

Dino Saluzzi

Childhood in campo santo.

Brilliant musician, Dino Saluzzi gives more importance to the formulation of his thoughts than to the fact of himself being a self-taught person came out of the oral transmission culture; for the same reason he prefers expressing himself in his mother language, the Spanish, that does justice to his concise and enigmatic thoughts which are punctuated by malicious silences. In this way, when someone asks him how his passion for the bandoneon was born, he answers that his father was the one to put the instrument between his hands, adding immediately 'But the question that everybody should make would be: Which is the reason why some day you meet someone or something?

Suddenly, doors get open and through them you can see paths traced forever. I was 7 years old when I first met the bandoneon, unless it was the instrument that found me. Since then, we never separate from each other'.

Born in 1935 in one of the most isolated regions of Argentina, Dino Saluzzi belongs to the generation of men for whom working or playing an instrument represent almost the same vital need.

In Campo Santo the rhythm of life was marked by the activity of a sugar refinery where each one's sorrow was enough for their lives. Music worked as an unavoidable bond between community and territory, long before being recorded in vinyl records. 'The place where we are born is all. Where I grew up, there wasn't this kind of *pollution* of the rural world by the civilized world. The melancholy listened in my music is partially due to the fact of having witnessed things that I'd never wanted to see'.

As much as this rigorous but convivial education, this feeling of loss led him to give things their right value: 'My encounter with the bandoneon will remain as a crucial moment for many reasons. Maybe the most important one is that I wanted to reestablish things that were looked down on or considered insignificant before: here is an instrument that has it all and that demands a constant and creative relationship with its player. When I started to play it, it had been consigned to oblivion in the official culture periphery for years. From my point of view, I was not conscious of that situation until much later. Nevertheless, that meeting in that exact moment didn't have a special meaning. I hadn't planned it. Neither had I chosen it.

PAIN CONSTRUCTS

Being a teenager, Dino leaves his home town to study in Buenos Aires, where his experience about the world begins. Shortly after that, he obtains a professional contract in the Radio El Mundo Stable Orchestra. In his way he crosses Astor Piazzola's path, which was shocking the guardians of the temple with the 'New Tango' heresy. Then Dino decides to follow his own way that will take him to Salta in 1956, with enough resources to reconstruct his musical roots in a homogeneous vision. It will be for him a duty 'avoiding to sink in the common eclecticism, which has already trivialized so many variants of Latin music, as if they were species in need of safeguarding'.

His record career doesn't start until the 70s, along with Gato Barbieri, when he signed a couple of crazy lyricism albums under the name of *Gaucha*. Over this decade, he

worked on many tours in South America and especially in Japan, but always associated to other names, as Mariano Mores or Enrique Mario Franchini. His first recording as a leader, *Kultrum*, will not appear until 1982, liberating the bandoneon of the tango contexts where it was too often subdued before.

Being among the last musicians who knew how to revolutionize the art of his instrument, Saluzzi gave birth to a new vision that didn't please with only recycling the already existing forms. In this way, he describes us his esthetic project tinged with a fourierist utopia:

'Thanks to the bandoneon, polyphonic instrument of excellence, I could discovered the *united sounds*, that I name like that because they sound at the same time and in an inseparable way. The interrelationship phenomena in polyphony have showed me that any element is needed by the others. From that point, I have discovered the *plurality of opinions* (I call *opinion* to something that is alive and is personified in a melody, since melody is a present corpus). Transpositioning the society to the concept of polyphony in music, allowed me to define the idea of a harmonic society that is about to come. So a righteous music would give the tone of a righteous society? Of course, with the condition that things that are considered right reflect the diversity of opinions, since there are so many melodies as persons, since every person possesses its own harmonic sounds'.

Even if his speech sounds serious, Saluzzi is incredibly optimistic for those who don't know anything about him apart from his albums. 'There 's no doubt, pain constructs. There is a kind of sadness and undeniable melancholy in the Argentine culture for different reasons, but especially for one in particular: we don't take the world in a lightly way. But the consciousness of finite things is not an obstacle, it 's just the starting point that allows you to think about happiness as a categorical imperative'.