

# Omar Massa

## Bandoneon & Composition

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### BIOGRAPHY

[He achieves] a sensuality of sound that decisively contributes to redefining the technical and musical perspectives of the instrument.

– Romald Fischer, *Das Orchester*, April 2022

The bandoneonist and composer Omar Massa was born in Buenos Aires and has been hailed by the international press as 'the successor to Astor Piazzolla' (*Crescendo, Pizzicato*) and as the artist who "has taken the Tango Nuevo to a prestigious 'Tango Concertante' level, without losing its original character." (Adrian Quanjer, *HRAudio*).

During the **2024/2025 season**, Omar Massa will perform some of his own compositions and works by Piazzolla with the Boulanger Trio at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg. As soloist, he will inaugurate the MDR Music Summer in Chemnitz together with Fatma Said and the MDR Symphony Orchestra. Chamber music concerts will take him to Romania, France and Great Britain, and together with Daniel Hope & Friends he will be performing at Schloss Elmau.

Now based in Berlin, Omar Massa has performed in a number of major concert halls around the world, including the Lincoln Center in New York, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the National Concert Hall in Dublin, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, the Teatro Nacional La Castellana (Bogotá), the Konzerthaus Berlin and in the Berliner Philharmonie. In addition, he has been invited to various music festivals, including the George Enescu Festival (Bucharest), the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, and the Rheingau Music Festival.

As a soloist, Omar Massa has performed with orchestras such as the Gürzenich Orchestra Cologne, the Berlin Symphony Orchestra, the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias, the Romanian National Radio Orchestra, the Moldavian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Biel Symphony Orchestra, the Braşov Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires and several others in America and Europe.

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Thanks to „his consistently clear, stupendously virtuosic and natural-seeming bandoneon playing, which never gives the impression of being an end in itself” (*Das Orchester*), it is no wonder that Massa is regularly invited to perform with other renowned artists. He has appeared alongside Alondra de La Parra, Guy Braunstein, Fatma Said, Daniel Hope, Jonas Kaufmann, Pablo Ferrández, Anastasia Kobekina and Paquito D’Rivera. Massa has collaborated on recordings for such renowned labels as Deutsche Grammophon and Sony Classical. In 2011, he performed with Plácido Domingo in front of an audience of 120,000 people in Buenos Aires.

Massa's compositions have been performed in venues such as the CBC Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto, New York's Lincoln Center and the Berliner Philharmonie. “[Massa] succeeds [...] in seemingly effortlessly and naturally integrating fundamental stylistic devices of Tango Nuevo and developing these within his own authentic tonal language’, asserts *Das Orchester*, while Remy Franck (*Pizzicato*) finds it “particularly remarkable” how Massa “consistently develops Tango Nuevo further. With him, the music becomes even more powerful, even more expressive between melancholy and anger, and now and again, as in his *Kageliana*, even more modern.”

Massa's recordings have been nominated several times in the categories “Composer of the Year” and “Instrumentalist of the Year” for Opus Klassik, for the German Record Critics’ Award and for the International Classical Music Awards. His CD *Tribute to Piazzolla* was nominated for the Gardel Music Awards, Argentina's most important music prize, in 2014. Thanks to this recording, the Piazzolla family invited Massa the following year, 25 years after Piazzolla’s death, to play on the maestro’s own bandoneon. To this day, Massa is the only musician to have received this honour.

Omar Massa started piano lessons at the age of five. Two years later he made his debut with music by Astor Piazzolla at Café Tortoni, a coffeehouse in Buenos Aires steeped in tradition and famous for hosting cultural event. At the age of twelve, he entered the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, where he studied composition, among other subjects. He continued to take bandoneon lessons with teachers such as Rodolfo Mederos, Marcos Madrigal, Alejandro Barletta and Julio Pane, a former member of Astor Piazzolla's sextet.



Omar Massa gives masterclasses for bandoneon and on Piazzolla's music all over the world, such as at the Conservatorio Nacional Superior de Música and at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, among others. The Argentinian Foreign Ministry has declared Massa's foreign tours as being of “cultural and artistic importance to the country of Argentina”. In 2023, Omar Massa was honoured with the Krefeld Bandoneon Prize in the very city where the bandoneon was invented.

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