Piazzola: Tango!

by Michael Kiesow Moore

A street musician plays his bandoneón

pushing and pulling his accordion bellows

the music sighs, it wails, it cries out

Tango!

Two men—compadritos—rush to the street

join hands,

male hip pressed to male hip

the men dance the Tango!

The street is Buenos Aires, it is the year 1900

and the Tango is forbidden

Women gasp as the street thieves dance

cheek to cheek, arms stretched to the limit

not that two men dance, who cares about that?

but they dance the Tango!

A priest makes the sign of the cross

children's eyes are covered by anxious hands

the two men hold each other tight

step through the boundaries

If you will not see how life should be lived

shut your eyes to the Tango!

The husbands listening to wives exclaim

watch longingly, if only they could Tango!

The music swells, pitches higher

the men throw themselves at each other

is it a fight or is it dance?

watch as they flame the Tango!

If you will not live dangerously

why live at all?

Tango!