



Multiple Reviews

Pablo Ziegler's Nuevo Tango Passion: Amsterdam Meets New Tango

By [DAN BILAWSKY](#), Published: May 17, 2013

[Astor Piazzolla](#) invited jazz into the world of tango, birthing a hybridized form of music that's outlived its creator; jazz, proving equally hospitable, opened its doors to Piazzolla and nuevo tango. High-end artists like saxophonist [Gerry Mulligan](#), vibraphonist [Gary Burton](#), and guitarist [Al Di Meola](#) all collaborated with the legendary composer/bandoneon player, helping to raise his profile and that of nuevo tango music on the whole. Piazzolla had a notable influence on, in addition to all three of these musicians, countless others in jazz's past and present, but none of those figures took up the mantle of nuevo tango figurehead; pianist [Pablo Ziegler](#) did.

When Piazzolla departed this Earth in 1992, the torch was passed to his longtime pianist who's been carrying it proudly ever since. Ziegler continues to push the art form forward through his own work and supportive largesse. These two projects shine a light on both artistic-cum-promotional paths being paved by nuevo tango's leading living exponent.



Pablo Ziegler & Metropole Orkest
Amsterdam Meets New Tango
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Despite any sense of titular redundancy, it's tempting to dub this a "new nuevo tango" album. In marrying his small group with the Metropole Orkest, and expanding the stylistic reach of his own nuevo tango compositions, Ziegler has taken the tradition one step further. The sultry and sensual sounds that are expected in this style of music appear, but something altogether sinister is afoot at times. A sense of controlled and highly focused discord, underlined by percussive intensity, separates this music from run-of-the-mill nuevo tango. The album-opening "Buenos Aires Report," which sounds like an imagined collaboration between Ziegler, Piazzolla, Igor Stravinsky, Bernard Herrmann, and [Leonard Bernstein](#), is the perfect example of this bold new brew.

Other numbers, like the primal-cum-elegant circus of a closer, "Que Lo Pario," also break new ground, but Ziegler also walks on well-trod terra firma. He takes cues from the blues ("Blues Porteno"), plays things light and airy ("Pajaro Angel"), and tips his cap to the great composer/multi-instrumentalist [Hermeto Pascoal](#) by marrying Argentine sensibilities with Brazilian ideals ("Milonga Para Hermeto").

The Metropole Orkest is responsible for the most striking and soothing of sounds here, but the heart of the album is Ziegler and his crew-of-three. The leader brings a sense of passion and surprise to every one of his solos; guitarist Quique Sinesi conjures the night with every strum; bandoneon wielder Walter Castro proves seductive at every turn; and percussionist [Quintino Cinalli](#) works around the edges to provide rhythmic support. This is, indeed, "new nuevo tango" stuff.