GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES

C.E.N° 27.645/2006

Buenos Aires, April 27th, 2006

The Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires passes as Law

Section 1 – TheFILET PORTENO is hereby declared “Cultural Heritage of the City of Buenos Aires”.

Section 2 – It is hereby notified, etc.

SANTIAGO DE ESTRADA
ALICIA BELLO

LAW 1941
COPY

Buenos Aires, May 29th, 2006

According to the capacities granted by section 102 of the Constitution of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Law 1941 is hereby enacted, passed by the Legislature of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires in its session on April 27th, 2006. Be filed, published in the Official Bulletin of the City of Buenos Aires, sent copy to the Parliament Office of the mentioned Body through the Legislative Issues Coordination General Office and to the Historical Institute General Office of the City of Buenos Aires, to the Subsecretary of Cultural Heritage and the Cultural Historical Heritage Preservation Commission of the City of Buenos Aires, for their acknowledgement and corresponding purposes.

This decree is authenticated by the Ministry of Culture.


Buenos Aires, MAY 29th, 2006

(Aparece una firma seguida de: VILMA NANCY SASTRE. RECORDS DEPARTMENT. LEGAL AND TECHNICAL SECRETARY. AUTONOMOUS CITY GOVERNEMENT.)
LAW PROJECT

Section 1 – The Fileteado Porteño hereby declared “Cultural Heritage of the City of Buenos Aires”.

Section 2 – It is hereby notified, etc.

FUNDAMENTALS

President,

One of the first Porteño fileters, Alfredo Brunetti said “We gave image to the city”, and it is difficult to contradict him. National laces decorated with roses, hideous masks in the prow that never saw the river, the “Virgin of Lujan”, “gardeles”, marbles, countryside images, acanthus leaves, flowers, medallions, abundance large cups or horns are some of the images that, thanks to the filet, populated the City of Buenos Aires during decades and strengthen its cultural identity.

Etimologically, the word “filet” comes from the latin “filum”, thread, and means “thin line used for decoration”.

Fileting, true decorative and popular art, was born in Buenos Aires at the beginning of the 20th Century. It was brought by the Italian people from the south of the peninsula and was born in carts factories where they worked.

Fond of painting, some of them started to decorate carts and practically created the specialty. These beginnings and the future development are not documented and, as a consequence, the history of filet is made of the protagonists testimonies.

In this respect, the fileter master Martiniano Arce said that “the filet began to appear in our streets when the first inmigrant currents started to arrive. From Europe, many craftsmen arrived who were popular masters in the use of the brush. These men searched for new ways of expressing themselves and found this in particular”.

As it happens with tango, it cannot be precisely and reliably stated the name of the first artist nor the exact date in which the filet was born. Most testimonies agree on the fact that three Italian immigrants were the ones who developed contemporaneously the filet working in the cart factories that existed at the beginning of the 900s, in our city: CECILIO PASACARELLA, VICENTE BRUNETTI and SALVADOR VENTURO, whose first followers were their own children.

In a newspaper article entitled “Fileteando, del suburbio al centro”, Elba Perez introduces a touch in art genesis. According to testimonies that she collected, due to taxes resulting from names and addresses written in chassis, considered as publicity, fileters pioneers thought of a trick: they kept within municipal limits not taxed, name and signs of the owner, but ornamented them with fantasy frames, they fileted them, calling thus neighbours attention.
First fileters customers were grocery men and milkmen, union shared by Italian and Basques.

The true thing is that thanks to these pioneers' initiative, the carts' municipal grey was invaded by the filet: firstly, when sides were painted with other colours, and then, when those colors were divided by a thin line in a more intense or contrasting tone.

Later, there appeared the different designs that made an ample repertoire that characterized, as well as in the composition and paint technique, a genre which was unmistakeable in the "porteñas" streets.

Colors used were really vivid, and playing with the contrast and transparencies, the work obtained volume. Synthetic varnish was used which was resistant to time and out in the open.

Regarding this same issue, Elba Perez, in the article mentioned, points out that firstly it was the line, framing tables, sides and fronts. Later, it was imposed the pleasure for playing with it, at impulses of a suggestion provided by the same city scenography.

For Elba Perez, gargoyles, chimeras and gryphons that abound in filets come from the University of Alcalá de Henares, through a simile proposed by the front of Teatro Cervantes, which delighted Miguel Venturo, one of the precursors.

Although filet pioneers were Italian, in a short time other colectivities embraced the activity.

When in the 40's fileting reached trucks and buses, its popularity increased and together with it, its final insertion in the "porteños" daily life, which means, in their culture.

The filet, as time went by, started to be accompanied by texts and it gave origin to multiple knowledge manifestations and porteño's tricks.

Even Jorge Luis Borges referred to texts related to fileting, which he defined as "sentencious sides". In "Las Inscripciones de los carros" (part of his book "Evaristo Carriego" published in 1930) he collects some of them.

Apart from the presence of the filet in Buenos Aires streets and the unquestionable popularity, the art critic did not worry about the issue and, as Alfredo Genovese points out, the first fileting exposition took place in 1970, thanks to the collection work performed by specialists Esther Barugel and Nicolas Rubió.

That exposition coincides with the activity decline, which suffers a strong setback when in 1975 a law prohibits fileting buses.

During the last years, fortunately, the filet succeeded in reinstalling in Buenos Aires thanks to many artists', collectors' and defenders' of the cultural heritage work.
At the same time, its use extended to architecture as they appeared in bars, restaurants, inside houses, furniture and objects. Moreover, many tango disks covers have fileting illustrations.

Regarding filet stylistic development, it is interesting to quote Cecilia Ivanchevich who, in a piece of writing, traced a parallel with tango history.

She considers that Buenos Aires music had in its development a fundamental breakup with Astor Piazzolla appearance, while the filet, in her opinion, had an evolution more reserved.

Cecilia Ivanchevich maintains that currently, when a filleting recovery occurs, there appear younger artists coming from artistic schools, and from them, it is so expected a renewal in this “porteño” art.

Salvador Venturo, Carlos Carboni, Leon Untroib, Ernesto Magliori, Miguel Ventura, Cecilio Pascarella, Bernasconi Brothers, the Brunettis’, Andres Vigliotti, Federico Yrigoyen, Carlos Blanco, Martiniano and Enrique Arce, Luis Zorz, Armando Miotti and Ricardo Fortuniti, are some of the filleting masters that provided their creativity.

“Will the filet go on? As long as a fileter exists and some few fileters friends, as long as there are sensitive people, sometimes in key positions, sometimes not, the filet will continue its way. As there will always be someone who wishes to filet a cart, a truck, a bed or a closet. And if that someone exists, there will be someone who tries to decorate it. Perhaps with a lot of talent, probably with less”. (“Los maestros fileteadores de Buenos Aires”, investigation done by Esther Barugel and Nicolás Rubió).

With respect to all herein stated, President, we request a quick approval of this initiative.
GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES. (PAGE 11. SECLyT).


Purposes: Law 1941 enactment.

CITY GOVERNMENT CHIEF,

Through these procedures it is processed Law 1941 enactment, passed by the Legislature of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires in its session on April 27th, 2006.

The Law under analysis declares the Filet Porteño as “Cultural Heritage of the City of Buenos Aires”.

This declaration is motivated by the importance that fileting embraces as a true decorative and popular art that was born in Buenos Aires at the beginning of the 20th century and that is definitely inserted in “porteños” culture.

Besides, with the passing of time, the filet started to be accompanied by texts, giving birth to multiple manifestations of “porteña” knowledge and tricks.

Its use expanded to architecture as it appeared in bars, restaurants, inside houses, furniture and objects and tango disks that showed fileting illustrations in their covers.

Due to the reasons exposed before and every time the Ministry of Culture has authenticated the Decree project that has a (1) page, it is herein submitted for its consideration.

(There appears a signature followed by: DR. SERGIO FABIAN BEROS. SECRETARY. LEGAL AND TECHNICAL OFFICE).