## Marine Orchestra

**Andrew Grams**, conductor  
**Karen Gomyo**, violin | **William Schimmel**, accordion

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### Friday, July 19, 2019, 8 pm  |  Orchestra Hall

| **Dominick Argento**  | **Valentino Dances, Suite for Orchestra**  | ca. 10’  
| from *The Dream of Valentino*  
| William Schimmel, accordion

| **Astor Piazzolla/arr. Leonid Desyatnikov**  | **Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas**  | ca. 26’  
| (The Four Seasons in Buenos Aires)  
| Verano (Summer)  
| Otoño (Autumn)  
| Invierno (Winter)  
| Primavera (Spring)  
| *Karen Gomyo*, violin

| **Esteban Benzecry**  | **Obertura Tanguera**  | ca. 7’

| **Osvando Golijov**  | **Last Round**, for String Orchestra  | ca. 15’  
| Movido, Urgente – Subito meno mosso  
| Lentissimo

| **Alberto Ginastera**  | **Ballet Suite from Estancia**  | ca. 12’  
| The Land Workers  
| Wheat Dance  
| The Cattlemen  
| Final Dance (Malambo)

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Los materiales del programa de esta noche están disponibles en español; solicite un folleto al acomodador.

**Osmo Vänskä**’s profile appears on page 8, **Karen Gomyo**’s on page 42 and **William Schimmel**’s on page 44.

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Dominick Argento (1927-2019), the most decorated classical composer ever to call Minnesota home, was mourned around the world when he passed away last February. Prominent among his achievements were 13 lyric operas, the last of which was *The Dream of Valentino*. This true-life 1920s-set tale of the Italian Rudolph Valentino follows the peaks and valleys of his career as a dancer and Hollywood silent film star. After the opera’s 1994 premiere by Washington National Opera, Argento composed an instrumental suite of tango dances from *Valentino*, expanding and re-orchestrating several numbers. The Minnesota Orchestra premiered the suite, which features accordion in a prominent role, on July 13, 1994.

Astor Piazzolla / orch. Leonid Desyatnikov  
*Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas*  
(The Four Seasons in Buenos Aires)

This evening’s celebration of the tango continues with a work by the classical composer most closely associated with the popular dance style from the Argentina-Uruguay border region that includes the port city of Buenos Aires. Argentina’s Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) started his career as a virtuoso performer of the bandoneon, a traditional Argentinian instrument similar to the accordion. In the 1950s he turned his eye to classical music and honed a unique voice combining elements of classical, jazz and tango. From 1964 to 1970 he composed four tangos known collectively as *Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas* (The Four Seasons in Buenos Aires) for a small chamber group. The version performed today was orchestrated in the late 1990s by Leonid Desyatnikov for violin and strings—not coincidentally, the instrumentation of Vivaldi’s famous *Four Seasons* of the Baroque period.

Esteban Benzecry  
*Obertura Tanguera*

The influence of Piazzolla is felt heavily in *Obertura Tanguera* (Tango Overture) by Argentinian composer Esteban Benzecry (born 1970), one of the most renowned South American composers of his generation. The composer comments on the work, which dates from 1993: “The name of *Obertura Tanguera* refers to the melodic and rhythmic twists of tango in its most modern expression, constituting a tribute to Astor Piazzolla, who had died a few months before [I began] to compose it. The work has a tripartite structure, with a brief introduction that shows a fast theme, a central section of a slow and expressive theme that the strings play, that goes in crescendo until the re-exposition of the fast subject, reaching its climax in the end.” Commissioned by Mexican choirs and youth orchestras, *Obertura Tanguera* was premiered on May 21, 1995, by the Orquesta Sinfónica Carlos Chávez.

Osvaldo Golijov  
*Last Round, for String Orchestra*

When Piazzolla suffered a severe stroke in 1991, his countryman Osvaldo Golijov (born 1960) was saddened and began sketching a “sublimated tango dance” in honor of his idol—in Golijov’s words, meant “to give Piazzolla’s spirit an imaginary chance to fight one more time.” The work went through several iterations, surfacing first in 1996 as a work for two string quartets and bass, then reworked for string orchestra in a version premiered March 3, 2000, by the Boston Symphony. The composer remarks: “The first movement represents a violent compression of [Piazzolla’s instrument, the bandoneon] and the second a final, seemingly endless opening sigh (it is actually a fantasy over the refrain of the song ‘My Beloved Buenos Aires,’ composed by the legendary Carlos Gardel in the 1930s).” *Last Round* is one of three Golijov works performed this Sommerfest, including the festival finale on August 2 and 3—his stunning choral-orchestral interpretation of the Biblical Passion story, *La Pasión según San Marcos*.

Alberto Ginastera  
*Ballet Suite from Estancia*

In 1941, Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983)—Piazzolla’s major competitor for the title of most revered Argentinian classical composer—was commissioned to write a ballet for the American Ballet Caravan. Sadly, the company promptly disbanded, and Ginastera’s *Estancia* was not staged until 1952. In the meantime, the composer extracted an orchestral suite, premiered by the Teatro Colón Orchestra on May 12, 1943. The following note (slightly edited) appears in the score: “The deep and bare beauty of the land, its richness and natural strength, constitute the basis of Argentine life. This ballet presents various aspects of the activities on an ‘estancia’ [cattle ranch] in the course of a day, from dawn to dawn, with a symbolic sense of continuity. The plot shows a country girl who despises the man of the city. She finally admires him when he proves that he can perform the roughest and most difficult tasks in the land.”

Program notes by Carl Schroeder.