

# BIG GAME ARGENTINA

by Craig Boddington



PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
GUILLERMO ZORRAQUIN





## PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES



At over 307,000 square kilometers Buenos Aires is Argentina's largest province, roughly the same size as the country of France. The population is about fifteen million—but this does not include the great city of Buenos Aires, which is administered as an autonomous city and is not under the provincial government. The provincial capital is La Plata, about fifty miles south of the city of Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires is the country's easternmost province, with a long Atlantic coastline.

In the north it is bounded by the broad mouth of the Rio de la Plata, with Uruguay across the river to the northeast. Neighboring provinces are, clockwise from southwest, Rio Negro, La Pampa, Cordoba, Santa Fe, and Entre Rios. Geographically Buenos Aires is part of the region called The Pampas, which simply means "the plains." This is a most apt description, because most of Buenos Aires' huge land mass is a very flat plain reminiscent of—and nearly as large as—North America's Great Plains. There are two low mountain ranges, the Sierra de la Ventana and Sierra de Tandil, with the highest point in the province reaching to 1,239 meters (4,065 feet). The plains are cut by numerous rivers reaching toward the Atlantic, with the longest the Rio Salado, stretching 435 miles.

With its long coastline and low-lying plains weather is strongly influenced by the Atlantic. Winters are temperate and summers hot, with fairly high humidity but evenings cooling significantly due to proximity of the ocean. Annual precipitation ranges from 500 to 1000mm, with rains possible throughout the year and flooding a constant concern, especially in low-lying coastal areas.

The first European settlement was Santa Maria del Buen Ayre (now Buenos Aires), established by Pedro de Mendoza in 1536. Original contact with the Indians was peaceful, but this didn't

last and the original settlement was abandoned in 1541, then re-established by Juan de Garay in 1580, renamed Santisima Trinidad y Puerto Santa Maria de los Buenos Aires. Among the original tribes were the Charruas and Querandies, but troubles persisted for nearly 350 years, and the original aboriginal cultures were lost as, over time, these tribes were virtually annihilated.

European settlers found the plains of The Pampas ideal for cattle ranching, and despite ongoing conflict with Indians the ranch culture that persists to this day was pushed into the hinterlands, with meat and leather the primary exports through the port of Buenos Aires. By the end of the 18th Century the Rio Salado formed an uneasy boundary between the European settlers and the remaining Indians, but raids across the river remained a constant danger until as late as 1879, when the campaign known as the Conquest of the Desert (Conquista del Desierto) exterminated most of the surviving Indians.

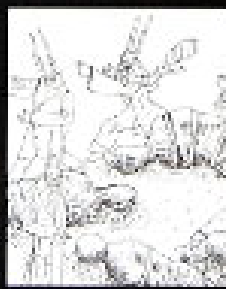
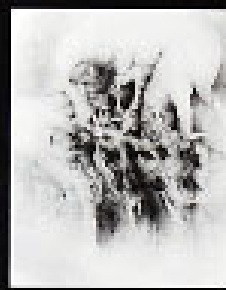
Independence from Spain came in 1816, and for the next seventy-five years there was considerable turmoil as the powerful city of Buenos Aires and the province of the same name frequently allied against the other provinces. This strife continued until the city of Buenos Aires was federalized in 1880, with La Plata founded in 1882 as the provincial capital. At that time Buenos Aires province had about a half-million inhabitants, a quarter of Argentina's entire population, so together with the great city of the same name they were a driving political force in 19th Century Argentina. Today agriculture remains the staple of Buenos Aires' economy, creating ideal conditions for the game birds and introduced big game species that thrive there.



Omar López Mato

# Dibujo Argentino Contemporáneo

Con Introducción de  
**Sarah Guerra**





«El paisano»  
Lápiz - 35 x 25 cm.  
2008

## Historia de Gauchos

Por Omar López Mato

No podía estar ausente de entre esta selección de dibujantes argentinos la impronta autóctona que tanto entusiasmó a artistas y público después de la traza de Molina Campos. Sin embargo, Díaz Mathé no encara el grotesco de Molina Campos ni las figuras estilizadas de Alonso en su *Marlín Fierro*, ni los personajes estereotipados de Eleodoro Marengo. Díaz Mathé cultiva el virtuosismo del hiperealismo para adentrarnos en un mundo que bien conoce por tradición y gusto personal.

Esteban Díaz Mathé es un enamorado de lo nuestro, la payada, las sogas, el campo, la doma y pingo criollo. No abunda en exageraciones folclóricas, ni cabestros y sillas enjaezadas ni en la platería que tanto entusiasmó a muchos. Esteban se detiene en la mirada serena del paisano y sus pilchas de trabajo. No son gauchos «for export», son paisanos

de trabajo, hecho a mañanas heladas y soles intensos, a cebar un verde en la matera antes de salir a recorrer.

Los recados, los lazos, los pingos, reproducen con precisión la vida real de nuestros hombres de campo, desprovistos de la parafernalia turística. Nuestro gaucho se jerarquiza con su simpleza, son hombres de trabajo que honran sus tareas y las habilidades del oficio.

En suma, Esteban Díaz Mathé refleja en sus dibujos la esencia más profunda del ser nacional, el gaucho, no como matrero, vago y malentendido que ha pintado la literatura sino el trabajador rural, amante del progreso pero atado al terruño y a las tradiciones del país que ayudan a hacer todos los días con la misma constancia que Esteban pone en su obra.



«Mancando la mañana»  
Lápiz - 35 x 25 cm.  
2008

## A Gaucho Story

Por Omar López Mato

The folkloric drawings that captivated artists and the public after the work of Molina de Campos couldn't be excluded from this selection of Argentine drawers. However, Esteban Díaz Mathé doesn't approach the grotesque feature of the work of Molina de Campos, nor the stereotyped figures of Alonso's Martín Fierro and Eleodoro Marengo. Díaz Mathé uses the virtuosity of hyperrealism to make us penetrate a world that he perfectly knows due to tradition and personal taste.

Esteban Díaz Mathé loves our culture, the gaucho, its poems, the ropes, the countries, the tameness and the Argentinean

horses. He doesn't draw gauchos «for export» but working countrymen, their work is done during freezing mornings and under shiny suns and the unmissable «mate» to be prepared before going out.

The saddles, the lasscos and the horses precisely depict the real life of our country fellows, devoid of tourism paraphernalia. Our gaucho stands out for its simplicity; they are workmen that honour their labour and the trade skills.

All in all, Esteban Díaz Mathé shows in his drawings the deepest essence of our national man. He doesn't portray him as if he were a fugitive, lazy and idle, as it has been the case of the literature, but he portrays him as a rural worker who loves progress but is clung to his land and the traditions of the country, which help perform daily activities with the same perseverance Esteban puts in his work.

Dt. ALBERTO LÓIZAGA  
Hernán Cruz Dubourg

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A modo de resumen, para mostrar las cualidades del Ser y los errores del Ego, elaboramos el siguiente gráfico. Éste se explica y desarrolla en el capítulo "Los 18 hoyos de nuestra vida", al final del libro.

