

At the races

EL RECODO

El recodo was composed in 1930 by Alejandro Junissi, but it was not recorded until 1941, by Carlos Di Sarli. And there are only few - but strong - recordings from later years, particularly by Biagi and Piazzolla.

"Recodo" means the final curve in a horse race. Horse racing was extremely popular in Argentina, as well as betting on horse races, and there are many tangos around this topic.



These are the versions I want to present:

Carlos Di Sarli, 3rd of December in 1941

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwiU19KEhUo>

Carlos Di Sarli, 23rd of October in 1951

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkLRt7LFZR8>

Astor Piazzolla, 22nd of September in 1946

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRmnhPtzA38>

Rodolfo Biagi, 5th of November in 1952

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mirDV2nXVr0>

The structure of the song is complex and different between the versions. I won't draw much attention to the details of the structure; but for those who want to go into them, here is an analysis of the different structures (thanks to Samuel Donnarumma who pointed me to this blog post):

https://elsustento.blogspot.com/search/label/An%C3%A1lisis%20de%20obras?fbclid=IwAR2ePB4bGMWfIzjYlXgU97HGkFJ71G2tp6J0BmUe0b3jQ0VoQ_69QaZx68

Di Sarli's 1941 version:

During most of the song, we hear repetitive melodies with strong regular rhythm and some rhythmical variations in it, played by all instruments together in staccato with a lot of arrastre. Knowing what the song is about, this evokes clearly the sensation of running. In some passages the violins play staccato and trill at the same time. Only few and short legato moments are in the song, much less than usual in Di Sarli's style; like breathing before the "running" comes back; and only two short and simple countermelodies (at 0:55 and 1:10); and very few restrained but effectful piano decorations.

Di Sarli's recording from 1951 has the same arrangement and almost the same pace; but we hear more exciting extra things of the piano.

Astor Piazzolla's version:

After having left Troilo, Piazzolla founded his own orchestra; it was still a traditional orchestra before he headed into other directions.

Like Di Sarli, Piazzolla produces the sensation of running by the bandoneons playing staccato, accompanied by the elastic, rocking piano of Atilio Stampone. But soon he adds some vanguard

specialties: it starts with a jazzy rhythmic melody of the piano (from 0:22), then the solo bandoneon comes in with a harmonically adventurous variation; in the legato part some 3-3-2 and then a countermelody played by the violins; and from 1:33 a new meditative part with a beautiful violin solo and then once more the adventurous bandoneon, leading to a final with retardation.

Biagi's version:

It's Biagi and therefore the staccato is even sharper staccato and the beat is even more pronounced. The legato moments are decorated by Biagi's sparkling piano. In the repetition of the first A part, the violins play a driving countermelody, and in the second A part they play the countermelody from the beginning, driving to a short but strong bandoneon variation.



Carlos Di Sarli



Astor Piazzolla with his orchestra



Rodolfo Biagi