

## Dino Saluzzi, Anja Lechner Ojos Negros

**Dino Saluzzi:** bandoneon; **Anja Lechner:** violoncello

ECM 1991

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*"As close to perfection as any music-making I can recently recall"*

Richard Cook, *Jazz Review*, on the Saluzzi/Lechner duo in concert

Chamber music with inspirational roots in Argentinean traditions: "Ojos Negros" puts the emphasis on Dino Saluzzi's finely-crafted compositions –and adds the beautiful old tango by Vicente Greco that is the album's title track. Interplay and improvisation also have roles to play in a recording that follows six years of duo concerts as well as ten years of collaboration between bandoneon master Saluzzi and the Rosamunde Quartet, of which cellist Anja Lechner is a founder member. They have taken their time to get this right.

A classical musician firstly, Anja Lechner's interest in tango goes back some 25 years, when she formed a duo with pianist Peter Ludwig to play their German interpretations of the idiom. She gave her first concerts in Argentina in the early 1980s and made a point of looking for tango's master musicians. But she first encountered Dino Saluzzi at a Munich concert where he played solo bandoneon. "He was playing a music that was really his own. When we finally began to play together I can say that I entered a new world."

The shared work has been a gradual process of becoming freer with the material while respecting it, resulting in a very integrated music. Saluzzi praises the cellist's commitment and stylistic independence: "Anja has become part of the music without losing her own identity. I think this is very important. She doesn't try to imitate the tango players. She has her own sound and character, and this makes our project together culturally richer."

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One of the most important figures in contemporary South American music, Timoteo "Dino" Saluzzi was born in Campo Santo in North Argentina and led his first group at the age of 14. He began to play professionally while studying in Buenos Aires, where he also met and befriended Astor Piazzolla, then in the process of developing the Tango Nuevo idiom. In 1956, Saluzzi returned to the district of Salta to concentrate on his compositions, now consciously incorporating folk music elements. In the early 1970s he was associated with Gato Barbieri, helping the saxophonist toward a rediscovery of his own roots on such influential albums as "Chapter One: Latin America".

Saluzzi's ECM discography was launched in 1982 with a solo album, a spontaneous example of the bandoneonist's art as "storyteller"; this marked the first of many "imaginary returns" to the little towns and villages of his childhood. From the beginning of the 1980s Saluzzi made numerous collaborations with European and American jazz musicians – amongst those initiated by ECM were meetings with Charlie Haden, Palle Mikkelborg and Pierre Favre ("Once Upon A Time - Far Away In The South"), with Enrico Rava ("Volver"), with Marc Johnson ("Cité de la Musique"), with Tomasz Stanko and John Surman (on Stanko's prize-winning "From The Green Hill" album) and with Palle Danielsson ("Responsorium"). Other

successful ECM discs have included recordings with Saluzzi family members: “Mojotoro” and the recently-released “Juan Condori”.

The 1996 recording “Kultrum” with the Rosamunde Quartet was widely acclaimed. In Gramophone it was an Editor’s Choice: “This particular recording is perhaps the best example I’ve yet heard of a music that rises naturally from its mixture of influences – here the South American tango and folk traditions and the European string quartet.”

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Anja Lechner studied with Jan Polasek, Heinrich Schiff and János Starker. She has been cellist of the Rosamunde Quartett since 1992. The Quartet made its international breakthrough with festival appearances and, particularly, recordings for ECM. Prominent amongst these are albums with music of Shostakovich, Webern, Silvestrov, Mansurian and Haydn as well as the "Kultrum" CD with Saluzzi. In her solo recitals, Anja Lechner also places an emphasis on contemporary music. This has led to performances of works by the composers Valentin Silvestrov and Tigran Mansurian and others as well as to musical collaborations which call both for interpretative and improvisational skills. Her duo with Greek pianist Vassilis Tsabropoulos released an ECM recording in 2004. "Chants, Hymns and Dances", incorporating music of G. I. Gurdjieff, Byzantine hymns and new compositions by Tsabropoulos, stormed its way up diverse charts and was especially successful in the USA.

Lechner is a member of pianist François Couturier’s acclaimed “Song for Tarkovsky” project, has recorded twice with pianist Misha Alperin (new album in preparation) and toured with Sylvie Courvoisier.

Dino Saluzzi and Anja Lechner celebrate the release of “Ojos Negros” with concerts in Argentina in March, continuing with a tour of the United States in April. In May they return to the US to play the Spoleto Festival. For details visit [www.ecmrecords.com](http://www.ecmrecords.com)

European dates are in preparation for both the Saluzzi/Lechner duo and for Dino’s family band.

*CD booklet includes liner notes by Steve Lake and session photos.*