

In 2001, Diego Romay created the musical *Tanguera*, which proved to be a milestone in his career as a theatrical producer. The play, which not only represents tango, but Argentina as well, opened in Buenos Aires in 2002. From then on, it has had a successful run worldwide.

JANUARY 11, 2002 – LA PRENSA

This is evident in a show lovingly related to our urban tradition

María Nieves is a tango icon

***Tanguera* is a typically Buenos Aires musical. It brings about the essence of some urban icons of the old-time Argentina which became stronger through the consecutive contributions of the arriving immigrants.**

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Tanguera credits. Musical Direction: Omar Pacheco. Book: Diego Romay and Dolores Espeja. Director of Choreography: Mora Godoy. Associate choreographer: Laura Roatta. Musical arrangements: Lisandro Adrover and Gerardo Gardelín. Lyrics and musical composition: Eladia Blázquez. Sets: Valeria Ambrosio. Costumes: Cecilia Monti. Lighting: Ariel Del Mastro. Singer: Lidia Borda. Dancers: Mora Godoy, María Nieves, Junior Soares, Juan Paulo Horvath, Ricardo Barrios, Oscar Armando Martínez Pey, Bruno Gibertoni and company. At El Nacional (Corrientes 960). THE SHOW: The first image offered by this musical -exquisitely presented to dazzle local audiences as well as those in Europe and the United States- looks like something coming out of one of Quinquela Martín's paintings. The set depicts the port of the city of Buenos Aires: cranes, a pier in the background and even further back a gangway which supposedly takes you to a ship. In the forefront, a group of longshoremen and an old organ grinder. At that same moment, we see a young and beautiful woman coming off the ship along the gangway carrying a suitcase. We meet Giselle, the French girl, the urban archetype suggesting the young woman arriving in the country with the idea of getting married, but who will soon be subdued by a pimp who will turn her into a prostitute. Two men, Lorenzo and Gaudencio, will then fight fiercely with knives to have her. Just a little later, another typical character makes her appearance: the Madam, who will train the French Girl into the secrets of paid love. THE PLEASURE OF DANCING: the book by Diego Romay and Dolores Espeja gets into the classical structure of a musical, such as *West Side Story*, in which the good guys and the bad guys: that is the Lorenzos and the Gaudencios, come face to face to win a woman's love. The plot will undertake an arc of tension in which an impending tragedy is finding its way (think of *Romeo and Juliet*). This becomes the pillar that stitches together a magnificent show, where no detail was overlooked. Furthermore, the dramatic tension of the story helps to fully appreciate the tangos and the milongas. Moreover, the songs written by Eladia Blázquez, exquisitely rooted in the urban lexicon, as well as the montage done with tango and milonga bits, as well as other popular sounding musical trends, by Lisandro Adrover and Gerardo

Gardelín, excite both dancers and audiences. The zest for dancing, the pleasure of dancing, the sexual/erotic giddiness insinuated in the choreography, the snippy footwork, the closeness of the couple's cheeks, women subdued by strong men (who nevertheless act cowardly), and a duet fighting for the same woman, all of this brings about the dramatic intensity of the popular embellishment which steadily owns the scene. In *Tanguera*, everything comes together from the sets, a detailed outline of a gloomy city where you can also find colorful neighborhoods, because that is what defines Buenos Aires, up to the vaudeville spectacle suggested by music halls and night clubs of the underworld district which are all part of the history of the city. In *Tanguera*, director Omar Pacheco decided to play it simply and to the point with superb resolutions: the carefully done second and third shots of the massive movements on stage, the dancers with their own individuality which make the plot credible. All of the above elements were key to allow the different choreographies to shine on their own. It is important to highlight the ample range of movement imagined by Mora Godoy that achieved a good balance among the different styles –over-the-top and socially accepted– in María Nieves's performances and more classic and contemporary in Mora Godoy's performance. An extraordinary revelation is singer Lidia Borda. With her clear and firm voice, the singer renders an interpretation which encompasses the warm and worthy legacy of the old-time tango singers, such as Azucena Maizani. At the same time, María Nieves who was loudly applauded by the audience on the opening night, regaled those in attendance with the wonder of her footwork, her mastery of the two-by-four, as if she were back dancing tango with her partner Juan Carlos Copes as they did many years ago as part of the cast of *Tango Argentino* in Broadway and in London.