

# *Estuary Three* **Jazz Tango**



**Estuary Three** is an exciting trio featuring an exotic mixture of tango and Argentinean music with modern jazz. Showcasing unique original compositions by innovative young pianist-composer Jeremy Woolhouse, the ensemble features the dynamic Judy Gunson on piano- accordion and ingenious bassist Jo To. The intensity of the music is matched by the passion of guest tango dancers Martin and Josie Taliana. On occasion the ensemble also celebrates traditional tango including songs, sung in Spanish, by vocalist Merrin Torpy.



Just as the estuary of a river is a point of meeting, Estuary Three is an ensemble where the musicians merge their personal experience and influences. From this fertile ground grows a unique new style, peppered with hints of the background soil from which it grew. Estuary Three feature distinctive original compositions, exploiting the relationship between jazz and tango, Argentina and Melbourne, dance and music, past and present. The ensemble's own tunes are juxtaposed with the traditional tangos of Gardel, De Caro, and Rodriguez and more contemporary works by the famous pioneer of 'tango nuevo', Astor Piazzolla. The musicians have a common interest in jazz, classical, folk and European music. They share a fascination in Argentinean culture and a fiery passion for tango. All are exquisite improvisers and fierce innovators of music, constantly exploring new terrain.

Dance has always been integral in the evolution of tango. Feature dancers help to connect the audience with the vast tradition which grew around tango. Being an improvised form, the dance is constantly interacting with the music, thus evolving the tango to a new level when the dancers interpret Estuary's original compositions and improvisations. It is a dazzling display of dexterity, and an intriguing exploration of the artistic progress of music.

The guest vocalist captures the staunch passion of the Spanish lyrics giving traditional songs a vibrant life of their own. Audiences continue to be moved by the romance and passion of Estuary Three's music and dance, in a performance which pays homage to the heritage of Argentina and to contemporary Melbourne. The experience is poignant, inspiring, and entertaining.



**Jeremy Woolhouse** is rapidly making a name for himself in Melbourne as a versatile and captivating pianist. His distinctive sound embraces the traditions of an Afro-American jazz background and blends them with a passion for tango and Argentinean music. He explores these genres in his ensembles Estuary Three, Trio Kestrel, and a host of duets.

Jeremy has become an innovative improviser and creates intriguing interpretations of modern contemporary music. After completing a Diploma of Music Performance, he graduated with a Bachelor of Music from the prestigious Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne. His mentors included Dr Tony Gould, Bob Sedegrene and Geoff Hughes. In addition, he has been in workshop with local jazz legends Joe Cindamo, Paul Grabowski and David Jones, and international guests such as Joe Zawavinul, Lee Konitz, and Philip Glass. Along side the study of improvisation, Jeremy has continually presented compositions reflecting his imaginative and individual approach to music.

**Martin and Jose Taliana** revel in maintaining the traditions of Argentinean culture. Veterans of the tango dance scene, their dancing has been featured with local ensembles such as Black Market. The agility and energy this couple create is a fantastic expression of the passion of tango. They join the trio for special feature performances.



**Judy Gunson** is famous for her piano-accordion and vocal work with gypsy ensembles Cosmo-Cosmolino, Stiletto Sisters and The Country Party. In Estuary Three, she unites the essential tango character of the bandoneon with her personal accordion sound. A vibrant and spirited performer, Judy's shrewd interaction with the ensemble adds an uplifting energy to the performance and enhances the intrigue of the tango.

A graduate of LaTrobe University, she has worked for many years as pianist, vocalist, accordionist, composer and performer with numerous acts, including celebrated Melbourne theatre group Anthill Theatre, and the Astra Choir. Judy has toured extensively in Australia, Latin America, Europe and Asia with the Melbourne's acclaimed Chamber Made Opera Company. She is hailed as a multitalented performer comfortable with repertoires as diverse as classical, country, cabaret, folk and jazz.

**Jo To** is in demand on the Melbourne music scene for her mastery of the double bass. She has provided the musical foundation for groups as distinguished as Ray Charles, Renee Geyer, Australian Pops Orchestra, Tony Gould, Alex Pertout, Rhonda Birchmore, Stiletto Sisters, Greg Arnold (Things of Stone and Wood), Tony Barber and the cast of Blue Heelers. Truly versatile, she performs in jazz, rock, pop, folk, latin, gypsy, big band and classical genres.

Jo's role in Estuary Three adds yet another colour to her palate. Her full sound underpins the ensemble and provides a rhythmic and harmonic stability. In the interactive spirit of the group, Jo also uses the bass to it's fullest melodic, textural and percussive potential. Jo received the Frances Quinn Arts Award whilst completing her Bachelor of Music at the VCA, and holds an Advanced Diploma in Music.



**Merrin Torpy** has demonstrated a unique capacity to embrace many genres during her musical career. She is experienced in music theatre, gesture, chamber, Gregorian chant, Irish folk, Broadway and tango, and is a local expert in early renaissance music. This gained her positions as soloist with elite vocal group Schola Cantorum, the Early Arts Guild and the medieval music ensemble of St Aloysius Chorale. She is a member of the "Immram" Irish group and has exhibited her skills on flute in the improvising ensemble "Exercises in Distance".



The young soprano has undertaken studies at the VCA - Melbourne University, and accepted a scholarship to Melba Conservatorium. Her tutors included luminaries of opera and chamber music circles, Linda Thompson, Brian Hansford and Natalia Afeyan. Merrin has workshopped with Jane Highfield of London's Royal Academy of Music and her talent secured her a finalist position in the South Street Eisteddfod of 2002.

Merrin's rich voice proffers a wide range of pitch and tonal colours. She is renown for achieving exquisite expression through subtle and masterful manipulation of the timbre and dynamic potential in her voice. Audiences never fail to be captivated by her alluring stage presence, magnetic personality, and sense of humour.

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