

**Limelight Magazine, Australia** - by Martin Buzacott

*'...outstanding playing... five brilliant musicians...'*

*Take five brilliant musicians from a variety of walks of life (but with associations to the Australian Chamber Orchestra as a common thread), stick them together for a couple of sessions during an unseasonably steamy September in Sydney, and let them loose on one of the hottest classical musical tickets of recent years – the tangos of Astor Piazzolla. And what do you get?*

*Well, you get outstanding playing of 10 Piazzolla works and a recording where you can practically hear the beads of sweat forming on the musicians brows. With accordionist James Crabb taking on the bandoneon parts, violinist Richard Tognetti, guitarist George Vassilev, pianist Benjamin Martin and ACO bassist Maxime Bibeau throw themselves into the Piazzolla classics with gusto.*

*The immortal Libertango is lithe and sinewy in this quintet arrangement, Milonga del Angel comes off well, and an epic Tangata brings it all home. Tango from the right hemisphere, wrong side of the Pacific, but right side of the musical heart.*

**The Australian** - by Deborah Jones

*'Irresistible and intensely seductive... a tour de force...'*

*Classical Accordionist James Crabb electrified the Australian Chamber Orchestra's Huntington Festival 2003 with an eclectic program including some foot-stomping Astor Piazzolla works. Tango Jam features quintets from the Argentine composer and reunites Crabb with ACO's Richard Tognetti (violin), Maxime Bibeau (bass), along with ACO fave Benjamin Martin (piano). Guitarist George Vassilev completes the hot line-up. Or should that be oh-so-cool?*

*Tango Jam kicks off with a punchy Libertango, showcasing each of the fab five. The tango can be sexy, swoony, aggressive, fun, strutting, dramatic, romantic and joyous, and Concierto para Quinteto covers all the bases in an irresistible 10 minutes. The brief Fugata is a tour de force and Romance del Diablo intensely seductive. The best thing is that these fine soloists sound both individual and part of the group; second best thing is that Tango Jam is subtitled Volume 1.*

**Newcastle Herald, Australia** - by Kim Sutherland

*'Tango passion Shines on CD...'*

*Novocastrians who enjoyed the Australian Chamber Orchestra's Bach to Buenos Aires concert last September will be pleased to know that a CD has been released celebrating that unique partnership of outstanding musicians playing Piazzolla quintets.*

*Two members of the ACO – Richard Tognetti, lead violin and artistic director and Maxime Bibeau, principle double bass – join Melbourne pianist Benjamin Martin, Bulgarian guitarist George Vassilev and James Crabb, classical accordion.*

*They have a wonderful rapport which is exploited beautifully in Tango Jam, Volume 1.*

*The disc is co-produced and engineered by Daniel Denholm, who engineered many of ACO's recent recordings including Song of the Angel and Sculthorpe Cello Dreaming and other works. This is Denholm's new venture under his new label Mulberry Hill Recordings, set up to introduce non-mainstream music to a wider audience.*

*The lyrical passion of the tango shines throughout Tango Jam. The tracks range from the exquisitely sultry Milonga del Angel and Romance del Diablo to the virtuosic Fugata and La Camorra II. A sheer delight. Tango Jam is a perfect gift for any occasion and a great addition to any CD collection. It is available at all good record stores and through the ACO website [www.aco.com.au](http://www.aco.com.au)*

**Libretto Magazine, Australia - by John Barnes**

***'...a recording of spectacular brilliance...'***

*In recent years the music of Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla has made a significant impact on music-lovers worldwide. It was not always thus; as a teenager in 1939, after being invited to play his beloved bandoneon with a tango orchestra in Buenos Aires, his theatricality and flamboyant approach to the music angered so many 'purists' that he was beaten up in a street and, on another occasion, had a gun held to his head. It was only after studying with Alberto Ginastera in his home country and with Nadia Boulanger in Paris that he was able to gradually gain public respect with his Tango Nuevo.*

*Those who have heard the Macquarie Trio and the Australian Chamber Orchestra play Piazzolla's music will know what to expect from this new CD. Those who have not had that experience will be treated to a concert covering the whole gamut of emotions, from the forlorn melancholy of the love songs to the pulsating exuberance of Libertango and Escualo. Each member of the quintet is a virtuoso player and knows exactly how to portray the rich tapestry of Piazzolla's unique musical creativity. The tight ensemble playing, with solo instruments judiciously highlighted, is enhanced by a recording of spectacular brilliance.*

*Mulberry Hill is a new label, established to familiarize listeners with non-mainstream music. Its career has got away to a flying start!*

**[www.weselyclassics.com.au](http://www.weselyclassics.com.au)**

***'...a wonderful new recording...'***

*This wonderful new recording of Piazzolla quintets has received great response from airplay on Classic FM over the past two months. It features the intrepid Richard Tognetti, director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, who performs alongside classical accordionist James Crabb in ten life-affirming quintets by Piazzolla.*

*Tango Jam is an example of independent record label production at its best. The recording was fuelled by the enthusiasm, not only of the performers, but also of the sound engineer Daniel Denholm.*

*Tango Jam is the first release from Mulberry Hill Recordings, a new Australian label based in Rozelle, New South Wales.*