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The joining of work by Argentinean bandoneon player Astor Piazzolla and Cincinnati-based bass player Frank Proto is a good idea. Both composers were involved in popular music and performers themselves. Piazzolla was deeply into the tango tradition, while Proto is a jazz man as well as a symphony player (retired). Where the rub comes, if it rubs at all, is playing Piazzolla with a piano trio. I was not aware that he wrote for this combination.

The *4 Seasons* was written to match the Vivaldi, and the scoring is for a small orchestra. The other four numbers are for various scorings, none of them like this. The notes and listings give no hint that anyone arranged any of these pieces. Not that Piazzolla couldn't have done it, but if he did you would think they would advertise the fact. Whose copyright is in question here?

Whoever arranged these works did a good job, and the Merlings play with a properly stylistic balance between abandon and control. They do the same for Proto's beautifully atmospheric quartet, including, as it does, a double bass instead of the customary cello. The style weaves between classical and jazz in his effortless fashion, blending in elements of both worlds, somewhat as Peter Schickele and David Baker do—two other composers who like to cross over these artificial boundaries. American music would be much the poorer without this blending of styles. This is an unusual and beautifully played program.