

Dance Suite

For Violin, Cello, and Piano

DENNIS ALEXANDER

This work was commissioned by Music Teachers National Association to feature and promote collaborative music. It was premiered at the MTNA Conference on Sunday, March 10, 2013, Anaheim, California.

I would like to thank MTNA and Ann Witherspoon (National Chair of the Commissioned Composer Program) for inviting me to write a piece for the 2013 National Conference in Anaheim. When I made the decision to write a trio for piano, violin, and cello, I knew that I wanted to include at least one dance movement. I grew up in southwest Kansas and have been surrounded or involved in dancing my whole life. My parents were ballroom dancers and also loved square dancing. They made sure that my sisters and I took dance lessons.

About a year ago, I became enamored with the tango when I was introduced to the music of QTango, a professional music ensemble that performs regularly in Albuquerque and throughout the United States. Their music immediately captured my attention. They are superb musicians first of all; but, beyond that, they express an infectious and fervent love of Argentine tango music. I was inspired to make the tango an integral part of this chamber music work and am very grateful to both Olga Tikhovidova (violinist) and Erskine Maytorena (bandoneonista) for sharing their infinite knowledge of this style with me!

I wanted to end the suite with a flourish, so I took the first melodic notes of the tango to create a "Valse brillante" that brings this two-movement suite to an exciting conclusion. I hope that musicians performing this work will find it as gratifying to play as it was for me to compose!

Dennis Alexander

Introduction and Tango	2
Valse brillante	15

With grateful appreciation to Ben Therrell (cello), Olga Tikhovidova (violin), and Erskine Maytorena (bandoneón) of QTango for their invaluable input and inspiration in the art and performance of tango music.



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