

***Prologue to a Tango* (2002)**

Prologue to a Tango is the last work Weinzwieg completed. He was commissioned by New Music Concerts to contribute a work for a concert celebrating his ninetieth birthday. The work's text (written by Weinzwieg and translated into Spanish with the help of Jorge Ospina) and the tango-influenced sounds do not necessarily depict an actual tango, but more likely a reminiscence of the character's tango with a señor. Weinzwieg describes the scene as follows:

A dance hall in a Latin-American town. A señora bemoans her feelings of sadness and yearning. She hears the music of the Tango and her dark mood gives way to exhilaration. She invites a señor, loitering nearby, to Tango with her. While dancing, she instructs her partner in the Tango movements. When the music stops, the señora and señor part into the silent night.

Weinzwieg's interest in the tango goes back to his visit to Mexico in 1969; the tango idiom does not plainly emerge until over two decades later in works such as *Journey Out of Night* (1994) and the humorous *Le Rendez-vous* (1995). Despite the detailed scenario and character development, *Prologue to a Tango* contains little of the gestured theatricality of previous theatrical works, such as *Parodies and Travesties* (1995); the mezzo-soprano remains standing in the centre of the stage, with the violinists seated around her. The work is in two sections: 1. Prologue, 2. The Tango goes with fiddles and bows - (a) My sad night, (b) My Tango. The standing violinists dive right into the tango rhythm, but with dissonant chords, offering a glimpse into the character's sad reflections in the second section.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn