Astor Piazzolla - Maria De Buenos Aires (1998)

Written by bluesever
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CD1:
1.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Alevare
2.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Tema de Maria
3.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Balada para un organito loco
4.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Milonga carrieguera
5.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Fuga y misterio (instrumental)
6.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Poema valseado
7.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Tocatta rea
8.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Primera Parte. Miserere canyengue

CD2:
1.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Contramilonga a la funerala
2.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Tangata del alba (instrumental)
3.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Carta a los arboles y a las chimeneas
4.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Aria de los analistas
5.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Romanza del duende
6.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Allegro tangabile
7.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Milonga de la anunciacion
8.Maria de Buenos Aires, operetta: Segunda Parte. Tangus Dei
  Julia Zenko - vocals Jairo – vocals Coral Lírico Buenos Aires Kremerata Musica Gidon Kremer – director

City gives birth to girl. City loses girl to shadowy underworld. City reunites with girl's spirit. That is the story of María de Buenos Aires, a 30-year-old Spanish-language operetta composed by Astor Piazzolla, the foremost proponent of modern tango. This recording was encouraged by violinist Gidon Kremer, resulting in an elegant new arrangement (down from the original eleven musicians to eight, including the late Piazzolla's beloved bandoneon) and the appearance of Horacio Ferrer, who wrote the libretto, to perform the role of Goblin (or El Duende), the narrator. Ferrer's textured spoken baritone brings a weary romance to the work, contrasting with Julia Zenko's robust María, who can enunciate pizzicato syllable-for-syllable runs without losing the

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meaning of her phrases, and who trills her r's with an emphasis equal parts street-wise and regal. For much of the operetta, María is actually the shadow spirit of María, cursed to wander the city; if Zenko's ethereal María seems more passionate than most mortals do, one must assume that Ferrer approves of the interpretation. The ensemble is exceptional, with particular emphasis given to Vadim Sakharov's jazzy piano and Kremer's elegiac violin. The production shows a tremendous amount of emotional restraint, in contrast with the María on Milan Records. At times, Ferrer's phantasmagoric poetry proves hysterically surreal. Who else, besides perhaps Woody Allen, could have composed an "Aria of the Anyalysts" in which María confronts her memories. --Marc Weidenbaum, amzon.com

A rendition of a tango operita, commissioned by the Argentinian Ministry of Culture (this rendition anyway), was revived by violinist Gidon Kremer, who had such a love for the original LPs from Piazzolla and Horacio Ferrer that he wanted to recreate the music. Ferrer was kept on as El Duende (the Goblin) -- the role that he created when he wrote the libretto thirty years earlier. Regrettably, Piazzolla had passed on prior to the remake. Nonetheless, the arrangements and orchestrations are remarkable. The suffering and the passion of Maria (the main character in the show) are perfectly portrayed by the tango. The music changes forms as her character progresses, taking on traditional tangos, modern tangos, milongas, waltzes, and other styles to reflect changes in Maria. The music is always well-composed. This is an opera for the display of modern music, and the tango of Piazzolla is modern music at its finest. ---Adam Greenberg, Rovi

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