

London Philharmonic Orchestra

After Dark: Tango Landscapes

Saturday 21 March 2026 | 8.30pm | Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer

With LPO members:

Vesselin Gellev violin

Emma Oldfield violin

Laura Vallejo viola

Henry Shapard cello

plus special guest dancers:

Lauren Oakley & Kai Widdrington



Tonight's music

The evening's main concert has ended, but the night continues – with a change of rhythm. Four string players from the London Philharmonic Orchestra come together for a late-night tango session, swapping the scale of the symphonic stage for the intimacy of a string quartet.

The programme travels through some of tango's most beloved music, from from the golden age of Carlos Gardel to Astor Piazzolla's bold reinvention of the genre in the mid-20th century. Along the way come melodies filled with longing, romance and nostalgia – the emotional heart of the tango tradition.

The pieces have been specially arranged for tonight's string quartet by Emiliano Greco, who introduces each of them below.

Volver (Carlos Gardel)

An emblematic work by the duo Carlos Gardel (1887–1935) and Alfredo Le Pera (1900–35). Its melancholic character evokes the nostalgia of returning to one's beloved homeland.

La llamo silbando (Horacio Salgán)

One of the most important pieces by the great pianist and composer Horacio Salgán (1916–2016). The violins evoke the whistling sound of someone calling from afar, transformed into a musical gesture.

Cuando tú no estás (Carlos Gardel)

A tango of profound intimacy, exploring absence and the melancholy of lost love.

La cumparsita (Gerardo Matos Rodríguez)

Probably the most famous tango in the world, written in Montevideo in 1916 by the Uruguayan composer Gerardo Matos Rodríguez (1897–1948). Its unmistakable opening motif became a universal symbol of the genre.

El día que me quieras (Carlos Gardel)

One of Gardel's most celebrated songs, in which romanticism reaches its highest expression. Its luminous melody and lyricism have made it an eternal classic.

Preludio & Tango a la distancia (Emiliano Greco)

My own contemporary perspective on tango: it evokes the distance of the artist when, often, they work for long periods far from their homeland.

Quejas de bandoneón (Juan de Dios Filiberto)

A profoundly expressive tango. Filiberto (1885–1964) constructs intense and dramatic music here, charged with emotion.

Adiós Nonino (Astor Piazzolla)

Composed in homage to his father, this is one of Piazzolla's (1921–92) most moving works. It unites pain, memory and beauty in one of the most profound pieces of modern tango.

Libertango (Astor Piazzolla)

A symbol of Piazzolla's aesthetic break with traditional tango, composed in 1974. Its rhythmic energy and decisive character represent the creative freedom of the 'new tango'.

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Lauren Oakley & Kai Widdrington dancers

Lauren Oakley and Kai Widdrington are both well-known to fans of BBC's *Strictly Come Dancing*, and earlier this evening they both performed on stage with the full London Philharmonic Orchestra during Piazzolla's *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*.

Lauren has just completed her fourth series on the BBC show, in which she was partnered with footballer Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink. She recently finished performing on the *Strictly Arena Tour*, and will next be heading out on the Professionals Tour this summer.

Lauren joined the professional dancer line-up on *Strictly* in 2022, and in 2023 was given her first celebrity partner, Krishnan Guru-Murthy, with whom she placed eighth in the competition. In the show's 20th anniversary series, Lauren stepped in to partner JB Gill, taking him all the way to the final.

Born in Southampton in 1995, Kai Widdrington was initially destined for the football pitch, following in the footsteps of his father, Tommy Widdrington. However, at the age of 12 he chose the sequins over the studs, a decision that rapidly paid off. By age 14, he became a World Junior Latin Champion, proving his natural flair for movement and rhythm.

Since joining *Strictly* in 2021, Kai has become a powerhouse of the franchise. He is a Guinness World Record holder for the most Cha-Cha-Cha time steps in 30 seconds, and has a proven track record as a serial winner, having secured the Christmas Challenge Glitterball twice, and multiple titles on the *Strictly Come Dancing Live Arena Tour*.

Kai's popularity recently culminated in his first solo tour, 'Evolution', which was such a massive success last year that it is returning for a highly anticipated second run in 2026. Known for his old-school Hollywood charm and technical precision, Kai continues to be a leading force in the world of modern ballroom, captivating audiences on both the screen and stage.

Emiliano Greco composer & arranger

Emiliano Greco is a pianist, composer, arranger and conductor. He graduated from the Astor Piazzolla Higher Conservatory of Music in Buenos Aires and from the Argentino Galván Conservatory of Tango Styles, with a degree in music arrangement and expertise in tango styles, endorsed by the National Tango Academy.

Since 2010, Emiliano has been the director of the show at Café de los Angelitos in Buenos Aires. From 2005–14, he served as musical director of the 'Rojo Tango' show (Faena Hotel), director of Mora Godoy's company, musical director of the 'O Tango' company, and musical director of the 'Tango Legends' and 'Tango Feeling' companies. He currently works as a pianist for the 'Tango Lovers' company and the Federico Pereiro Quartet. He co-directs, with Lautaro Greco, the septet that bears their names. He forms the duo Greco/Liberati with singer Melina Liberati, with whom he produced and released the album *Lluvia* in 2021. Since 2022, he has led En Desorbita, a contemporary tango group for whom he writes musical arrangements and original compositions; they have already released two albums (*La historia Imperfecta* and *Gardel 90*). For many years, he was the pianist for the Juan Pablo Navarro Septet and the Pablo Agri Quartet.

Between 2002 and 2026, Emiliano toured worldwide with various projects. In 2017, he won first prize in the National Arts Fund composition competition in the Tango category with his work *Tangos Nocturnos*.

Next LPO After Dark event: 200 Years of ZSL

Wednesday 15 April 2026, 9.30pm
Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer

Celebrate ZSL's 200th anniversary with a lively late-night performance by the Orchestra's brass and percussion players, following Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* in the main 7.30pm concert.

Visit lpo.org.uk to find out more.