

# El Brazo Recto



To the list of popular Latin dances – the cha-cha, rumba, samba, mambo, escondido, lemon merengue, and atoma bomba – you can now add the brazo recto, or “straight arm.” The dance evolved, as have so many throughout history, from an escalating disagreement. Two Tijuana suitors were one day arguing over a mutual *amigo de señorita*, and onlookers noticed that their more belligerent movements contained elements of dance. The karate chop to the face, the eye gouge, the punch to the celiac plexus, the throat throttle – each evoked memories of Terpsichore, the muse of dance, and choreographers quickly created movement sequences that captured the pervading spirit of inter-societal truculence. *El brazo* was an instant hit, though its popularity waned with the emergence of another fisticuff-centric dance, *il panino del l’articolazione* – or, the “knuckle sandwich.”