

## **TANGO: THE SPIRIT OF ARGENTINA**

Tango is a singular expression in music, song and dance, a local art form that blossomed to enchant and seduce the world. Produced on location in Buenos Aires in May 2004, **TANGO: The Spirit of Argentina** displays the finest of Argentine tango in a sizzling performance special that brings together the best singers, musicians and dancers, at a combination of locations and concert venues, to showcase the past and present of tango culture both for existing tango aficionados and a whole new audience waiting to discover its magic.

Born at the end of the 19th Century in the tenements of Buenos Aires drawing on waltzes and polkas from Europe along with African rhythms, the product of mingling cultures in a port city, tango made its way from the barrio to the ballroom - but remains untamed. And it is once again seducing contemporary audiences as one of the fastest-growing dance movements in the US. **TANGO: The Spirit of Argentina** introduces tango in all its color and vibrant life, tracing the history of the dance from its earliest waterfront roots to its latest symphonic interpretation.

**TANGO: The Spirit of Argentina** begins, fittingly, where the dance began - with performances on the docks in the barrio, then on to the elegant sophistication of the Cervantes National Theater in the heart of Buenos Aires. The second act highlights love and loss, the blend of sensuality, sophistication, melancholy and passion which is the true soul of tango - the "vertical expression of a horizontal desire." The finale introduces audiences to tango's passion for 'place,' blending music and dance with additional location shooting to reveal tango's roots in the urban landscape of Buenos Aires.

Dancers featured in the program include Pilar Alvarez and Claudio Hoffmann, choreographers and directors of Tango Metropolis as well as dancers from the Esquina Carlos Gardel Company, named for the tango singer known as the "King of Tango." All the various elements of **TANGO** are woven together by background information about the dances and the songs - some original to the conventillos where the tango took its first steps - to enhance the viewer's appreciation of this art form.

**TANGO: The Spirit of Argentina** continues WLIW's series of performance specials for PBS that bring to life the spirit of place unique to a particular country and culture by filming in high definition on location and utilizing cameras moving with the performers on stage. **MARIACHI: The Spirit of Mexico** premiered nationwide in May 2003.

Produced by WLIW New York in association with KCET Hollywood. Executive Producer: Roy A. Hammond. Producer/Director: Leo Eaton (Eaton Creative, Inc.). Funding provided by Wines of Argentina, National Endowment for the Arts, and Latino Public Broadcasting.

Publicity Contact: Susan Hellman, WLIW, Tel.: 212.560-8823; Fax: 212.560-4921;

Email: HellmanS@wliw.org

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