

Beautiful melodies in very different arrangements

BUEN AMIGO

This song was composed 1924 by Julio de Caro, with lyrics of Carlos Marambio Catán. Julio De Caro dedicated the song to his friend Dr. Enrique Finochietto; you can find the story here:

[https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buen_amigo_\(tango\)](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buen_amigo_(tango)).



The De Caro brothers recorded the song four times (1925, 1930, 1942, and 1950), and it was recorded by several other orchestras during the following decades.

These are the versions I want to compare:

Francisco Canaro, recorded 14th of July, 1936

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRPOy60k5fM>

Julio De Caro with Agustín Volpe, 16th of September, 1942

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3_Ge14L7Kw

Anibal Troilo, 11th of July, 1946

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVSQ5J_7JbE

Osvaldo Pugliese, 26th of February, 1958

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8xZBFMp3tw>

This song has three beautiful melodies: The main theme A (12 bars); and parts B and C (8 bars with repetition) which are rhythmically almost identical; both are very sentimental and (at least for me) with high earworm potential. The melodies are connected by an interlude of 4 bars (in the Pugliese version not always). In the versions, the parts are played in different order and with very different arrangements.

Canaro's version (structure: ABCBC):

Canaro starts with the warm, sonorous tutti. The B part starts with powerful bandoneons, then the warm violins come in, and the piano plays around. The C part is played by a solo bandoneon that sounds metallic and thin at the same time, with a simple rhythmic accompaniment of the orchestra. In the following B part first the warm romantic violins, then the tutti; and the C part with a nice duet of solo violin and solo bandoneon.

De Caro's version (structure: ABBBC):

In the first part violins and bandoneons play in a dialogue that is already a bit crazy. The B part comes with a solo bandoneon and piano a capella: first deep, ligated notes, then extreme staccato together with the piano in staccato; and the solo bandoneon plays also the interlude a capella. Then once more the B part, now played by the tutti and with lots of glissando of the violins. Then the singer comes in gently, once again with the "B" melody, and he is accompanied by a solo violin playing a slow sentimental tune and the bandoneons playing fast rhythmic figures - a crazy three-fold counterpoint. And finally the even more sentimental "C" melody, played by the solo violin with extreme glissando.

Troilo's version (structure: ABCAC):

Troilo starts strong and staccato, playing the A part in syncopated rhythms. The B and C parts are more romantic, dominated by the violins with a rich accompaniment of the rest of the orchestra, particularly José Basso's piano; with a bandoneon solo at the end of the C part, and a short solo in the following A part. Each interlude in Troilo's version is arranged differently and sometimes with an alternative melody. The final C part starts with spooky violins, a small violin solo is embedded, then crescendo leading to a bandoneon variation accompanied by the violins. This is a brilliant version, but - for me - more academic and less romantic than the one of De Caro.

Pugliese's version (structure: ABCACC)

Pugliese's interpretation starts crescendo and with rubato, then comes a solo bandoneon and the section of bandoneons playing with strong rhythm and a lot of power. The B part starts with aggressive rhythmical effects, then the orchestra plays dramatic with several layers. In the C part we hear an extremely romantic violin solo, the rest of the orchestra comes in crescendo. Then, in the A part, the bandoneons come back playing aggressively, and the rhythm group attacks together with the violins playing chicharra, they all play an altered melody in 3-3-2 rhythm, and then the solo bandoneon and solo violin play a beautiful transition to the final C part, with meditative violins and the piano drifting around. And then comes an extra strong repetition of part C with the tutti and a dissonant ending.



Francisco Canaro with his bandoneonists



Julio De Caro and his orchestra



Aníbal Troilo and his orchestra



Osvaldo Pugliese and his orchestra