

## Drinking alcohol with pathos

# LA ÚLTIMA COPA

La última copa was written 1926 by Francisco Canaro (music) and Juan Andrés Caruso (lyrics). There are various recordings from several decades. Canaro himself recorded it five times with different singers. For the comparison I chose Canaro's best singer, Charlo; and Tanturi with Castillo, and Pugliese with Morán.



A musical score for the tango 'La Última Copa'. The title is 'LA ÚLTIMA COPA' in large letters, with 'TANGO' underneath. Below the title, it says 'Letra de JUAN A. CARUSO' and 'Música de FRANCISCO CANARO'. The score is written in standard musical notation with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It consists of several staves of music, including a piano introduction and a vocal line.

In the lyrics, the protagonist announces to commit suicide and claims to drink his "last drink" now; why? as always, because a woman has left him. One of many tangos about drinking alcohol. "Eche amigo, nomás, echeme y llene hasta el borde la copa de champán!"

These are the versions to compare:

Francisco Canaro with Charlo, recorded 13th of May, 1931:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmW5WXujP04>

Ricardo Tanturi with Alberto Castillo, recorded 29th of April, 1943:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cc\\_LbkvRYVs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cc_LbkvRYVs)

Osvaldo Pugliese with Alberto Morán, recorded 6th of January, 1953:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDiVGo9CbuI>

Canaro with Charlo:

The instrumental part sounds cheerful, with strong regular rhythm, mostly played by the tutti in unison, and with a short bandoneon solo before Charlo starts singing. Charlo is an early master of phrasing, incarnating with heavy tongue a drunken man. After the singing we hear a nice violin solo in dialogue with the bandoneons, and then a strong bandoneon variation.

Tanturi with Castillo:

Tanturi's orchestra sounds rich and full, with warm and romantic violins, and nice piano transitions and decorations. Alberto Castillo sings with a lot of passion, sometimes in dialogue with gentle violins. After a short, nicely phrased bandoneon solo, the singer comes back.

Pugliese with Morán:

In Osvaldo Pugliese's version, the drama is expressed from the first bar in the orchestral introduction, with suspension and volume dynamics. Alberto Morán comes in early - it's actually a tango canción -, and he celebrates each line of the lyrics with a tremendous spectrum of expressions in his voice, and each line is accompanied in a different way by the orchestra, from hard rhythm played with bandoneon staccato to eery violins and weeping violins, with a lovely moment of Camerano's solo violin .

(And we understand how Alberto Morán was at the point to ruin his voice in Pugliese's orchestra)



Charlo with Francisco Canaro



Alberto Castillo mit Tauris Orchester



Alberto Morán mit Puglieses Orchester