

# TV tango for the Pops

By Richard Dyer  
GLOBE STAFF

Luis Bravo created "Forever Tango" in 1990 and the show has been touring the world since 1993; last year it played an engagement at the Wilbur Theatre, and Monday night some of the dancers and musicians returned to Boston for an "Evening at Pops" taping in Symphony Hall.

## Music Review

The performance ought to make spectacular television. There were three dance sequences, a vocal number, and two instrumental selections that were introduced by Leslie Caron, who reminded us that her first tango partner had been Fred Astaire. The great dancing star of MGM musicals is 66 now, and she looks as chic, gamine, and adorable as she did in "An American in Paris" back in 1951. She read her pedestrian script with panache, and her eyes and hands never stopped dancing.

Lisandro Adrover, music director and principal bandoneonist of "Forever Tango" led off with Astor Piazzolla's "Adios Nonino," posing with preposterous melodrama but playing his accordion-like instrument with real mastery, emphasizing how close to life-sustaining breath music can be. The Pops offered its first million-selling record, "Jalousie" in an arrangement that showed off the technique and rubato of the violinist of "Forever Tango," Miguel A. Bertero. Tango singer Carlos Morel offered "El Dia Que Me Quiras" with pulsing vibrato and slithering portamento — his singing sounded like what tango dancing looks like. Caron used the word "sensuous"; this was lascivious.

The dancing was really what the audience wanted to see. Caron said the tango could be danced "at any age," which may be true, although

## THE BOSTON POPS

Keith Lockhart, conductor

At: *Symphony Hall Monday night, in a television taping*

you'd have to be in awfully good shape to get through this particular choreography. The men of the company represent many dimensions of age, size, and shape; those who had hair, pomaded it. The women were all young, hair-tossing, and alluring, dancing in high heels, seamed net stockings, and dresses slit to the thigh. The first couple, Marcela Duran and Carlos Gavito, were traditional — he fixed her with a basilisk stare as he repeatedly invaded her personal space; she was submissive but contemptuous. The second couple, Miriam Larici and Claudio Villagra, added an acrobatic element. Larici may have been costumed as an odelisque, but she was a modern woman — she didn't even pretend to be submissive as, levitated horizontally between Villagra's legs, she rotated 360 degrees; up on his shoulders, she whirled around his neck before swooping down in a balletic fish dive; at the end, he twirled her above his head like the blades of a helicopter before hurling her half-way across the stage in a sinuous pose she never broke. Although this couldn't have been less demanding than the famous pas de deux from "Le Corsaire," Larici and Villagra danced it all over again for the benefit of the cameras. "Lo Que Vendra," brought on eight couples for the grand finale, which was colorful, fun and dangerous-looking; the male dancers must learn fairly early how to keep out of the way of a kicking high heel.

Keith Lockhart and the Pops served as a backdrop to most of this, but the conductor displayed professionalism by holding things together. He stumbled over his introduction to



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / JUSTINE ELEMENT

## Steamy tango team Marcela Duran and Carlos Gavito.

Caron, but refused a producer's request to call her "hostess" instead of "host." "Come on," he said, "this is the '90s." Earlier on he had led cheerful performances of Dan Welcher's derivative "Spumante" and Chabrier's "España."

Juggler and performance artist Michael Moschen taped another "Evening at Pops" sequence, choreographing his own movements with those of the two wire circles he manipulated, a huge one that seemed to float in music by Gounod, and a small one for the intermezzo from Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" — this looked as if Moschen were chasing a bubble, a rather odd thing to be doing in Sicily on Easter Sunday morning. Moschen juggled through Irving Berlin's "Puttin' on the Ritz"; the balls darted through the air like dancers in a period revue, moving on the beat and syncopating around it, and at one point dropping to the electronic floor for a tap routine. This was intricate, amusing, amazing; Moschen is a one-man band but something even more unusual — a one-man dance company.