Libertango

Duration: 5 minutes.

THE COMPOSER – ASTOR PIAZZOLA (1875-1937) – Piazzolla spent the early 1970s in an experimental chamber music ensemble called “Conjunto Electronico.” The group featured the unusual combination of bandoneon, various keyboards, guitar, electric bass, drums and violin. Sometimes a flute would join in and a permanent singer was added later. Piazzolla objected to the eventual classification of his Argentinian/European collective as a jazz-rock band. He described the music of Conjunto Electronico as “…my music, it had more to do with tango than with rock.” Most things did.

THE HISTORY – Piazzolla revolutionized the Tango form during his interesting and varied career and became one of the foremost proponents of the Tango Nuevo movement of the late 1950s. Before this could happen, however, Piazzolla would need to be convinced that he was meant for it. His love of Bach, Bartok and Stravinsky and his period of study with Nadia Boulanger in Paris spoke to his desire for distance from his beginnings as a bandoneon virtuoso. He was in search of a new path as a purely classical composer but Boulanger, after hearing him play one of his tangos, steered him back to his real calling when she told him: “Astor, your classical pieces are well written, but the true Piazzolla is here, never leave it behind.” The Libertango (loosely “Liberty Tango”) of 1974 represented a break from the old traditions and the creation of the new tango school that defined the rest of Piazzolla’s composing life. The immensely popular Libertango has been recorded hundreds of times in various instrumental guises and has been incorporated into numerous advertisements and even a few movie soundtracks.

THE WORLD – Gerald Ford gave an unconditional pardon to Richard Nixon in 1974. Nixon had resigned the Presidency earlier that year. Also in 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, India detonated its first nuclear bomb and West Germany won the World Cup on its own soil.

THE CONNECTION – This will be the CCSO’s premiere performance of Libertango.