



# PHILADELPHIA ARGENTINE TANGO SCHOOL

~ tango for all ~

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**For Immediate Release – April 30, 2018**

## **(Philadelphia, PA)— Recipe for a Tango-Perfect Memorial Day Weekend: 13 Tango Masters, Live Tango Orchestra, and Dancing into the Wee Hours Every Night**

In its eighth year, the [Philly Tango Fest](#) has grown into one of the biggest tango events in the United States, convening over 600 dancers from throughout the country, as well as overseas. This year's lineup of 13 celebrated *maestros* (Argentine tango teachers & performers) in particular has proven to be a huge draw. With over three weeks to go before the festival, we've had record pre-registration. Many of the 27 workshops for beginners through advanced dancers are already close to selling out, and we are well on our way to packing the 5,500 square foot ballroom each night at our exquisite new venue, the [Lithuanian Music Hall Association](#) in Port Richmond. The festival will take place throughout Memorial Day weekend (May 25-28) with activities starting at 6 pm Friday night, and continuing past midnight on the evening of Monday, May 28.

A big part of the excitement this year is about the headliners [Gustavo Naveira & Giselle Anne](#), the most celebrated tango performers and teachers of our time. Gustavo & Giselle have traveled the world for well over 20 years to inspire and educate generations of tango dancers. They are recognized for their unmatched performances, featuring brilliant musicality, gorgeous lines, and a relentless search for perfection, and for creating a tango pedagogy that has become the basis for much tango teaching worldwide. As early as 1999, the main Argentine newspaper, *Clarín*, stated, "*you could say that three stylistic tendencies contend for supremacy [in tango]: Urquiza's style, Almagro's style and Naveira's style.*" The first two styles mentioned are neighborhoods of Buenos Aires; only the last style is the name of a person, Gustavo Naveira.

Equally exciting for many attendees is the chance to see and study with [Fabian Salas & Lola Diaz](#) in the same festival as Gustavo & Giselle. In the 1990s when interest in Argentine tango had waned to the point where the dance had nearly ceased to exist, even in its city of origin, Buenos Aires, Gustavo and Fabian collaborated to launch a *práctica*, an informal tango event for exploration and experimentation. Most modern histories of tango concur that the seeds of tango's rebirth, and the eventual renewal of interest in tango worldwide, were sewn in these *prácticas*. We will hear more about this during a

“Lecture on Tango History,” which Fabian and his partner Lola will offer on the last afternoon of the festival.

In all, 13 instructors will share responsibility for teaching the 27 festival workshops. The festival lineup is rounded out by Ciko Tanik & Adam Hoopengardner, popular teachers from New York City; Ramu Pyreddy, and Jake Spatz & Dasha Khripkova, wonderful teachers living in Washington, DC; and Meredith Klein & Andres Amarilla, founders of the [Philadelphia Argentine Tango School](#), the sponsor and organizer of the festival. Teaching a four-workshop [Absolute Beginner Track](#) are Philadelphia-based instructors, Kristin Balmer and Barbara Kountouzi. Adam, Ciko, Ramu, Jake, and Dasha will perform double-duty, serving as the festival DJs as well.

Another big draw for this festival is the incorporation of live music for the first time since our inaugural festival in 2010. Thanks to a successful fundraising campaign, we will bring the [Pedro Giraudo Septet](#) to play live for dancing on the first night, Friday, May 25. The palpable energy and excitement of live music brings a new dimension to everyone’s dancing. Jaw-dropping tango performances by festival *maestros* and special guests take place nightly during the *milongas* (social dances), and promise to propel the *onda* (vibe) to new heights.

An improvised social dance, Argentine tango essentially consists of walking while hugging. Despite what you might think from watching some popular TV programs, tango is not about what you can see from the outside (like passionate expressions, high kicks, or dips). Rather, it’s about the communication between two dancers in the moment and with the music, and further, how this communication makes it possible to move seamlessly around a dance floor occupied by 100 other couples. Because the heart of tango is walking, it is accessible to dancers of all ages and abilities. Indeed, our students range in age from 15 to 84. Learning tango does not require any prior experience with dance; most members of our community started their dance journey as adults, with Argentine tango. Tango-curious folks should consider buying the “[Beginner Pass](#),” which includes four absolute-beginner workshops, a lecture on the history of tango, and entrance to all of the *milongas*. The live music and performances take place during the *milongas* each night, so new dancers will get a big dose of inspiration, along with excellent instruction.

The entire festival will take place at the [Lithuanian Music Hall Association](#) (2715 E. Allegheny Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19134) in Port Richmond, conveniently located one block from the Allegheny Ave exit off I-95. The Lithuanian Music Hall was built in 1907 and is still maintained by the local Lithuanian-American community. It features 10,000 square feet of program spaces in total, including a 5,500 square foot ballroom, where workshops and nightly *milongas* will be held, and a banquet hall, where we will hold concurrent workshops. An additional space, the Club Room, will house a café, with catering by [Lino’s Lithuanian Foods](#), on all four festival days. A variety of free program activities will also take place in the café. Author Batt Johnson (*Tango Intoxication*) will give a book talk and signing on Saturday and Sunday nights; fun ice-breaker activities will be offered on Friday and Saturday nights to help out-of-town or newer dancers meet other dancers; and other

free activities are still being added to the schedule. The lobby of the LMHA will be transformed into a pop-up boutique, offering a variety of exquisite tango shoes and clothes for men and women. Vendors will include [La Mina Tango Boutique](#) (NYC) and [Atelier Vertex](#) (San Francisco).

The [Philadelphia Argentine Tango School](#) (PATS), which sponsors and organizes the Philly Tango Fest, recently celebrated its 10-year anniversary. In addition to offering group and private lessons, PATS offers weekly *milongas* in our own studio in Fishtown, twice monthly *milongas* at beautiful off-site locations, performances, talks on tango history, and other special events. We have organized or participated in events at almost every major landmark in Philadelphia: the Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia Museum of Art, LOVE Park, the Union League, the Swann Memorial Fountain, City Hall, and the Kimmel Center, among many others. A standout highlight was [performing](#) (along with 26 of our students) at Independence Hall during the World Meeting of Families (2015), shortly before Pope Francis took the stage to give his speech on immigration and multiculturalism. This is the eighth festival organized by PATS.

Complete information and registration can be found on the [festival website](#). Online registration is open through May 20 at midnight. After that, payment for individual events will be available at the door only. Attendees should check the website to see which events have sold out if they plan to pay at the door.

Questions should be directed to Meredith Klein, Director, who can be reached at 617-291-3798 or [meredithklein@gmail.com](mailto:meredithklein@gmail.com).

**A variety of PRINT-QUALITY PHOTOS are available at this link, with many more available upon request:** <http://philadelphiatangofestival.com/press.html>

#### **SELECTED PRESS COVERAGE:**

- [An Emissary From the Golden Age of Tango](#) - New York Times, June 2017
- [Let's Dance Tango, Philly!](#) - Al Dia News, May 2017
- [At This Festival, It Takes Everybody to Tango](#) - Philadelphia Inquirer, May 2016
- [WHYY-TV's Articulate with Jim Cotter](#) - Episode on Argentine Tango, May 2015

**FESTIVAL PROMO VIDEO:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmKctzf00gM>

#### **SELECTED VIDEOS OF THE FESTIVAL TEACHERS/PERFORMERS**

- [Gustavo Naveira & Giselle Anne](#)
- [Fabian Salas & Lola Diaz](#)
- [Adam Hoopengarnder & Ciko Tanik](#)
- [Andres Amarilla & Meredith Klein](#)

May 25-28, 2018

# 8TH PHILLY TANGO FEST

Memorial Day Weekend [PhiladelphiaTangoFestival.com](http://PhiladelphiaTangoFestival.com)

PHILADELPHIA ARGENTINE TANGO SCHOOL - tango for all

JAKE SPATZ & DASHA KHRIPKOVA

KRISTIN BALMER & BARBARA KOUNTOUZI

RAMU PYREDDY

ADAM HOOPENGARDNER & CIKO TANIK

GUSTAVO NAVEIRA & GISELLE ANNE

ANDRES AMARILLA & MEREDITH KLEIN

FABIAN SALAS & LOLA DIAZ

**Live Music**  
PEDRO GIRAUDD TANGO ORCH.

**VENUE**  
Lithuanian Music Hall Association  
featuring a 5,500 sq. ft. ballroom

**DJs**  
Adam Hoopengardner  
Ciko Tanik  
Dasha Khripkova  
Jake Spatz  
Ramu Pyreddy

REGISTER BY MARCH 15 FOR THE BEST PRICING!

Complete Details & Registration At [HTTP://PHILADELPHIATANGOFESTIVAL.COM](http://PHILADELPHIATANGOFESTIVAL.COM)

## Highlights OF THE 8TH PHILLY TANGO FEST

**PHOTO CREDITS**

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- LIVE MUSIC by the Pedro Giraudd Tango Orchestra on the 1st night of the festival: Friday, May 25.
- A 12-hour partners-only seminar on "Tango Salon: Navigation, Rhythm & Combinations" with Gustavo Naveira & Giselle Anne, the world's most respected tango pedagogues.
- Maestros Fabian Salas & Lola Diaz, appearing in Philadelphia for the first time. They'll be teaching 8 workshops and giving a lecture on the history of tango.
- A fun and friendly "Beginner Track," including four workshops. No experience or partner required!
- A SUPER new venue, the Lithuanian Music Hall Association (2715 E Allegheny Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19134), featuring a 5,500 sq. ft., high-ceilinged ballroom.
- 28 workshops at a variety of levels from absolute beginner to advanced, taught by a total of 13 phenomenal instructors.
- Nightly performances that will amaze and inspire.
- All the tango clothes and shoes you could hope for from La Mina Tango Boutique and Axis Tango Shoes.
- Awesome DJs to keep you dancing during 25 hours of milongas: Ciko, Jake, Ramu, Dasha, and Adam!
- An on-site café featuring fresh, tasty meals and snacks, so you can get your nourishment and recharge on-site in between workshops.