

Argentine Tango

Musical Phrasing

Technical Description:

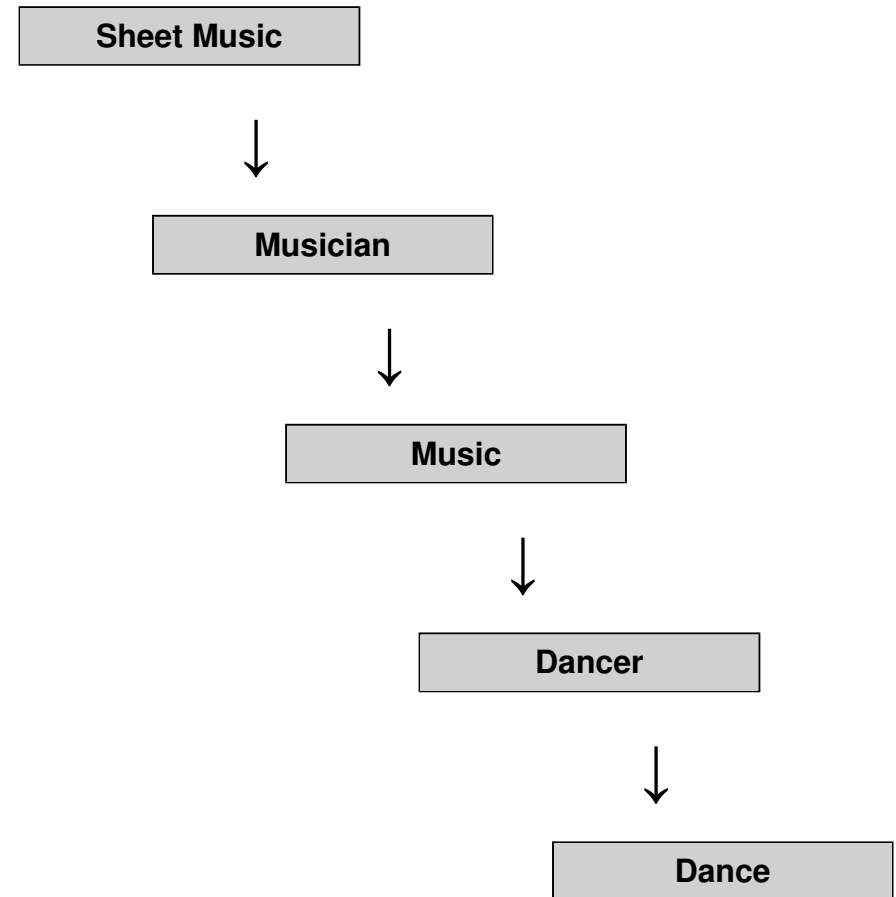
1. Phrasing happens in normal talking. We pause to inhale. Singers need to breathe too.
2. When a person talks non-stop without pausing, it is hard to process the information.
3. When a leader leads steps non-stop, the followers have a hard time processing all the steps.
4. Phrasing allows the brain to relax, process the information and prepare to listen to the next phrase.
5. Dancing to the phrases allows the body to rest and enjoy the phrase.
6. Some phrases sound like a question that then receives an answer to feel complete.

Metaphor:

1. Pausing at the end of the phrase allows you to savor it.
2. Pausing is like reading a poem and pausing to reflect on each line.
3. Pausing is like sitting back after a great meal and reminiscing the flavors.

Homework:

1. Mark the beats and phrases of music that you already have at home or in the car.
2. If you have tango music, mark the beats and phrases. Make a fist when you end the phrase.
3. In posture, walk forward on each beat then pause at the end of the phrase.
4. When the song changes to a strongly rhythmic phrase, dance very tight angular steps almost like milonga.
5. When the song changes to a smooth and melodic phrase, dance very smooth circular steps almost like vals.



Don't think the music, Feel the music.
 Don't count the beats, Move to the beats.

Hear the music and mark the beats with the following musical sign language.

These signs are for marking the beats

Beats	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

The first finger marks the first beat of the phrase.

Beats	X

The closed fist marks the last beat of the phrase.

Beats	X

If the phrase ends unexpectedly, start the next phrase with your first finger.

Most Argentine Tangos are 4, 8 or 16 beats per phrase.
 Some songs have 2 extra beats before the singer starts.

Before you start dancing, change her weight only once so that you know which foot she is on.
 Then stop moving.
 Listen for the end of the phrase.
 Start on the first beat of the next phrase.

Marking a 4-beat phrase.

Beats	X	X	X	X

Marking an 8-beat phrase.

Beats	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Mark the end of the phrase by standing still during the last beat of the phrase.
 Mark the end of the phrase by slowly collecting.

Pause on the last beat of a 4-beat phrase.

Beats	X	X	X	

Pause on the last beat of an 8-beat phrase.

Beats	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Think of a song like a poem.

The song Sollozos by Osvaldo Fresedo has 16 beat phrases with a clear 8 beat comma.

Stanza 1A (0:00 - 0:31)

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

Stanza 1B (0:31 - 1:02)

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

Stanza 2A (1:02 - 1:33)

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

Stanza 2B (1:33 - 2:04)

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

Stanza 3A (2:04 - 2:35) Roberto Ray sings

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

Stanza 3B (2:35 - 3:06) Roberto Ray sings

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

Stanza 4B (3:06 - 3:22)

beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat,
 beat beat beat beat beat beat beat beat.

The stanzas 1A, 2A and 3A are the same melody but played by different instruments.
 The stanzas 1B, 2B and 3B are the same melody but played by different instruments.
 The stanza 4B is the first half of the 1B melody but played by different instruments.

If it feels like the end of a phrase at the 8 beat comma, that is good because you are hearing it in this song.

In many tangos, the singer starts singing precisely at 1:00 minute into the song.
 Sollozos is unique in that Roberto Ray doesn't start singing until 2:04 into the song.