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Marin Symphony's crossover step: Classical + dance

Paul Liberatore
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The Marin Symphony looks to be light on its feet this season. Its theme may be "The Wind Beneath the Wings," but the 56th season promises way more dancing than flying.

It kicks off on Oct. 5 and 7 with a program of tango music and dance, a first for music director Alasdair Neale and the orchestra.

The opening night gala suggests black tie or tango attire.

Every concert after this, from October through May, includes at least one work from the classical music dance repertoire.

"We had terrific success last season showing the connection between classical music and film," said Marin Symphony board president John Pitcairn of Ross. "Classical music is a vital part of everyday life today, more than most people realize. This season we're making the same point - only this time by focusing on how classical music makes many forms of dance possible."

For these season-opening concerts, the three-time Grammy-nominated Quartet San Francisco joins the orchestra in a world premiere of Argentinean tango pieces arranged by the quartet's lead violinist, Jeremy Cohen.

These are jazz-infused crossover renditions of tango favorites by Piazzolla, Rodr'guez and Bardi. Cohen has also written three original new tango-style pieces arranged for orchestra.

Young and hip, Quartet San Francisco has been compared to the Turtle Island String Quartet, and the group has been mentioned in the same breath as the great Stephane Grapelli. But, as a review in the San Francisco Chronicle notes,

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their "sound is as impossible to categorize as the quartet itself."

Sandor & Parissa, a tango dance team known for the steamy sensuality, are also making their Marin Symphony debut. A Los Angeles Times review describes them as "hotly obsessive," praising their "gymnastic flair and uncompromisingly violent backbends."

IF YOU GO

Who: Marin Symphony, with conductor Alasdair Neale; Quartet San Francisco, soloists; Sandor & Parissa, tango dancers



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What: A world premiere of Argentinian tangos, including original works and new arrangements of favorites by Piazzolla, Rodriguez and Bardi.

When: 7:30 p.m. Oct. 5 and 7

Where: Marin Veterans Memorial Auditorium, Marin Center, 10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael

Tickets: \$27-\$65 (students half price)

Information: 499-6800, www.marinsymphony.org

Gala details: "A Celebration of Tango Argentino," a pre-concert dinner and post-concert dessert and milonga (tango dancing), starts at 5 p.m. Oct. 5 in the white tent behind Marin Center. Black tie or tango attire. Tickets are \$150; call 479-8100.

Paul Liberatore can be reached at liberatore@marinij.com.



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