

**The Carlos Guastavino Collection**  
**(Length 02:31:30)**

José Cura, canto  
Zulma Cabrera, piano

30 years ago I set off on an worldwide journey to promote Argentine composers of classical songs. A process that led me, and still leads me, to perform this music in the most unexpected places, from the opening of the 2003 Rugby World Championship in Australia, to Dalhalla, a meteorite crater turned into an auditorium in the middle of Sweden, and countless more venues, including an open-air concert in London's Hyde Park, many years ago.

When my album *Anhelo* was released in 1998, a somewhat confused European critic wrote that it lacked what he called "flamenco spirit"... Some in Argentina also thought that my interpretation of these songs was not accurate because I did not sing them in the manner popular music is supposed to be sung: a valid choice, but not the only one. Denying Guastavino the place he deserves in the universal classical repertoire by insisting that he only wrote folklore is an intellectual injustice, as well as a historical error. On the contrary, it is the very flexibility of his songs which allows them to be interpreted either with the lightness of a popular tune, or with the discipline of erudite chamber singing, which makes them so different from their European counterparts, the songs of Schubert, Fauré, Respighi —to name a few—, which hardly allow the performer any other approach than a scholastic one. That is why, rather than wasting time with pointless discussions, I prefer to instead continue taking Guastavino around the world, while still searching for that elusive performative balance between chamber song and folkloric tune, that magical fusion on which the songs of the illustrious musician from Santa Fe are based.

The four volumes which comprise this collection are separated by years of composition. But, as there is a bit of confusion on the exact dates some of his works were written, I prefer to speak of periods instead.

It is our fervent wish —myself together with the great pianist from Rosario, Zulma Cabrera— that this tribute to Carlos Guastavino serves not only to regale the listener with his best known works, but also to shine a light on many of his lesser known musical jewels, with the hope that musicians from all over the world, and not mainly Argentines, are encouraged to savour the unique and inimitable flavour of the music of the greatest Argentine songwriter.

José Cura  
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