

A sad goodbye, in very different interpretations.

EL ADIÓS

El adiós was composed in 1937 by Maruja Pacheco Huerga - one of very few female composers in tango - and lyrics written by Virgilio San Clemente. In 1938 it was recorded within one month by Canaro and Donato; and decades later by Ángel Vargas and Osvaldo Pugliese.



The structure of the song is quite complicated, with an interlude in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end; but it appears easy to the listener and the dancer.

It is a sad song about lovers who separate without drama and say goodbye, and the man is suffering silently.

Francisco Canaro with Roberto Maída, 3rd of March in 1938

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NFA9pWzdE0>

Edgardo Donato with Horacio Lagos, 2nd of April in 1938

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEXksxQvYI4>

Armando Lacava with Ángel Vargas, 28th of January in 1954

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX9fzYRLAYM>

Osvaldo Pugliese with Jorge Maciel, April 1963

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

Donato's version:

This is the most well-known of all versions. And it's atypical for Donato in 1938: much slower than he used to play in those times, and more melancholic. It starts with a short violin solo in low notes. In the instrumental part there are nice dialogues between violins, piano, and very lively bandoneons. Horacio Lagos sings simply and restrained, in the chorus in dialogue with the bandoneons. After the singing we have strong contrasts between the sounds of the instruments: the accordion - the innocent sister of the bandoneon and Donato's "special instrument" - plays a little solo, followed by the dark violin played without vibrato which produces a depressive feeling, and then the bandoneon variation with the violin playing the countermelody.

Canaro's version:

It's played faster and doesn't sound melancholic. The instrumental part is played by the tutti, accompanied by a lively piano, and there is a nice dialogue with a clarinet. Roberto Maída starts half spoken, half sung over the interlude, before he sings the verse. In the chorus, his soft voice is accompanied by the clarinet. Unusual for Canaro, there is a piano solo after the singing. My feeling is that this recording was routinely made as part of Canaro's mass production, with little dedication. But anyway, it's nice for dancing.

Ángel Vargas' version:

After having left Ángel d'Agostino, Ángel Vargas run an own orchestra for which he hired several orchestra leaders. In this recording, Armando Lacava was the conductor of Vargas' orchestra. He starts the song in a magical way, with eery violins and solemn bandoneons in the introduction that ends in a pause. In the instrumental part, violins and bandoneons play in dialogues, with variable timing, particularly the bandoneons slow down several times, like taking a deep breath. Ángel Vargas' singing is very expressive, first melancholic and then dramatic - when the lyrics say that he will never

see her again. While Vargas is singing the orchestra stays in the background, with the violins accompanying him descreetly. Between the two parts of the singing the bandoneons come in strongly and expressively,

Pugliese's version:

Pugliese plays a different introduction, rhythmic and dark, that prepares the upcoming drama, which is further evoked by the violins, first delicate and then strong, then the bandoneons, first crying and then playing Pugliese's sharp marcato together with the piano - and after a pause Jorge Maciel starts his opera-like singing: first pianissimo, accompanied very quietly by a bandoneon playing with dissonances; then crescendo, and with enormeous volume dynamics - singer and orchestra - giving extreme expression to every word of the lyrics. The first part of the singing ends in a meditative playing of the piano and the violins (just one long note) and the bandoneon, until the tutti and the singer come back for the dramatic final.



Francisco Canaro with# Roberto Maida



Edgardo Donato and his orchestra



Ángel Vargas



Osvaldo Pugliese and Jorge Maciel