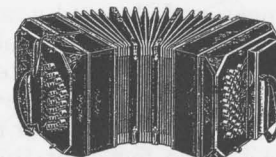
Despite these practices, current research has confirmed that Marino Rivero's bandoneon was made by the Alfred Arnold factory, leaving it probably in 1930 as model 31a II (fig. 8), pre-assembled

and tuned to $a'' = 880$,¹ the so-called "orquesta típica" pitch, which was only for export. In German-speaking countries, bandoneons were tuned to the "Normal A" ($a'' = 870$) until 1941, when Germany joined the International Pitch Convention, at which time instrument makers switched to the higher a' for the domestic market as well.

Marino Rivero's bandoneon has been preserved in its original condition, meaning that all important components and their assembly remain as they were when the instrument left the Carlsfelder factory. It is the reed board, consisting of tongues mounted on long plates, that fundamentally defines the sonority of each bandoneon. As a result, the musical instrument manufacturers of better reputation had long been making their reed boards in their own workshops, employing their own well-guarded materials, tools and techniques. Only when the National Socialist government took over the direction of the German economy, and particularly after the outbreak of war in 1939, when quotas were assigned to the metal supply, was Alfred Arnold forced to cease production of reed boards. They were then obtained in semi-finished form from Gebr. Dix A.G. of Gera, who were mass producers supplying many German harmonica, accordion and harmonium makers. In Carlsfeld these externally produced reed boards were tuned, voiced, fitted with leather lamellae, installed and finally tuned once more inside the instrument.

Marino Rivero speaks of this instrument as a "Stradivarius," far outclassing his other four bandoneons in its sound quality and in the precision of its response. He obtained it from the Italian bando-

neon tuner Romeo Griati² in Buenos Aires in 1960. All his life, this bandoneon connoisseur par excellence complained about those of his customers, mainly *porteños* (*porteño* society: inhabitants of the port of Buenos Aires), who either tried to make their own alterations to their instruments to make them as loud as possible or who brought them to him for this purpose. It was one of these *porteños* who gave him the future Marino Rivero bandoneon in payment, with the remark that it was unsuitable because its sound was too weak. Griati, however, immediately recognized the true value of the instrument, which had, during the first three decades of its existence, been perfectly played-in by a single owner, until it ended up in the hands of the *porteño* who thought it lacked power. It is a well-known fact that the full tonal quality of wind instruments in general only develops gradually over a long period of time, and this is indeed true of the bandoneon. It is easy for a careless player with inadequate technique to ruin an instrument or to cause permanent damage to it. A new bandoneon of any make must therefore be correctly played-in from the start so as to allow its full tonal quality to develop gradually. Being an extremely complex combination of hundreds of individual components, the bandoneon demands the most conscientious handling on the part of the musician. The bellows only develop their pliancy and full capacity through balanced traction, the action only becomes uniformly light and sensitive through precise fingering applied to all the instrument's buttons and, in particular, the air ducts and reed boards together only gradually develop their potential sonority as a result of differentiated air regulation. Therefore it is clear that it is not only



Peso com bahú 8,3 kg
sem bahú 5,4 kg

Modell Nr. 31 a II. Bandonion 142 tönnig oktav, diatonisch (S. 16) oder chromatisch (S. 17), dieselbe Ausführung wie 31 a I, jedoch: Gehäuse mit schöner Jugendstil-Verzierung.

Modelo No. 31 a II. Bandoneon de 142 tons, octavo, diatónico (p. 16) o cromático (p. 17), en acabado idéntico al No. 31 a I pero la caja con linda incrustación en estilo moderno (juvenil).

Modelo No. 31 a II. Bandoneão de 142 tons, em oitava, diatonico (p. 16) ou cromático (p. 17), d'execução igual ao desenho 31 a/I, porém a caixa com bonita incrustação no estilo moderno.

Model No. 31 a II. 142-toned Bandoneon in octave, diatonic (p. 16) or chromatic (p. 17), in a finish similar to 31 a/I but case with nice modern style-incrustation.

Modèle No. 31 a II. Bandoneón de 142 tons en octave, diatonique (p. 16) ou chromatique (p. 17), de type égal à 31 a/I mais la caisse avec belle incrustation de style moderne.

Mit Aluminium-Platten	Mehrpreis
Com chapas de alumínio.	Aumento de preço
Com chapas de alumínio.	Augmentação de preço
With aluminium-plates	an augmentation of
Avec les plaques en aluminium	plus

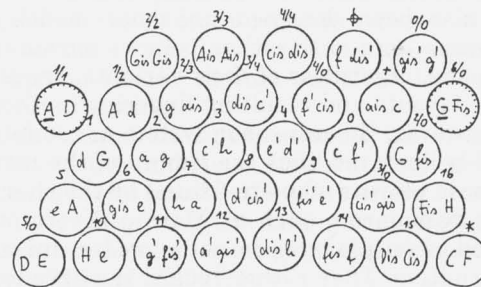
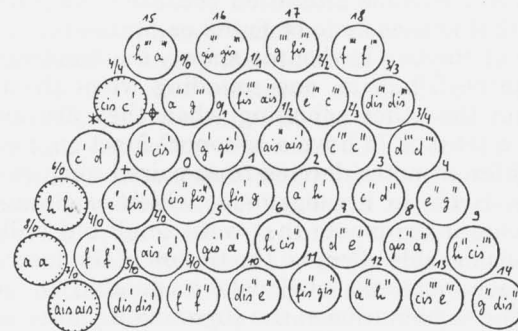
Bälge mit vollständigem Neusilber-Beschlag	Mehrpreis
Fuelles completamente con guarnición de plata alemana. Aumento de preço	
Folles totalmente com guarnição de prata nova. Augmentação de preço	
Bellows with complete fittings of German silver an augmentation of	
Soufflets avec garniture de maillechort	plus

Le meilleur Bandoneón pour les Orchestres de Tango et Jazz.

ALFRED ARNOLD, CARLSFELD/ERZGEBIRGE
Fabrique de Bandoneóns et Concertinas. (Allemagne)

Griati retuned the bandoneon and changed a note, and then sold it to Marino Rivero for 1,500 Uruguayan Pesos, about U.S. \$100 at the exchange rate of that time, which represented more than one and a half months' pay for a teacher in Montevideo. Griati also made the purchaser promise not to allow another tuner to touch the instrument, which accounts for the fact that this bandoneon has only been fully retuned once in 60 years, and that no work has been carried out on it that would affect its sound in any way.

Marino Rivero's bandoneon departs from this standard layout only in one note, which was modified in 1960, when Griati tuned the



instrument and changed the "e" on button 10 on the left manual to play "C." This is a sensible alteration because it dispenses with an identical note that is already to be found on button 6.

As the table of the two keyboards shows, the bandoneon has two notes linked to each button, one sounding when the bellows are compressed and the other sounding when they are extended. 59 buttons out of a total of 71 have a bi-sonor³ function, i.e., they each produce two different notes derived from paired tongues of differing measurements. Such an arrangement, which originated from attempts to develop instruments that were small but still had many notes, has a considerable effect on the timbre of the instrument. The formants of each note are obviously modulated by neighboring notes, so that the combination of the surrounding notes is important in determining tone quality. This sympathetic interaction has even been worked out on the basis of trial and error by some of the early instrument makers, which influenced the planning of their models. On the other hand, since the making of free reed instruments began, have also been designed uni-sonor models, which would produce the same note with either bellows movement. These uni-sonor realizations, regardless of their variants, are more systematic per se in their layouts and resulting fingering methods than the bi-sonor ones. However, the uni-sonor system in combination with the push-and-pull bellows modifies the timbre of the instrument to the degree that those players who are fixated by the characteristic tonal quality of the bandoneon, such as Marino Rivero and most South American bandoneon players, do not consider uni-sonor models to be a real alternative. They rather regard the absence of bi-sonority

as a negative feature which deprives the bandoneon of its idiomatic sound.

Marino Rivero's bi-sonor bandoneon contains rows of tongues which are riveted to long plates in such a way that their free ends are exactly situated over vibration channels of the same dimensions. The smaller the clearance at the sides and free ends, the less the air loss and the better the tone. The rectangular tongues are grouped in pairs, one on each side of the plate, so that one tongue sounds when the bellows are compressed and its partner when they are extended. Eleven, twelve or thirteen pairs are combined on a long plate, each pair being fitted over its own wooden air chamber. All tongues, with the exception of the smallest ones, which produce the highest notes, are complemented by leather lamellae covering the vibration channels. They are glued at the base onto the plate's face opposite the tongue. Depending on the direction of the air flow, they are either pressed onto the plate or lifted away from it, respectively sealing or opening the vibration channels. Therefore, whenever the air stream causes one tongue to vibrate, it also opens its corresponding leather lamella and simultaneously pushes the lamella of its partner tongue against the plate, thus preventing the other tongue from vibrating.

Each vibrating tongue transmits some of its wave energy to its plate through its socket and rivet. However, "the greater the mass of the tongue carrier, the smaller the wave energy transmitted from the tongue to its anchor, and the larger the oscillation amplitude and, as the most important consequence of this, the greater the sound pressure" (Richter 1990:231).

With the long plates of Marino Rivero's bandoneon—the longest available—there is also a further factor influencing the timbre: they are made of zinc. Almost without exception, South American bandoneon players have always insisted upon zinc plates, and the German manufacturers and exporters have had to cater to this demand. This was the case in spite of the fact that in Germany during the 1930s domestic customers usually wanted aluminium, although the use of that material made the instrument more expensive. Zinc is not only heavier than aluminium, but also has a greater material density. In the same way, the density of the steel used for making the tongues is highly relevant. Milling, pressing, stretching or rolling increase the metal's elasticity, and thus its resonance. The tongues in Marino Rivero's bandoneon have tempered segments. Today it is no longer clear what temperatures were used for the tempering and what other processes were used at Carlsfeld to increase the density of the metal.⁴ We only know that the Alfred Arnold reed boards have the worldwide reputation for having the richest sound of any ever made. Apart from their prized tone, they have the advantage of keeping stable pitch, even when played with high bellows pressure. Still, they have an extremely precise response at all times, allowing the player to produce the most sensitive and dynamic sounds.

The rule which governs free reeds is that the length and width of the tongue define its frequency. From the point of view of the tuner, this means that the pitch can be modified by the removal of material. When he shaves material away from the head of the tongue, he decreases the vibrating mass, which slightly raises the

pitch. However, if he files something away at the foot of the tongue, he weakens its resilience and lowers its pitch. Tongues that vibrate at less than 150 Hz—that is to say, lower than “d”—usually have tongue weights fitted to their heads, because it is impossible to increase the length of the tongues *ad infinitum* without adversely altering their physical properties. Each pair of tongues has a corresponding air duct or chamber, the dimensions of which are directly related to the measurements of the tongues: for all practical purposes, their size also has to be limited.

The ducts form a row of compartments analogous to the set of tongue pairs on the long plate. Marino Rivero's bandoneon contains two types of air ducts: in the right-hand casing, shallow pans are combined with cavities that have been carved into blocks of wood that protrude from the base board (fig. 5). In the left-hand casing,

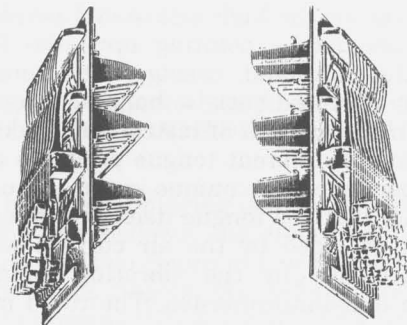


Figure 5

only the latter type is found, with the distinction, however, that the right-hand duct floors are curved, while those of the left-hand casing are straight. This manner of installation is characteristic of double-voiced bandoneons, which make use of the so-called "Oktavton" register—i.e., each tone is produced from two tongues tuned an octave apart. South American bandoneon players favor this combination, whereas German players in the past employed every possible number and combination of voices up to five; apparently, they were not particularly bothered by the inevitable increase in the size and weight of the instrument.

Just as the type of chamber defines the air turbulence to which the tongue is subjected, so does it also determine the tongue's position in relation to the vent and its pallet, which is opened by the depression of the button. In Marino Rivero's bandoneon, the right-hand casing houses tongues which are mounted parallel to the vents and pallets for the high octave and perpendicularly standing tongues (i.e., anaglott = pointing upwards) for the basic notes, whereas in the left-hand casing, both tongues are not only perpendicularly mounted but also hanging (i.e., kataglott = pointing downwards). In the opinion of instrument makers and tuners, it is this combination of different tongue positions and duct mountings that give the bandoneon its unique sound. Acoustic technicians also point to the fact that the tongue itself is not really the main sound source: this is provided by the air current which is, as it were, "blocked" periodically by the vibrating tongue, thus producing sound through quasi-intermission. The rapid motion of the tongue compels the air in its immediate vicinity to move as well, thus

causing fluctuations in pressure. It seems logical to assume that the inner shape of the chambers and the position of the tongues are significant factors influencing sound amplification, radiation and tone, but this has not yet been sufficiently analyzed. In terms of its classification, the bandoneon belongs to the group of so-called intermittent aerophones, specified as free reed instruments with hand-operated bellows (Hornbostel/Sachs no. 412.132), which have no preset chords. This last fact is one of the essential features that differentiate the bandoneon from the common accordion-type instruments. Within the concertina family, the bandoneon is distinguished by its special combination of air ducts, by its long plates and by the layout of its buttons. The last few decades have seen the development of acoustic research, using advanced technology, in the field of free reeds. However, bandoneon construction has remained, up to now, traditional down to the last detail, and many unanswered questions thus remain.

III. BANDONEON PLAYING TECHNIQUES AND THEIR APPLICATION TO TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Marino Rivero's bandoneon playing is in no way limited to merely opening and closing the bellows and fingering the instrument's buttons. It is composed of two chains of movement, the first running from the shoulders to the fingers, the second stretching from the back to the feet. This means that his whole body is involved in the playing process. In order to control and to coordinate both chains of

movement, the brain, which has to provide numerous impulses via the peripheral nerves, must simultaneously carry out highly differentiated tasks. Consistent with the instrument's complex functional mechanism, the bandoneon demands complex movement processes. Their components can be to a certain extent analyzed, described and transmitted, allowing for the development of various schools of playing, different techniques and special training methods. Nonetheless, it is left to the bandoneon player himself to cultivate the dynamic functions of his body and to apply them to his music in a harmonized fashion; in this respect, only individual solutions are possible.

In the interpretation of Uruguayan dances, René Marino Rivero mainly uses the traditional playing techniques. His body posture, the way he holds the instrument and his operation of the bellows correspond to the drawings, photographs and descriptions that document the playing of the bandoneon in the first half of the century in Uruguay and Argentina.

Bodily position

Marino Rivero plays in a sitting position. His chair must have a flat seat and be absolutely stable. Selecting a seat height that allows his thighs to form a line parallel to the floor, he sits forward so that they can move unrestrictedly inwards and outwards with the bellows. The feet form a secure anchor and are hardly ever placed flat on the floor or touching each other; instead, they are predominantly offset, with the right foot usually to the rear, its heel

swinging free. His stance is erect and he rarely bends over his instrument. Lateral upper-body and head movements mainly occur in the direction of the manual on which particularly pregnant passages are being played. Marino Rivero never looks at his hands or at the manuals. His instrument weighs 5.4 kg; the dimensions of its corpus are 35 x 23 x 24 cm, while the total instrument, including the handles and other extras, measures 41 x 23.5 x 25 cm.

Position of the instrument

Four different basic positions are used in bandoneon playing, depending upon the playing tradition and repertoire. Marino Rivero uses only two of these; he never plays standing up without supporting the bandoneon, nor does he adopt any sitting position by which the instrument is played "on its edge"—in other words, with its forward lower edge balanced on his upper thighs. Apparently, neither of these positions have ever been common in Uruguay.

Marino Rivero plays mainly in the so-called classical position. The instrument is rested on the thighs, parallel to the floor. The contact points are, most frequently, the bellows end-casing, then the housing framework and, occasionally, the outer bellows folds. Only when further extending the bellows does Marino Rivero lift the instrument's ends slightly. A black cloth is usually laid between the bandoneon and the contact points and a minimum distance between the instrument and to the upper body is maintained.

In particular passages of traditional music, mainly in *tangos* and *milongas*, Marino Rivero falls back on the fourth variant. Here, the central section of the bellows is rested on either the right or the left thigh, and the manuals are moved freely.

Operation of the bellows

Marino Rivero's instrument has two relatively wide bellows end-casings and between them three bellows segments of five folds each. The segments are divided by two stabilizing interim frames. The bellows valve is mounted on the back of the right-end casing. When closed, the bellows measure approximately 13 cm, and when fully extended about 65 cm, which means a five-fold increase in their air volume. The greater the volume of the bellows, the greater the strength demanded of the player in opening and closing them.

There are three distinct ways of operating the bellows: the restricted, the extended (i.e., fully opened) and the protean operations, by which the player forms the bellows into many different shapes (cf. figs. 6-9).

When he plays traditional music, Marino Rivero uses mainly the extended operation. He does not employ the restricted bellows operation, in which the opening and closing phases are very short. He occasionally chooses the protean operation in order to achieve particular tonal effects.

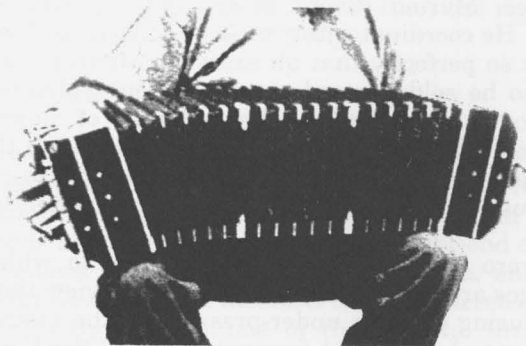
An essential part of bellows operation involves the manipulation of the breather, which acts on the bellows valve. This is opened by pressing a lever with the thumb of the right hand. The two main

functions of the breather are to adjust the air volume and to enable the player to achieve particular modifications of tonal color. When playing dances, Marino Rivero makes only sparing use of the bellows valve. He coordinates the musical phrases and the direction of the bellows so perfectly that an excess or shortage of air hardly ever occurs, so he seldom needs to use the air valve to make adjustments. *Sotto voce* playing—the imbuing of notes with an aspirative effect while not losing any volume through the use of a slightly opened bellows valve—does not seem to feature in traditional music, as Marino Rivero almost completely rejects this effect.

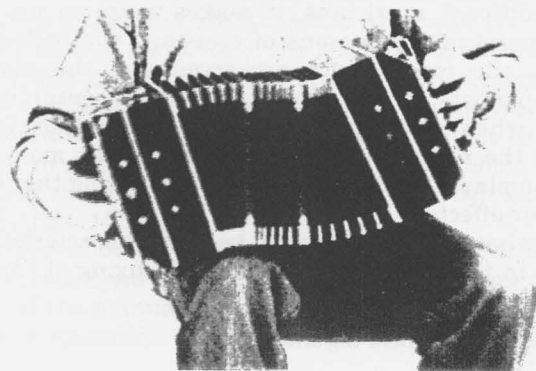
Marino Rivero sees the bellows as an axis to which the two playing surfaces are at right angles. He does not view the bellows as a pump, producing over- or under-pressure in the instrument, but considers them to be the real formant creator—the breath-maker. Just as breath has a homogeneous quality, so, in his opinion, should homogeneous wind proportions prevail in the bellows and equally in each segment. In order to prevent localized air compressions and back-ups from effecting the reed boards, he is careful to maintain the approximately vertical position of the folds, interim frames and end-casings. He also minimizes as much as possible the number of quasi-breaks that naturally occur as the result of each change of air direction through his use of the extended bellows operation.

The protean operation, on the other hand, works with just such turbulences. It is most effectively practiced with only the central bellows section resting, the two halves of the instrument being freely moved. This position is primarily advantageous when the

*Figs. 6 & 7:
Extended bellows operation*



*Figs. 8 & 9:
Protean bellows operation*



effects of gravity are to be employed. The weight of each half can be used as an additional power source, leading to the strengthening of the Pascal Pressure Value in the bellows interior. When the instrument is played *forte* or *sforzato*, the unequal pressure proportions are not detrimental to the sound, although great stress is exerted on the bellows and tongues. In applying the protean operation, the player's upper body becomes out of balance and his physical dynamics become strained. The same applies to the habit of some bandoneon players who favor playing in the suction phase, shutting the bellows after a musical phrase by using the breather. In this technique, notes are produced only from the tightened bellows. The consequence is a specific articulation, mainly relevant to the *golpe* (impact). The *golpe* is produced by stamping the heel; the impact is transmitted through the leg directly into the instrument.

For traditional musicians, it makes sense to use the extended bellows operation for reasons of economy: the bellows hardly ever wear out, the tongues are preserved and the player's physical strength persists longer. This is of fundamental importance, for example, when playing for dance sessions that last for hours. Unlike in the restricted bellows operation, the more open one also affords the player the opportunity of performing the "bellows shake" and similar effects.

As to what he considers to be the characteristics of bellows operation in the traditional bandoneon playing of Uruguay, Marino Rivero sums them up as follows:

1. Extended arm and leg movements.

2. Physical dynamics, with the capability of relaxing the muscles.
3. Homogeneous air proportions within the bellows.

Position of the hands

The most ergonomic hand positions are prerequisites for precise fingering and bellows operation. Because each individual player's hands are different, it has fallen to the bandoneon manufacturers to construct the manuals in such a manner that they can be easily altered, with adaptable hand straps, exchangeable handles, adjustable strap guides and other accessories. Each manual has a bar to which the hand strap is secured. The strap passes over the back of the hand. It should be adjusted to allow the player the greatest possible freedom of movement while simultaneously holding the hand securely in place. There are different working conditions for the left and right hands. Whereas the ball of the thumb and the base of the palm of the left hand can rest on the bass end resonator, the curved contours of which are designed just for that purpose, the balls of the right hand must pass freely over the housing fretwork cover. Here, the controlling contact to the instrument is taken over mainly by the thumb, which holds the handle outside the belt. Support is given either via the belt [draw] or the handle [push] (figs. 10, 11).

Marino Rivero allows his hands a great deal of free play. His wrists bend, stretch and curve from side to side in accordance with the fingering. If the manuals are moved slightly off the playing axis, this results in propination or supination of the hand and forearm.

René Marino Rivero's AA-bandoneon has compact keyboards, the ranges of which, in comparison with instruments made by other manufacturers, are relatively small, although the diameter of the buttons, at 12 mm, remains quite large. The staggered button layout is, in Marino Rivero's opinion, optimal. The playing area does not have a linear but a zonal structure, in which he sees decisive advantages as the layout groups the most-used buttons together in nuclei which can be most comfortably reached with the four playing fingers. On the piano, with its long linear playing surface, ten fingers must control 88 keys: on the bandoneon, it is eight fingers and 71 buttons. Experience shows that finger movements from the vertical hand position are much better suited to subtle playing than those from the horizontal position. Does this mean that the bandoneon's fingering is easy? Marino Rivero points out that the difficulties of bandoneon playing do not lie in the fingering but in the differentiated operation of the bellows and their synchronization with the other constituents of both chains of movement. Because the bellows operation, which may be compared with the bowing of stringed instruments, has to follow the musical sense, it demands musical knowledge, imagination and expressiveness on the player's part before he can even begin with the technical work on a piece. This is, in his opinion, the reason why there are so few bandoneon players with a wide repertoire—and not only in Uruguay.



IV. BANDONEON CULTURE IN URUGUAY - MUSICAL PRACTICE AND TRANSMISSION

The designation "La Plata States" has a long history and defines a particular territory on the basis of geographic, demographic and economic similarities. This designation is also sometimes used to define a cultural area.⁵ But in looking upon the La Plata States as a homogeneous unit, one would have to bear in mind that several European countries could comfortably fit into that area, and that people have come from all over the world to settle there. Certainly, no hermetic divisions exist between, say, Uruguayan and non-Uruguayan music, as divided along the Rio Plata riverbank or by the country's other national borders. But having a too wide area of focus—such as presented by the La Plata states—blurs internal differences all too easily. Specific characteristics become difficult to identify and important details are overlooked. In order to gain access to Uruguayan traditional music, this study reduces the geographical dimension and limits itself to only one instrument, the bandoneon, and its musical practice. It reflects the viewpoint of someone not originally involved in Uruguayan music. Emphasis is placed upon the questions of which were the determining factors in the integration of the bandoneon in the existing culture and how its instrumental technique was adapted and transmitted.

Musical parameters of traditional music practice and their transfer to the bandoneon

Today Uruguayans see the guitar and the bandoneon as their typical traditional instruments. For almost a century now, the bandoneon has been heard solo or as part of an ensemble in both town and country. As in former times, the instrument is not only appreciated for its dynamic capacity and ability to create full harmonies; the Uruguayans love it primarily for its incomparable timbre, which comes out in fast, figurative passages just as fully as in held notes. The fact that instruments of the guitar and lute family have been long established in Uruguay has meant that many characteristics of guitar playing have been taken over in the playing of traditional music. These guitarlike parameters can also be used on the bandoneon without limitation, and this seems to be the second reason for its rapid integration and acceptance. Some features of guitar technique can still be found in bandoneon playing, such as rapid repetitions of notes (*dedillo*) and arpeggiated chords. Both of these techniques are unavoidable on the guitar because of the attenuation of notes after the string has been plucked, whereas they are not necessary on the bandoneon, on which notes can be sustained as long as desired. Nevertheless, there are numerous examples of this (e.g., no. 3). Another analogy is found in playing marked phrases in octaves at salient points. On the guitar, this is a method of increasing the volume, which on the bandoneon could actually be achieved by more forceful operation of the bellows (e.g., nos. 10, 24). Furthermore, the stopping of the strings just after the

notes have begun sounding manifests itself as a kind of "*ahogado*" (= deadened stroke) on the bandoneon, the vibrato as a kind of "*temblor*" of the bellows. In the opinion of the bandoneonist Arturo Penón "the first bandonionists copied and enriched the guitar style of playing" (Penón 1988:64). Even rhythmic beating on the body of the guitar has been taken over by bandoneonists, though only seldom practiced, in their use of the bass end resonator as a substitute drum (no. 23). As can be seen, the bandoneon did not disrupt the musical tradition of Uruguay; instead, its musical range ensured the continuity of those very elements that were widely practiced in guitar playing.

At the time the bandoneon entered Uruguayan musical life, the early accordion had already been a part of that country's traditional instrumentation for several decades. The accordion's tonic-dominant chord accompaniment could be taken over by the bandoneon, as heard in tracks no. 4 and no. 10. In addition, dual expression (the difference in timbre resulting from the suction and compression of the bellows) and the characteristic articulation of the early accordion resulting from bi-sonority could also be carried over to the bandoneon (cf. nos. 5, 9). The modulation of intensity through the operation of the bellows, i.e., *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, could be reproduced to an even greater extent by the bandoneon than by the *acordeón campero* due to its voluminous bellows (no. 5). Rapid sequences of notes with large leaps—a specific accordionistic parameter—could be executed by the fingers in a relatively comfortable manner on the compact button boards, and the small distances

between the buttons facilitate the playing of the highest notes simultaneously with deep ones on the same manual.

Ornamentations within the phrases belong to the traditional interpretation of Uruguayan dances, and specific *fioritura* have been developed for the bi-sonor instruments. Of course, the early accordion's possibilities were much more limited than those of the bandoneon, but the forerunner could lay claim to being the first to integrate thirds as grace notes and chordal patterns to compensate for the loss of ornamentation between seconds that was not possible to carry out on the single row accordion. The bandoneon is not subject to these limitations, but the *saltos de acordeón* (Baccay 1967, Pérez Bugallo 1992:86) are still present (cf. nos. 4, 10). Thus one can clearly trace the perpetuation of accordion playing within these musical parameters. Additionally, the bandoneon repertoire includes a number of pieces that originated from early Uruguayan accordionists such as Jorge Machado (the author of "Tango No. 1," 1883), whom A. G. Villoldo described in 1919 (Selles 1977:168):

El famoso Pardo Jorge, un verdado virtuoso del acordeón, instrumento en cuya ejecución nadie se hubiera atrevido a disputarle supremacía.

Further adaptations of bandoneon playing to previously existing musical practices can be seen in relation to military music, for example in fanfare formulas (no. 15); in relation to church music, with its use of organ pedal points (nos. 4 and 3, respectively); and referring to special compositional styles. However, this is not the place to demonstrate the bandoneon's versatility, but instead to examine the instrument's place in traditional Uruguayan music. It should nevertheless be clear that the instrument's features allow

every bandoneonist to build up a repertoire according to his own taste.

Bandoneon in practice

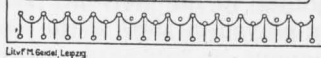
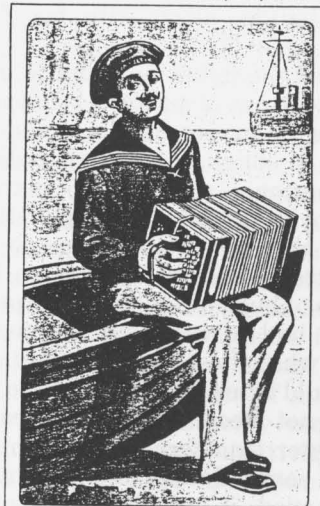
Local musical life received a remarkable impulse in the second half of the nineteenth century through the gradual penetration of imported accordions and bandoneons into the furthest corners of the country. Distributed by itinerant tradesmen and musicians and, towards the end of the century, in much greater volume by mail order catalogues, accordions and bandoneons reached everyone who was interested in novelties. The purchaser normally received a kind of tutor with his instrument; only the cheapest models were dispatched without a leaflet of any kind. In that case, the purchaser had no choice but to learn by ear, piecing together music from his memory. It is said that the famous bandoneonists Domingo Santa Cruz and Eduardo Arolas learned to play on their own using this technique. The prerequisite for such an accomplishment is a high level of basic musical talent. Even learning from the printed page without the assistance of a teacher (in other words, through self-study) demands not only motivation and stamina, but also musical imagination and creativity. Another complication was the fact that there were no Spanish-language bandoneon tutors available on the Uruguayan market. Before the turn of the century, such tutors were nonexistent because those published in Germany were in German, with only a very few in German and English for export. One of the first bilingual tutors appeared in 1877: *Neueste*

practische Schule für 64-, 70-, 88-, 100- and 130 töniges Bandonion ... in deutscher und englischer Schrift op. 28, by Carl Ullrich, published by F.W. Wolff, Mainz. This tutor was reedited in 1895 by Alfred Band (the son of Heinrich), who added a French version. The *Self-Instructor for Bandonion* by Otto Luther, published by Julius Heinrich Zimmermann of Leipzig in 1892 (fig. 12), seems to have had the largest worldwide distribution, along with his *Table of Fingering* (fig. 13).

Luther's *Self-Instructor* contained the following practice pieces: 1 Ländler (slow country waltz), 2 waltzes, 2 polkas, 1 Rhinelander dance, 1 valse Boston, 5 hymns, 5 arrangements from operas, including a minuet and a ballet, 16 songs (including the German, Austrian, Russian and French national anthems), 5 marches or marching songs and 1 tatoo. For want of anything better, the Uruguayan novice possibly used this repertoire of music he had never heard before for his first attempt on the bandoneon because its notation gave hints as to choice of buttons, bellows operation and fingering.⁶ At the same time, he had to work out his own interpretation because he had no idea what these pieces should actually sound like. This meant that he could bring his own taste to bear on any music of foreign provenance, not "recreating" but "creating" in the true sense of the word. He later transferred the techniques he developed through playing foreign songs, dances and marches to the indigenous repertoire, and extended it ad libitum. Luis Alba transcribed a *polca* which he heard played in 1907 at the Costas del Arroyo de la Virgen, Florida (Uruguay), by "un pardo acordeonista de apellido Ramos."⁷ He could not recognize it as the so-called

Bandonion-Schule

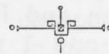
64, 88, 100 und 130 tönig



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for Bandonion.



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leichten und hübschen Uebungs-
und Unterhaltungsstücken
von

Otto Luther

Preis 2 M. netto gebunden

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Figure 12

Table of fingering for the bandonion

with explications of the touches, scales and chords

in all
major and minor keys

as well as

instructions for transposing compositions of every kind

for the

88-, 100- and 130-toned bandonion.

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Figure 13

"Flohwalzer," a popular German tune that was included in nearly every bandoneon tutor at that time, because Ramos interpreted it in his own "Uruguayan" manner.

A Spanish-language bandoneon tutor was first printed in Germany in the mid-1920s and issued by Bosworth and Co. (1925, Walter Pörschmann), a music publisher with a worldwide network of agents. The Bandonionfabrik Alfred Arnold, Carlsfeld, followed a few years later with the *Método popolare d'insegnare facilmento a*

Armonía en los bajos para ejecutar en la 1ª parte de:

EL CHOCLO

tango de Villoldo y M. Catán



Figure 14

provided their 142-note export models with the tutors by A.P. Berto, A.C. Rolla and R.L. Brignolo (see Appendix). By the beginning of the 1950s, a good dozen tutors were available in Spanish. They were usually entitled *Método* because the exercises progressed by keys. For their material, the authors relied mostly on piano tutors, applying even their études directly to the bandoneon, as in Ch. L. Hanon's *El célebre método de piano, totalmente adaptado y digitado para Bandonion por Felix Lipeskier* (Buenos Aires, Ediciones Musicales, 1946). Such tutors did not acknowledge the fact that two manuals with compact button keyboards, bi-sonority and bellows operation require their own idiomatic methods of treatment from the very beginning of the exercises.

Para ejecutar sobre los últimos 8 compases de:

EL CHOCLO

Tango de VILLOLDO



Figure 15

Around the middle of this century, editions of traditional Uruguayan and Argentinian music for bandoneon consisted largely of single-staff notation, "*variaciones y fraseos*."⁸ These were devoid of fingering or bellows markings and normally also lacking phrasing or articulation signs, tempo prescriptions, grace notes and dynamic marks. At most there were brief annotations, such as "*la milonga bien cortada*." The albums and collections by Juan Rezzano, Felix Lipeskier, Astor Piazzolla, José Dames and others are small quarto

booklets of twelve or sixteen pages, in which each musician presents his own version of those passages that he considers the most characteristic of each piece. For "El choclo" (nos. 1 and 25), for example, A. Piazzolla (Buenos Aires, Editorial Musical Record, 1949) gives eight bars for the right manual (fig. 15), whereas J. Dames (Buenos Aires, Editorial Musical Record, 1945) notates sixteen bars for the left manual (fig. 14).

Such a notation practice allows for a completely personal realization, tending more towards invention than interpretation, especially when the instrument is performed solo.

The performer's personal contribution to the music is even greater when using a second type of autodidactic instruction book or printed music, namely those that do away with notes entirely. The conventional system of notation, with its prescriptive character, allows little freedom, particularly with regard to the music's metric flow. Rubati, agogic proportions and unmeasured rests have no place in this system. On the other hand, if the notation shows only the macrostructure of a piece (such as when and in which order buttons are to be fingered), the melodic and harmonic progressions are still laid down, although their formulation is left to the musician. The coarser the informational framework, the more the player must create from his own resources. A sort of code was developed exclusively for the bandoneon, which corresponds to the inscription marks next to each button on both manuals.⁹ This code simultaneously gives information about fingering and bellows operation. The main advantage of the code is that it allows the player to "read" music without having any knowledge of musical

notation and theory. New adherents are thereby reached—namely those who cannot read music—for whom the cost of musical instruction is prohibitive but who still wish to learn to play the bandoneon. *Tañer por cifra* (=playing the guitar by numbers) was standard practice until well into the twentieth century. Why not adapt this successful technique to the bandoneon? It had been observed that "los bandoneonistas en su mayoría [fueron] analfabetas musicales" (Ernié 1977:736). So it may be supposed that they, imitating the *guitarristas*, also relied upon a code. It will require further research to assess whether Uruguayan bandoneon music was ever handed down using a code for its notation.

A third type of self-instructional tutor is correspondence course learning (*por correspondencia*). It is still not certain whether Sebastián Ramos Mejía, who lived in Montevideo for some years, and the "Facultad de Bandoneón" were the first to organize correspondence courses around 1890.¹⁰ In Buenos Aires bandoneon instruction was organized by Arturo Hermano Bernstein's "Instituto"¹¹ and Jesús Perez' "Academia de Bandoneón" (Garay 947). According to an advertising leaflet, the Academia sent its courses to subscribers throughout the entire area, even to addresses on board ships (fig. 16).

How Perez, Bernstein and Ramos Mejía themselves learned to play the bandoneon is unknown. Only the generation that followed these pioneers had any opportunity to learn directly from a bandoneon player. Even as late as the 1940s, René Marino Rivero had to take bandoneon lessons from a violin teacher and turned to a printed tutor for advice; there were no bandoneon classes at the

ACADEMIA DE BANDONEON - GARAY 947 - Buenos Aires
Clases Diurnas, Nocturnas y por correspondencia, se facilitan Bandoneones para estudiar los Alumnos. Profesor y Director JESUS PEREZ.



Garduña, alumno que estudia por correspondencia, y a muy adelantado, su domicilio. Estación Mansilla. (Provincia de Entre Ríos).



E. Danielovif, alumno que estudia por correspondencia con mucho éxito, su domicilio Vapor Magallanes de E. Aires al Paraguay.



Norueira, ex alumno, dando una serenata a la novia y molestando a los vecinos en el pueblo de Lanús.



C. A. Clementi, ex alumno, excelente ejecutante y autor de varias piezas inéditas, muy conocido en el barrio de Boedo, su domicilio, Q. Bocayuva 1410.



A. Cozzi, ex alumno que aprendió por correspondencia y toca divinamente a primera vista, su domicilio, (Chivilcoy).

Si no dispone del tiempo necesario para concurrir a la Academia hágalo por correspondencia.

conservatory in Tacuarembó until 1950. The instruction of professional bandoneon players has been institutionalized in Uruguay since that time, although there is still no chair of bandoneon at the capital's conservatory. Today one selects one's *maestro* from among the famous bandoneonists and studies directly with him, attending his workshops or holiday courses. Up to now, no specialized courses, either for amateur or professional musicians, have been held in the field of traditional music.

Uruguayan bandoneon culture today encompasses every kind of music, but it is particularly associated with the contemporary urban *tango nuevo*. However, this musical genre is subject to different criteria and considerations than those applied to traditional music. Unlike the latter, the urban tango is defined in its texture by certain compositional styles, schools and individual styles, all of which have grown out of a musical specialism and an artistic aesthetic. This aesthetic can be acquired by any virtuoso bandoneonist, be he Uruguayan, Japanese or French, thus placing it outside the scope of this study. Highly relevant to both art as well as traditional bandoneon culture is Arturo Penón's observation that "...they are legion, those who, in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, have never seen a bandonion" (Penón 1988:82).

V. DANCES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

In his selection of the twenty-four dances presented on this CD, Marino Rivero followed two criteria: the composer's connection with

the Uruguayan context must be ensured, and the music should reflect to a high degree the atmosphere that he regards as specific to his country. This atmosphere is expressed acoustically by distinctive musical formulations and in terms of content by any topic that carries concrete associations, such as to landscapes (nos. 7, 11), to the affairs of the black population, "*cosas de negros*" (nos. 15, 24), or to the everyday life of Uruguayans (nos. 4, 18, 22). Nearly each dance is associated with numerous versions of text and the melody's combination with a title and textual content seems to be a *sine qua non*. Therefore instrumental pieces like "El choclo" or "Mate amargo" have been given different verses over time. Composers of Uruguayan descent are A. Mastra, F. Canaro, R. Melo, R. Gavioli and the Podestá family, whose *compañía* and street band achieved a wide popularity. In Montevideo the musicians P. Laurenz, J. Bauer and P. Castellanos were active, some of them for decades.

Performance

In his interpretation of pieces, Marino Rivero decided to play a concert version, which is not intended to exhort a public to dance or to coordinate dance motions. Within its dance repertoire, the Uruguayan tradition distinguishes three performing styles: *danza bailable*, *danza canción* and *danza*. One and the same dance has to be played according to its function and the *danza* style offers the most liberty for musical creativity and virtuosity. Such a solo presentation of a single bandoneonist could be inserted as an

interlude between two cycles of dance, but generally it was performed within a series of various events. Without being cramped by a rigorous rhythm or having to consider an ensemble or a singer, the dance could be individually modelled.¹² One of the earliest recordings documenting a solo performance by a South American bandoneonist was realized by Juan Maglio for the Columbia Phonograph Company in 1912, the same year he played in the "Café Bon Marché" at Montevideo.¹³

Concept

Apart from its musical and textual-thematic nucleus, each dance has a flexible pattern which has to be formulated anew by the musician's inspiration with each performance. Tradition hands down only the basic material and a kind of framework within which the dance must find its realization. Some of the essential guidelines for Uruguayan bandoneonists could be: domination of minor and sharp keys, friction through dissonances that occur mainly on accented beats, use of a wide ambitus, the drawing-out of tension resolution, dynamic diversity while favoring *pianissimo* for important phrases, refraining from brilliant timbres, avoiding rhythmical ostinati, shunning identical repetitions, and the priority of the playing process over the final product. These guidelines, extracted from Marino Rivero's concept, must be further investigated and verified as to their representative character.

The most conspicuous feature of Marino Rivero's interpretation is the combination of macrorhythms with agogic modelled micro-rhythms, whose cells sometimes are delayed or advanced by a split second. On the level of macrostructure, accents are achieved by the increase in emphasis, whereas the microstructure is organized by time. The synchronic use of both rhythmic measures evokes an oscillating tension that Marino Rivero regards as a characteristic, indispensable quality of the interpretation of traditional music. Daniel Mendoza de Arce in his *Sociología del folklore musical uruguayo*, identifies as one trait of the *cultura gaucha* the to and fro between the poles of *facilitarlo o entorpecerlo* and *acelerarlo o retardarlo* (= lightening up or burdening down, prolepsis or retardation),¹⁴ and he deduces from this alternation one of the main characteristics of Uruguayan musical aesthetics.

Concerning a specific bandoneon aesthetic within traditional music, Marino Rivero specifies *la queja* (the lament), which is created from the impulse and the pulsation of the bellows, set into motion by the player. Excitement is conveyed through the surging and shimmering sound, thus increasing the intensity of expression. Another specific quality manifests itself in the *ataque* (attack) of notes in certain sequences, to strike the notes and to bring them to an end in a vigorous manner. In contrast to the explosive start of notes that is characteristic of the Argentinean *tango porteño*, in which the bellows are jerked, the entire note is formed out of a precisely measured volume of air. This volume results not only from

suction, but equally through the bellows movement in both directions. For the flow of energy, set free by the pregnancy of such sequences, must not be interrupted. Microrhythm, *la queja*, tone attack and the transmission through these techniques of tension, excitement and energy belong to the essential elements of interpretation. The bandoneonist—regardless of his degree of virtuosity—must be well acquainted with all these techniques if he wants to bring to the traditional dances their full Uruguayan vitality.

VI. BACKGROUND TO THE PIECES

1. "El choclo" *tango criollo*, 1:55

This instrumental composition was created by Angel Gregorio Villoldo (1868 - 1919). In addition to this about one hundred pieces have been handed down that are attributed to him. The creation of "El choclo" (ear of corn, Indian corn dish, burden, overshoe) dates from before 1905, and this *tango criollo* obtained great favor in a short time. Soon the piece was published and due to the popularity of the music various authors such as C. Marambio Catán and Enrique S. Discépolo wrote verses for it.

Villoldo was self-taught in music; sometimes he played the guitar simultaneously with the harmonica, which he fixed in front of his

mouth with a special holder supported by shoulder wires. After 1916 Villoldo turned away from the *tango* because the genre began to change in character as a result of its increasingly complex structures and rhythms. He preferred to continue composing in the rural style and the music of his late period was in no way inferior to his earlier work; his work continued to be held in high esteem by his audience.

2. "Miriñaque" *milonga uruguaya*, 1:58

Miriñaque can designate an ornament in filigree but also a fabric woven from horsehair. In relation to this meaning the word is also used to specify any screen of wire, and, in this sense, the cow-catcher of locomotive engines as well.

The guitarist and composer Alberto Mastra, born 1909 in Montevideo, arouses with this title associations with the pampas, the cattle herds and life on the ranches, all of which are reflected in his *milonga uruguaya*.

3. "Corazón de oro" *vals oriental*, 1:52

Like his older brother, the bandoneonist Juan Canaro, Francisco Raúl Canaro (1888 - 1964), the composer of this *vals oriental*, was born in San José de Mayo, Uruguay. By profession a wagon driver, Francisco taught himself the violin and began his musical career as a member of a trio made up of violin, mandolin and guitar. This

conjunto (ensemble) performed all the dance music at the rural *bailes* (dances).

The *vals oriental* as a genre continued the tradition of the *cielito* of the Banda Oriental del Uruguay (Banda or República Oriental del Uruguay is the complete name of the state) in a modernized form and thus became one of the most popular pair dance genres in the countryside as well as in the towns up to the 1950s. Although Francisco Canaro gave the *tango* absolute primacy in his autobiography *Mis bodas de oro con el tango y mis memorias 1906 - 1956* (Buenos Aires: CESA talleres gráficos, 1957), one has to bear in mind that the different varieties of *vals*— *vals oriental*, *vals criollo*, *vals boston*, and *vals porteño*—held an important place in his musical life, among them "Corazón de oro" (heart of gold) counts as the most popular.

4. "Mate amargo" *ranchera*, 2:05

Mate amargo, the unsweetened tea of mate leaves (= *Ilex paraguariensis*), is quite a common topic of the Uruguayan *poesía popular*, and numerous *coplas* (four-line stanzas) and *décimas* (ten-line stanzas) dealing with this subject exist. While the texts often were written down and collected, the musical realizations were for the most part not documented. In the Departamento Tacuarembó the *ranchera* "Mate amargo" was well known and handed down in oral tradition.

5. "Camino al don" *foxtrot canción*, 1:42

As the *foxtrot* as such requires a performance in a moderate tempo, the *foxtrot canción* is interpreted also in a moderate manner, but more melodiously and quietly. With his sensitive instrumental version Marino Rivero recalls the rough, brittle voice of a singer like Roberto Goyeneche, El Polaco, born in 1895 in Montevideo. Marino Rivero's uneven playing corresponds to such a singer's performance, with its prolepsis and retardation, a performance which seems to be more audible meditation than song and which transmits an impression of life's unsteady processes, thus creating a strong connection between the musician and his audience.

The composer of "Camino al don" (on the way to the master) is unknown; the verses come from Mario Battistella (Mario Z. Bates Stella) and J. A. Barbará.

6. "Milonga de mis amores" *milonga*, 3:08

For more than half a century the "Milonga de mis amores" (of my amours) has numbered among the favorite pieces of nearly every bandoneonist because the music was written expressly for that instrument—made to measure, so to speak, "for its bellows". The most distinct bandoneonistic parameters represented in this *milonga* are: long phrases in *legato*, exhausting the whole capacity of the bellows' volume; *crescendi* and *decrescendi* in orchestral dimensions; multi-note sounds with wide-interval distances, obtainable on the compact, zonal-arranged button manuals.

Pedro B. Laurenz (1902 - 1972), the famous bandoneonist, is the composer of this *milonga* and he recorded it in 1937 for the Victor label; it was his first solo recital on a disk. Laurenz' professional bandoneon career started in 1917, when he moved to Montevideo. There he performed together with the pianist Luis Casanovas at the "Café Au Bon Jour" and with the bandoneonist Eduardo Lorenzo Arolas at the "Cabaret Moulin Rouge."

7. "Sentimiento gaucho" *tango*, 3:15

The *poesía gauchesca uruguaya* has a long tradition. Bartolomé Hidalgo, born 1788 in Montevideo, is considered to be one of the first poet-singers who was able to capture the *sentimiento gaucho* into words and to express it through music. This specific conception of life derives from being witness to the permanent changes within nature. All senses are necessary for the perception of reality and often split-second reactions are required in response to these changings. Each situation demands its own solution, to which both caution and audacity are conducive. From the resulting antagonism arises a certain instability of emotion, manifesting itself in the rapid change of extreme moods.

The composition by Francisco Raúl Canaro and his brother Rafael dates from 1924. As interpreted by Marino Rivero it reflects the contradictions inherent in the *sentimiento gaucho* in all its facets. By dispensing with a continual inner tempo, Marino Rivero transmits the impression of an existential uncertainty and unsteadiness.

8. "La puñalada" *milonga*, 1:55

The frontispiece of the piano score shows the poet Celedonio Flores and the musician Pintín Castellanos in 1934 in Montevideo just after they had finished composing "La puñalada" (Ricordi Americana). The *milonga* "dagger thrust, spurs striking, stabbing" quickly gained popularity and became widely known after 1937 as a *milonga orquestal* in the version presented by Juan D'Arienzo.

9. "La loca de amor" *vals criollo*, 2:16

Over several generations members of the Uruguayan Podestá family formed a well-known entertainment team. As street performers they circulated melodies for which they invented their own texts. For a time they ran a creole theater that maintained the tradition of *comedia dell' arte* in Montevideo, with its extemporized scenes performed by standard characters.

The *vals criollo* "in a burst of love" achieved great popularity in the arrangement of Enrique Caviglia, who edited it in his function as music publisher.

10. "Polca de Zamora" *polca*, 1:24

The *polca rural uruguaya* is closely connected with the *acordeón campero* and this genre spread together with that instrument in the second half of the nineteenth century. Numerous *polca* tunes and

variants emerged from the major chords and tonic-dominant basses that were offered by the programmed harmonic base of the accordion. As these accordions had differing base notes, a change of the instrument made it possible to change the key. Without modifying his fingering, the player could create another sound impression of the same piece of music—an important factor if a single accordionist had to play through a long dance session. In addition, monotony could be avoided through varied ornamentations, giving a different feel to the same dance melody. "The widespread use of the accordion during the second part of the nineteenth century helped the *gaucho* dance music to become more vivacious and dynamic" (Mendoza de Arce 1981:81).

11. "Gaucho de Florida" *ranchera*, 2:18

In its title the *ranchera* refers to the Departamento Florida, situated to the north of Montevideo. Up to the twentieth century the wide-open spaces of this region allowed the *gaucho* to follow his characteristic mode of life and granted "*su libertad selvaje*," his wild freedom. In this way the "Gaucho de Florida" represents a contrast to the "*gaucho sin campo y sin caballo*" (without land and without horse) living in the towns and cities, whose life was unavoidably transformed, signalling simultaneously a change in his culture and consequently in his music (Assunção 1984:54).

In 1907 Luís Alba collected and transcribed music in the Costas del Arroyo de la Virgen in the Departamento de Florida. Among his transcriptions were dances played by the widely known accordionist

Ramos. Some of the two-row accordions of that time offered minor chords on the bass manual that were highly consequent for *gaucho* music like the *ranchera* "Gaucho from Florida."

12. "Maxixa," *maxixa* 1:48

René Marino Rivero recalls neither a title for this *maxixa* nor when he first heard it. The genre *maxixa* apparently belonged to the northern region of Uruguay, specifically, to those areas where some contacts existed to the border district of southern Brazil. It is related that the bandoneonist Bartolo was a "border crosser," owing to which he received the epithet "El Brasileiro." The propagation of the bandoneon has been ascribed to him due to his function as musician, repairer and bandoneon teacher. As a result of his roving, he contributed eminently to the diffusion and the interchange of music.

To reproduce the driving character of this music, Marino Rivero does not formulate each phrase to an end. The tense haste and sense of continual motion in his interpretation transmit the troubled, dangerous life of those living in the border district.

13. "El pericón," *pericón* 3:55

The German pianist Albert Friedenthal (1862 - 1921) began publishing his series of musical pieces *Stimmen der Völker* (voices of the peoples) from 1905 in Berlin. During his extended travels through South America in 1882 to 1885 and 1887 to 1890, he col-

lected traditional music with the aim of giving European pianists the possibility of enlarging their repertoires with some music of that continent. As an example of Uruguayan *gaucho* dances, he presented this *pericón*. In his commentary he testified to having witnessed the dance several times and he referred to an old broadsheet of it, edited by Gerardo Grasso in Montevideo, that was in his possession. Friedenthal published the dance in its entirety and with the metronomic designation MM = 63 in 3/8 measure. He notated in the key of A-flat major, which is not easy to play on a piano. Perhaps the key suggests that Friedenthal listened to instruments made in the key of A-flat or D-flat, such as certain bandoneon models. Just as Friedenthal chose the *pericón* as the representative dance for rural Uruguay, fifty years later L. Ayestarán defined the genre as "la danza nacional por excelencia del Uruguay" (Ayestarán 1953:488).

14. "Sacate la caretita" *corrido*, 1:35

The pianist Juan Bauer embarked on his musical career in the milieu of the Montevidean *pensiones*. By around 1916 he was playing piano at silent film shows and at the end of the 1920s he was engaged with his ensemble at the Casino Municipal and at the music hall "Artigas", in Montevideo. In addition to a violinist and a pianist, Bauer's trio included the bandoneonist Héctor María Artola, born in 1903 in San José de Mayo, Uruguay. Bauer's *corrido* "Draw off the mask" is excellently suited for interpretation on solo bandoneon and seems to have originated in the period of his cooperation with Artola.

15. "Vieja morena" *paso doble académico*, 2:51

In Montevideo the *paso doble* can be traced back to 1889, when the dance was performed in the *salones de bailes públicos*. The public dancing saloon was called *academía* and such institutions generally were run by black Uruguayans. Some of the early "academía montevidéana" had good reputations as training institutions for dance where one could learn dignified and graceful behavior. Instruction was given by *profesores de corte y de la quebrada* and those who participated were *blancas*, *pardas* and *negras*, meaning women of all skin colors.¹⁵

The dancers of the *paso doble* stood face-to-face at a distance of approximately 20 cm. After a salutation prelude they began to move with short, alternating steps, placing the entire sole of the foot on the floor. The dance ended with a postlude that consisted of the repetition of the salutation formula.

16. "Norma" *foxtrot*, 1:48

There are innumerable arrangements and potpourris drawn from Vincenzo Bellini's famous operas "Norma" and "La somnambule." In some adaptations the music is reduced to its simplest form in order to give the instrumentalist the opportunity to learn the piece as quickly as possible. This is especially true of some of the early accordion tutors. However, the skilled, sensitive player would enrich such a rudimentary version using his musical imagination. The bandoneonist Juan Maglio, for example, presented in 1912 his

first solo recording, which included the piece "La somnámula," which seemed only to have the title in common with Bellini's music.

The *foxtrot* version "Norma" was composed by Alfredo Pelaia and Domingo Pelle. Its regular structure with its minimum in musical material is broken up by Marino Rivero through rhythmical shifting and harmonic friction. In his interpretation he contrives to give the simple sequences of notes and harmonies an interesting, surprising turn without going past the limits of the traditional music and without a sense of alienation from the dance.

17. "Las margaritas" *ranchera*, 2:08

Within the Uruguayan repertoire of the nineteenth century we find the *huella*, a dance with foot-stamping steps. Its choreography is not documented but it seems that some of its elements flow into the *ranchera* genre.

Marino Rivero plays the *ranchera* "Las margaritas" at a tempo of around MM = 120, that is 120 crotchets per minute, thus allowing a foot-stamping motion in a staid manner. The same *ranchera*, performed by Francisco Canaro and his "Orquesta Típica," recorded in the 1930s, has a tempo of MM = 160, which corresponds to a quick ballroom waltz. Despite a certain sedateness, Marino Rivero's *ranchera* has a swinging touch, while Canaro's interpretation produces an impression of monotony and sterility that is primarily due to his strict adherence to regular time values.

18. "Los ejes de mi carreta" *milonga estilo*, 2:21

Carro que canta (singing cart) refers to those wooden vehicles on which the friction of the turning axles produces drone sounds, provided that the axles are treated with water and resin in a special way. On the contrary, if they are smeared with soap, grease, tallow or similiar substances, they remain mute.

The title "Axes of my cart" and the text by Romildo Risso reflect the rural context; the music by Atahualpa Yupanqui (= José Tcherkaski) belongs to the genre *milonga estilo*, which demands a calm, staid performance in contrast to the *milonga orillera*. The thick harmonies, combined with musical phrases that sometimes fade out without definite resolution, contribute to the contemplative character of this *milonga*.

19. "Canaro en Paris" *tango*, 3:13

With this *tango* the bandoneonist Alejandro Scarpino and the guitarist Juan Caldarella recall to mind the year 1925, when Francisco Canaro and his "Orquesta Típica" performed in Paris for the first time. The sextet of that time was made up of two bandoneons (Juan Canaro and Carlos Marcucci), two violins, piano and doublebass, in addition to the percussion. This instrumentation, although modified soon thereafter, had the advantage that its sound came across fairly exactly—without severe distortions—over the radio. This was an important factor in the first years of broadcasting and contributed greatly to the popularity of Canaro.

But it was not only acoustically but also visually that Canaro propagated that which in the following years was associated with "*típica argentina*" in Europe, for his musicians dressed themselves in a so-called *gaucho* look, which proved to be very effective on the stage.

20. "Milonga que peina canas" *milonga orillera*, 2:26

It is said that in the title of his composition "Combing one's hair milonga," Alberto Gomez (1905 - 1973) refers to the fact that performing this *milonga* requires such a high degree of virtuosity that the instrumentalist's hair is being combed, so to speak, during its interpretation.

Concerning the specification *milonga orillera*, the epithet stands for the outskirts of a town and all those places where a fresh wind blows. The term *milonga* designates not only a musical genre but also a specific sensation, one which cannot be expressed through words. Only those musicians who have experienced this sensation are capable of articulating it through their music. In this respect a free improvisation, for example, can radiate *milonga* as well.

Marino Rivero presents in his interpretation cascades of notes, elongated or condensed into clusters, and puts them between tender, sensitive passages according to his emotion of the moment.

21. "Desde el alma" *vals boston*, 1:45

As a young girl, Rosita Melo, born in 1903 in Montevideo, composed this *vals boston*, for which her husband-to-be, the poet

Víctor Piuma Vélez, wrote the text in 1922. Twenty-five years later the music was chosen as the title melody for the film "Pobre mi madre querida" and Homero Manzi rewrote the text in accordance with the scenario. After the première on April 28th, 1948, Rosita Melo's vals became one of the most popular tunes of the continent. Although Manzi's verses did not include the words *desde el alma* (from the soul), the title was maintained to designate *el vals de todos los tiempos*.

22. "Polca de bordalesa" *polca*, 1:26

The "Polca de bordalesa" is mainly known in the center of Uruguay, in a region where two low mountain chains are located, Cuchilla Grande and Cuchilla del Haedo, whose slopes meet the conditions required for viniculture. *La bordalesa* is a big wine cask, which—when filled—gives reason for celebrating and dancing.

The *polca* in Marino Rivero's interpretation gives the impression of never ending music and reflects the desire of those celebrating to enjoy the festive mood to the full and as long as possible.

23. "Taquito militar" *milonga orillera*, 2:55

Mariano Mores, the pianist, recalls with his brisk *milonga orillera* those past days when men danced the *compadrito* rhythms and shared the specific spirit of life proper to all *compadres* before the times of uprooted *gauchos*, hoodlums and cut-throats. The text

by Dante Gilardoni and Raúl Capablanca describes as well a past that felt happier than the present.

24. "Baile de los morenos" *candombe*, 3:24

It seems that the *candombe* as a specific genre was danced up to ca. 1870 exclusively in those quarters of Montevideo (*barrios*), where the black population lived. Gradually the dance and its music spread all over Uruguay as the typical *baile de los morenos* (black man's dance). That it should be interpreted on a bandoneon was obvious, for already in the first generation of bandoneonists there were famous black players such as El Negro Lorenzo, El Negro Romero, and the mulatto El Pardo Sebastián Ramos Mejía, who gave bandoneon lessons already before 1900 to many interested students. The black's contribution to bandoneon culture is highly praised by Vicente Rossi:

Solo nuestro criollo ha sido capaz de sacar del bandoneón un éxito con el que ni soñó su fabricante alemán (Rossi 1926:431).

Romeo Gaviolo, who was born in 1912 in Montevideo and died there in 1957, composed a series of *candombe*, which became very successful. Gavioli was a violinist as well as an all-round musician who founded in 1946 the SUDEI (Sociedad Uruguaya de Interpretes).

VII. DIFFUSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE BANDONEON

One of the earliest references to portable free reed instruments in Uruguay can be found in the trade newspaper *Comercio del Plata* of December 2, 1852, in which a music instrument dealer offered his wares, including *acordeones ricos y de nueva invencion...25 pts.* His shop, *tienda*, was at Calle del Rincón No. 52 in Montevideo, a few houses from No. 240, where Rafael Pons' "Casa de musica" (founded in 1842), was situated. The latter also carried *acordiones* and *armonicos*, as is shown in his advertisement in the same journal, dated January 28, 1855 (Ayestarán 1953:772-3).

It seems that in the mid-nineteenth century there was not yet a definitive orthography nor a reliable designation for these new instruments in any language. In German-speaking areas of Europe, the terms "Accordion," "Harmonica," "Concertina," and "Aeoline" were not used in any truly consistent fashion. The musicians Heinrich and Johann Band themselves at first adopted the name "accordion" before coining the patronymically-based word "Bandonion." After 1855, they bestowed this new "brand name" upon a particular type of free reed instrument, which could be recognized from its exterior form and the layout of its keys. Musically, the bandoneon was distinguished from the accordion by the absence of preselected chords under individual buttons. In its horizontal playing position, as well as in the operation of its bellows using both arms equally, it was comparable to the "English concertina." That the surname "Band" with the ancient Greek ending "-ion" caught on relatively quickly was mainly due to the instrument's labeling. Each

instrument sold by the Band family bore the signal word "Bandonion" on its front section in the form of metal fretwork covering the bellows' valve. This eye-catching practice was even transferred to editions of printed music devoted exclusively to the instrument, whose title pages graphically incorporated the word "Bandonion" (cf. fig. 17).

Clever advertising using the motif of the instrument with its name guaranteed the right associations. Five of the Band brothers are described as musicians, music teachers and suppliers. Even after the deaths of their husbands, at least three of their widows showed themselves to be competent in carrying on the business. The musical circles of friends that sprang up in New York, Glasgow, The Hague—in fact wherever any of the Band brothers played¹⁶—provided a solid commercial base and ensured the continual spread of the instrument and its name. Thus, upon its arrival in Uruguay, there was no question as to how the instrument would be named and only a slight spelling modification was necessary in order to bring the word in line with the Spanish pronunciation.

It is not possible to state with certainty which instrument was meant in the advertisement of *acordeones ... de nueva invencion*. Certainly, the early accordion, whether of French or of Austro-German construction, was in great demand at that time and must have already been available in Montevideo for a number of years, especially since Vienna and some German production centers had already been in the overseas export market for almost twenty years.¹⁷ The relatively high price of 25 *patacónes* that was quoted for an *acordeon* in the advertisement probably indicates that the

offer was distinguished from earlier ones by the instrument's quality.¹⁸ The addendum *nueva invencion* could refer to the bandoneon's forerunner, the German concertina, which we know to have been used in the Uruguayan interior as well as in Montevideo. Tradition has handed down that José Santa Cruz, the father of the famous bandoneonist Domingo, played such an instrument, taking it along with him when he served as a soldier in the War of the Triple Alliance against Paraguay (1865-70), and that Domingo himself later learned to play on that instrument.

The pioneer years for the squeeze boxes were followed by another phase that began with the last quarter of the nineteenth century and ended with the onset of the First World War. German commercial interests in Uruguay grew after the confederation of German states to form the German Empire, as a result of which the export of goods was stimulated through new, uniform regulations instituted in 1873 and 1879. However, world trade was dominated at this time by Great Britain, and German exporters tended to specialize in goods that the British themselves did not produce. In the area of musical instrument manufacturing, the accordion and bandoneon presented an opportunity because Great Britain did not manufacture these instruments, and the world market was open for German products.

Statistics for 1880 show that of a foreign population of 140,222 in Uruguay, 2,125 were Germans, of whom many were attempting to establish themselves as small businessmen and salesmen (*Meyers Konversationslexikon*, 1890). In the accordion and bandoneon field, both Carlos Ott (Calle 25 de Mayo 282), founded in 1875, and

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Figure 17

Brandes & Co., were operating in Montevideo (Zabala 131). In 1906, for instance, the latter carried not only musical instruments but also hardware goods (*almacenes*), a common combination of items. While Brandes & Co. imported the German hardware goods at their own expense, the free reed instruments were taken only on consignment. This meant that businesses with Uruguayan customers and retailers were operated under their own name, Brandes & Co., but on another's account. In this form of transaction, the German supplier set a price limit and offered a fixed commission. This system of consignment held advantages for both partners: the business in situ was not burdened with risks or large investments in stock while the German manufacturer or exporter retained ownership of his goods until they were sold. Until the final sale, he had the right to draw a bill of exchange for them, which meant that they did not represent dead capital. In particular for bandoneon manufacturers or specialized exporters—relatively small businesses which operated without large capital reserves—this arrangement was acceptable and widely practiced. Manufacturing costs of a bandoneon were considerable, in addition to the investment and material costs. Unlike an agency that specialized in only one manufacturer's instruments, the consignment-based business allowed Brandes & Co. to carry instruments of varying makers, giving the customer the opportunity to choose between them. Brandes & Co. showed this to be a solid business approach at least into the 1930s.¹⁹ At any time the purchase of a bandoneon was quite an expensive affair and the relation between, say, the cheapest guitar and the cheapest 142-note double-voiced bandoneon was 1 to 20

according to German price lists. This relation would have been more acute in Uruguay due to the high import taxes for free reeds.²⁰

German accordion makers suffered significant losses in 1890, when, due to political developments in the La Plata states and the poor exchange rate, only limited deliveries were possible (cf. Wit 1890:494). Then in the early years of the twentieth century, Uruguay precipitated another crisis by raising import taxes on accordions and bandoneons, so that sales figures plummeted between 1907 and 1910. As early as 1906, a total of 38.5% import duty was levied on free reed instruments, but due to the fact that calculations were based "ad valorem" on the internal selling price, the tax actually exceeded 40% of the invoiced price. Two important Berliner free reed instrument manufacturers, J. F. Kalbe and C. F. Pietschmann & Söhne, whose exports were mainly aimed at Uruguay and Argentina, failed to weather the crisis and were forced into bankruptcy. Smaller bandoneon workshops were, however, able to make up the losses by increasing domestic sales. Finally, another way around the high import duties was found: they could be avoided by importing bandoneons not already fully assembled and tuned but as component parts in kits, since parts were subject to a much lower duty.

This new procedure meant that qualified Uruguayan workers were necessary for assembly and tuning, and musicians who also possessed handicraft skills thus found a second source of income through repairing and maintaining bandoneons. Some of these musicians took the next step of becoming a retailer or promoter of bandoneons, and began to mark the instruments that they had

assembled and finished with their own signature or label. This practice was indirectly encouraged by the German manufacturers, who supplied unmarked instrument components or delivered bandoneons in a "neutral" form. Recent research has indicated that bandoneons have never actually been manufactured in Uruguay, even when the instrument's label claims so.

During the First World War, German bandoneon exports were reduced to null as metals were rationed, trained workers sent to the front and production switched to war supplies. Due to the steady demand in Uruguay, attempts were made to make bandoneons in the Argentine; Italian accordion manufacturers such as Fidel Socin of Bolzano also tried to fill the gap in the market by increasing their range of instruments to include bandoneons. The German accordion and bandoneon trade was not in a position to recommence exports to South America until 1923. The 1927 statistics for Uruguay recorded 2,164 accordions imported from Germany out of a total of 3,228. This means that within five years, the German share of the market had once more reached 67% (Biedermann 1930:68), and continued to climb throughout the 1930s. The German statistics never differentiated between accordions and bandoneons, which makes it impossible to determine the specific figures, and no information concerning the deliveries of bandoneon kits is available at all.

The catalogues of bandoneon manufacturers such as Ernst Louis Arnold of Carlsfeld, the Meinel Brothers of Klingenthal and Alfred Arnold of Carlsfeld, gave detailed information as to the specifics of the numerous varieties of bandoneons. The jubilee edition of the

ELA bandoneon price list from 1930 (Ernst Louis Arnold of Carlsfeld) for example contained 180 varieties and the customer could choose between 42 different designs. Written in four or five different languages, these catalogues indicate a certain change in business practices. Before the First World War, apart from supplying their commissioners, the instrument makers had also delivered to international wholesalers and exporters. Now they were trying to cut out the middleman by promoting their products themselves and seeking to establish contact with retailers and even with individual customers. The most effective means of achieving this was through the mail order system, where the final price for each model was listed in catalogues in Reichsmarks and, at times, also in U.S. dollars. Anyone interested in buying a bandoneon in Uruguay could obtain price lists from various manufacturers and compare them.

In contrast to the specialized bandoneon manufacturers, the large enterprises dealing worldwide in "musical merchandise," such as Hamilton S. Gordon of New York, Gebrüder Schuster of Markneukirchen, or Matthias Hohner of Trossingen, continued the labeling dissimulation that had already been practiced in the nineteenth century. Thus, the Trossinger factory sold bandoneons under its own trademark and with names such as "Cardinal," "Concertista," "Tango" or "Germania," of which not a single component was of its own manufacture, with the exception of the company's nameplate. The same process was practiced by Herfeld & Cie. of Neuenrade, Meinel & Herold of Klingenthal ("BBB"-bandoneon), and others. For example, Alfred Arnold supplied Herfeld & Cie, undoubtedly on special terms that were financially advantageous to both. To straighten

out this maze of interrelationships, which was circumspectly kept as impenetrable as possible, still remains a desideratum.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, bandoneon distribution within Uruguay has been carried out by individual musicians and special shops, such as those of Roberto V. Calame in Salto Oriental (founded in 1907), or B. Goyeneche in Paysandú.²¹ The capital offered many possibilities to obtain a new or second-hand instrument. In the 1920s the German immigrants Max Webel (Cerrito 339), Wagenknecht & Cia (25 de Agosto 428), and Karl Schumacher (Buenos Aires 421) established themselves in Montevideo as importers and instrument suppliers. Naturally, the bandoneon scene of Buenos Aires also had an effect on that of Uruguay. Several bandoneon protagonists, such as Antonio Gutman, known as "El Ruso," moved back and forth between Argentina and Uruguay. Gutman was considered to be

uno de los principales y más reconocidos difusores del bandoneón en el Uruguay... en la primera década del siglo XX (Meierovich 1985:19).

From Buenos Aires, Jesús Perez offered correspondence courses and provided students registered at his "Academia de Bandoneón" with instruments on loan if they so wished. One could also find in the Argentinian capital instrument dealers of German extraction, such as Adolf Breyer, whose business was founded in 1883 and who was apparently the first to market bandoneons from the factory of Ernst Louis Arnold on a larger scale.²² These dealers were later followed by Albert Oehrthmann (Casa Oehrthmann, Humberto I 1565), Emil Pitzer, G.A. Teichmann and, in Rosario de Santa Fé, the accordion and bandoneon importer Wilhelm Lohmann. In addi-

tion to these German immigrants, native Argentinians and Uruguayans established their own firms and the supply and maintenance of bandoneons could be widely guaranteed.

With the rise of the Nazi regime in 1933, and particularly after the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the supply of bandoneons to Uruguay was drastically affected. As during the First World War, the German political authorities interfered in production and trade, applying rigid controls, withdrawing materials and even confiscating property. The bandoneon factory of the Gebrüder Meinel at Klingenthal shipped, for example, its last consignment of bandoneons overseas in 1939. Only a few manufacturers had the privilege of staying in operation at all. As a significant earner of foreign currencies, the firm of Alfred Arnold was granted an export licence but was allocated no metal for production. They were thus forced to fit their instruments with mass-produced reed boards supplied by Gebrüder Dix of Gera.

After the war ended in 1945, none of the German bandoneon makers were able to recover their pre-1933 positions. The Saxony and Thuringian manufacturing areas were situated in the territory of the German Democratic Republic, which dedicated its state-owned factories that had formerly produced bandoneons exclusively to accordion production. In the Federal Republic of Germany, an attempt by Arno Arnold of Obertshausen to manufacture bandoneons failed because the market did not respond to his instruments. It was not until 1985 that a German bandoneon manufacturer emerged who revived the original Saxony art of construction. After a great deal of preparatory work, Klaus Gutjahr of Berlin has pro-

duced 152-note, double-voiced bandoneons which correspond to the traditional instruments in their timbre and basic layout. Upon visiting Gutjahr's workshops for the first time in 1991, René Marino Rivero tried out a number of his instruments and expressed his high opinion of them. The cycle has thus turned full circle: high-quality instruments are once more available, and it is now the turn of the musicians to advance the cause of bandoneon culture.

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Special thanks go to Maestro René Marino Rivero, Montevideo. His personal selection of dances, his devotion to the tradition of his homeland as shown in his interpretations found on this CD, and his comments given in an extensive interview document not only a part of bandoneon culture of Uruguay but also its special traits and

vigor. In sharing his thorough knowledge of bandoneonistic and musical matters Marino Rivero enlightened many aspects of the bandoneon phenomenon.

The German version of this text is available from:

Beat Muggli, Mühlestr. 2, CH 5702 Niederlenz, Switzerland

Notes

1. "a'" is used to designate the so-called "tuning fork A" of 440 Hz, and middle C = c'. These designations also appear in Figure 4, in which it should also be noted that the German "h" is equivalent to the note "b" and the endings "-is" and # mean "sharp."
2. The tuner's name also appears as Romero Greatti, for example in Meierovich 1985:13.
3. In the selection of terminology for the parts and functions of the bandoneon, we have attempted to make recognizable the similarity of that instrument's construction to that of the organ. Concepts that evoke misleading associations have been replaced with neutral labels. For example, the term "bi-sonority" (adj. "bi-sonor") is chosen to describe a model in which two different notes are linked to one key, one sounding upon pressing the bellows together, the other upon pulling them apart. This replaces such unsatisfactory terminology as "diatonic system," "single action," "change-note," "non-equivox," "alternata" and "converse system." Regarding the use of the terms "bi-sonor" and "uni-sonor," see Boone 1990. For further information on bandoneon history, organology and terminology see Dunkel 1987.
4. This is according to information from the specialists Olivier Manoury, Paris, and Klaus Gutjahr, Berlin, who have accumulated hands-on experience in this subject over many years.
5. "El area cultural rioplatense" versus "El area cultural andina" according to the Uruguayan sociologist Angel Rama.

6. "... a tocar en bandoneón los vales de Waldteufel, Vals de los patinadores ..." (Assunção, 1984:178).
7. At that time, the accordion and bandoneon were often regarded as the same instrument, and it is possible that Alba had heard the famous bandoneonist Sebastián Ramos Mejía, known as "El Pardo" (Viglietti 1947:118/119).
8. "Fraseo - se aplica generalmente para designar los solos de bandoneón en tempo rubato dentro de la interpretación orquestal" (Ferrer 1980:434).
9. The DRGM (= Deutsches Reichs Gebrauchs Muster), the legal protection for registered designs in Germany, was obtained by Louis Steyer in 1896, although this code had already been in use long before that time.
10. Sebastián Ramos Mejía, "el fundador de toda la dinastía bandoneonera ... residió y tocó en Montevideo a principio del siglo" Ferrer 1977:39).
11. Arturo Herman 'El Alemán' Bernstein, 1882-1935, "Hijo de alemanes, con instrumento alemán, alemán por el trago, este Arturo dictó cátedra de porteñísimo; durante muchos años fue 'el' profesor de bandoneón en Buenos Aires" (Ferrer 1980:86, and Ferrer 1977:39).
12. "Interpretación solista: Se realiza sobre bases de conceptos musicales enteramente diferente a los de su ejecución orquestal. Supone un gran dominio técnico y la adaptación de cada composición a sus posibilidades y sus limitaciones" (Ferrer 1977:275).
13. Its titles were: "La Morocha," *mazurca* de Gerardo Metallo and "La Sonám-bula." In 1913 Vicente Loduca recorded "El Argentino" for Pathé, Paris (Ferrer 1980:355).
14. Microrhythm is not equated with *tempo rubato* or with "prolongación de los ritmos," both of which are based on dilatation and contraction (cf. Mendoza de Arce 1972:77). Ernesto Sábato identified as traits of the *cultura porteña* a certain disequilibrium and frustration, and "prolongación" could be described as a musical equivalent of these traits (Sábato 1982:100).
15. Vicente Rossi described it as follows: "Nuestros morenos se habrían hecho millonarios en el extranjero con seducciones bailables como el paso doble académico, quinta escencie del corte y la quebrada" (Rossi 1926:384).
16. José Santa Cruz, the father of the famous bandoneonist Domingo Santa Cruz, 'El Rengo', is said to have taken bandoneon lessons from one of the Band brothers at the "Café de los Alemanes," Calle Corrientes, Buenos Aires, when returning from the war against Paraguay, which ended in 1870 (Ferrer 1977:57).

17. Italian accordion production began with Paolo Soprani in Castelfidardo only in 1863. In Britain, only English concertinas of the Wheatstone system were manufactured, and the Russian, Swiss, Belgian and Dutch accordion manufacturers did not export to South America, at least not on any scale worth mentioning.
18. 1 patacón = 1 duro = 1 five-peseta piece
19. All of the following information about manufacturers and dealers was taken from Wit, 1906, 1912, 1925/26.
20. "Por un bandonion 71 voces recibí del Sr. Domingo Santa Cruz la suma de \$180, 24 de septiembre de 1910" (Silbido, 1964:79).
21. Roberto Goyeneche, "El Polaco," born in Montevideo in 1895, became a *tango* interpreter. It is still to be determined whether these two Goyeneche were related.
22. Cf. Johannes F Breyer, Alsterdamm 10, Hamburg, Musikinstrumentenexport nach Südbrasilien, Argentinien, Chile (in Wit 1906). ELA is said to be the first company to export bandoneons in a bigger scale to Buenos Aires, beginning in 1883.

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René Marino Rivero — Komponist aus Uruguay, aufgewachsen im Departamento Tacuarembó, geprägt von der Natur und Einsamkeit dieser Region, ihrer Folklore, ihres Dialekts, ihrer Musik und natürlich vom Bandonion, mit dem der Musiker Marino Rivero gleichsam einen Organismus bildet;

Favoriten — aus dem instrumental Repertoire der Fünfzigerjahre, als der Tango noch nicht ausgeklammert war aus der traditionellen Musik und die *tangueros* ihrerseits ländliche, kreolische Tänze integrierten.



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Back cover: Details of a AA-bandoneon