

From Iberia to the Americas: Worlds of Spanish Song

Janani Sridhar, soprano
Alexander Woods, piano

Three Tangos

arr. Charles Gorczynski

Nada
La mentirosa
Al compás del Corazón

José Dames, Miguel Caló, Raúl Iriarte
Anselmo Aieta, Osvaldo Pugliese, Alberto Morán
Domingo Federico, Miguel Caló, Raúl Berón

Tres poemas

Joaquín Turina

Olas gigantes
Tu pupila es azul
Besa el aura

Three Songs by Sylvia

Sylvia Rexach, arr. Woods

En mis sueños
Nuestra luna
Matiz de amor

Intermission

Canciones Clásicas Españolas

Fernando Obradors

La mi sola, Laureola
Con amores, la mi madre
Del cabello mas sutil

Siete canciones populares españolas

Manuel de Falla

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Seguidilla murciana
Asturiana
Jota
Nana
Canción
Polo

Program Notes

A few casual words from us:

When Alex and I were discussing repertoire to program for this recital, Alex suggested programming a recital of exclusively Spanish music. I thought it was a lovely idea because there is a wealth of music spanning from Iberia to the Americas that are compelling, harmonically interesting, and that transcend the barriers of language and culture. This evening, you will hear music by Hispanic composers, with repertoire ranging from tangos, to boleros, to art song. Many of these pieces are dances, and showcase the vibrancy and rhythm present in the fabric of the culture of the people represented in our music today.

We thank you for being here, and for journeying with us through the different time periods and genres of Spanish song, and hope that you will enjoy this repertoire we are excited to perform for you today.

Dames, Aieta, & Frederico: Three Tangos (arr. Gorczynski)

Tango music and dance emerged in Argentina and Uruguay during the mid 19th century. It drew influences from Cuban, Spanish, and African styles, taking shape among immigrant communities in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Over the first three decades of the 20th century, the standard tango ensemble developed into a sextet comprising two violins, piano, upright bass, and two bandoneons (a regional variety of concertina, related to the accordion). By the 1940s and 50s, the sextets grew into larger orchestras with full string sections and several more bandoneons. While tango music of this time was championed by trailblazing instrumentalists, composers, and arrangers, singers also played an important role in developing the style, rendering the poetic lyrics with passionate performances.

The tangos on this program were popularized by the mid-20th-century orchestras of Miguel Caló and Osvaldo Pugliese. These arrangements for voice and piano pay homage to the rich musical and lyrical innovations of the artists who dedicated their lives to the genre. Listen for contrasts between strict rhythmic material and expressive melodies with flexible phrasing (*fraseo*). The words to all three selections are decidedly unhappy, with forlorn narrators telling of loneliness, yearning, and even bitter resentment.
–AW

Turina: *Tres Poemas*

Joaquín Turina was a native of Seville, Andalusia, the southernmost region of Spain. He spent his early years in Seville and Madrid, where he garnered an impressive reputation as a pianist and composer. In 1905 Turina moved to Paris, where he studied composition with Moritz Moszkowski and Vincent D'Indy. It was in Paris that he met fellow Spanish composers Manuel de Falla and Isaac Albéniz, who encouraged him to incorporate more traits of traditional Andalusian music in his compositions. Turina took their suggestions to heart, and began to write with the "subtle elegance, grace, and humour"¹ and "rhythms,

¹ Carlos Gómez Amat. "Turina (Pérez), Joaquín." *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

light, and joy² that characterize the music of his homeland. With the onset of World War I in 1914, Turina returned to Madrid, where he thrived for decades as a composer, pianist, teacher, and music critic.

Turina was a prolific composer of piano and chamber works, and also wrote a wide variety of vocal music. The *Tres Poemas* set was written in 1933, early in his tenure as a professor at the Madrid Conservatory. The poems, written by Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer (1836-1870), use grandiose nature imagery to describe themes of romance and inner torment. Turina paints these scenes with lush, virtuosic writing for the voice and piano. We can hear harmonies and rhythms reminiscent of Andalusian music, which by this point had long been a central influence in Turina's style.

–AW

Three Songs by Sylvia (arr. Woods)

In July 1958, Sylvia Rexach and guitarist Tuti Umpierre met at a studio in San Juan to record a collection of 14 songs, entitled *Sylvia Rexach Canta a Sylvia Rexach* (Sylvia Rexach Sings Sylvia Rexach). Originally intended as a set of demos, this bare-bones album is one of the only recorded examples of Rexach singing her own music. Rexach's mastery of her craft shines in this intimate, fleeting format. Her narrative poetry enchants the listener, inviting us to relive tales of passing love told through dreams, moonlight, and nostalgia.

Born in Puerto Rico, Sylvia Rexach lived a short, multi-faceted life. From her teenage years she flourished as a composer of *boleros* - slow love songs marked by their rich poetry. During the Second World War, she enlisted in the Women's Army Corps and was posted in Connecticut. After leaving an abusive marriage, Rexach returned to Puerto Rico, where she worked as a comedy writer and newspaper critic. She also co-founded the Puerto Rican Society of Authors, Composers, and Music Editors, and led el Combo Las Damiselas, the first all-women vocal ensemble in Puerto Rico. Rexach's compositions have been recorded by countless artists, including Linda Ronstadt, Tito Rodríguez, and Ednita Nazario.

We're excited to share the three arrangements on this program, which attempt to preserve the transparent artistry conveyed in Rexach and Umpierre's original 1958 recordings.

–AW

Obradors: *Canciones Clásicas Españolas*

Canciones Clásicas Españolas, composed by Spanish composer Fernando Obradors, portrays themes of love throughout the seven-movement cycle. Obradors learned to play the piano from his mother, and was mostly a self-taught composer. He also spent time studying in Paris, before he went on to conduct the Orquesta Filarmónica de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands). Obradors compiled and arranged four volumes of classic Spanish poetry, and it is from the first volume of poetry that he drew on to write *Canciones Clásicas Españolas*.

² Alfredo Morán. "Biografía." <http://www.joaquinturina.com/>, May 2020.

In the first piece, "La mi sola, Laureola" the sparseness of the piano part paired with the unaccompanied vocal line in several measures sets the tone for the pain and longing felt by Leriano. "Con amores la mi madre" speaks of how the love of one's mother soothes and calms even the deepest of pain. The lullaby accompaniment bears resemblance to Roger Quilter's art song, "Weep you no more." The last piece in this set, "Del cabello más sutil" is a romantic and delicate song of desiring to be as close as possible to one's lover. The sparkling piano line with the lilting vocal line depicts the poetry perfectly.

-JS

De Falla: *Siete canciones populares Españolas*

Manuel de Falla's *Siete canciones populares Españolas* is one of the most frequently performed Spanish song cycles. The styles of the songs are drawn from different parts of Spain, and they all have a unique musical flavor. De Falla dedicated this work to Madame Ida Godebska, who was a music patron who often hosted gatherings for Parisian artists. De Falla met her during his time in Paris.

The opening movement of *Siete canciones populares Españolas* is from the Andalusian province in Spain, and speaks of the price of a woman's chastity. The dance of the seguidilla can be heard in the second movement, and the third piece in the set is a folk song from the Northern region of Spain, Asturias. "Jota," the fourth movement and title of the piece, comes from the Aragon province of Spain, and is also a dance. The lullaby "Nana," follows suit, hypnotizing one with its rocking vocal line and soothing piano part. The sixth movement, "Cancion" has a guitar-like accompaniment, and speaks of the inconstancy and unfaithfulness of the poet's lover. The last movement, "Polo," is the most dramatic piece in the cycle. The cries of the poet and escalated heartbeat motive heightens the drama and intensity of the cries of scorned love.

-JS

"I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by."

-Billy Joel

From Iberia to the Americas: Worlds of Spanish Song

Song Texts in Spanish & English (Translations by A.W.)

Dames, Federico, & Aieta: Three Tangos (arr. Gorczynski)

Nada (words by Horacio Bastera)

He llegado hasta tu casa...
¡Yo no sé cómo he podido!
Si me han dicho que no estás,
que ya nunca volverás...
¡Si me han dicho que tu has ido!
¡Cuánta nieve hay en mi alma!
¡Qué silencio hay en tu puerta!
Al llegar hasta el umbral,
un candado de dolor
me detuvo el corazón.

Nada, nada queda en tu casa natal...
Sólo telarañas que teje el yuyal.
El rosal tampoco existe
y es seguro que se ha muerto al erte tú...
¡Todo es una cruz!
Nada, nada más que tristeza y quietud.
Nadie que me diga si vives aún...
¿Dónde estás para decirte
que hoy he vuelto arrepentido a buscar tu amor?

Al compás del corazón (words by Homero Expósito)

Late un corazón, déjalo latir...
Miente mi soñar, déjame mentir...
Late un corazón
porque he de verte nuevamente,
miente mi soñar
porque regresas lentamente.

Late un corazón...
me parece verte regresar con el adiós.
Y al volver gritarás tu horror,
el ayer, el dolor, la nostalgia,
pero al fin bajarás la voz
y atarás tu ansiedad de distancias.
Y sabrás por qué late un corazón
al decir... ¡Qué feliz!...
Y un compás, y un compás de amor
unirá para siempre el adiós.

Nothing

I arrived at your house...
I don't know how I could have!
Since they told me you weren't there,
that you would never return...
Since they told me you had left!
So much snow is in my soul!
What silence at your door!
When I arrived at the threshold,
a lock of pain
stopped my heart.

Nothing, nothing remains at your old house...
Only cobwebs woven among the weeds.
The rosebush is also gone
it must have died when you left...
All of it's a cross to bear!
Nothing, nothing more than sadness and quiet.
No one to tell me if you're still alive...
Where are you, so I can tell you
that today I've repentantly returned to search for your love?

To the beating of a heart

A heart beats, let it beat...
My dream is lying, let it lie...
A heart beats
because I will see you again,
my dream is lying
because you return slowly.

A heart beats...
I seem to see you returning with a goodbye.
And upon returning you will shout your horror,
the past, the pain, the nostalgia,
but at the end you will lower your voice
and you'll constrain your fear of distances.
And you will you know why a heart beats
to say... How happy!...
And a beating, a beating of love
will forever unite our goodbye.

La mentirosa (words by Francisco García Jiménez)

Cuanto te amé, puedo decir que jamás
otra mujer, podré querer como a vos.
La juventud no volverá nunca más
y a la ambición ya puedo dar el adiós.
Qué tiempo aquel, hora fugaz que pasó,
todo el valor de una pasión conocí.
Cuanta feliz frase de amor escuché,
que siempre yo, sumiso y fiel te creí.

Las caricias de tus manos,
tus palabras de ternura,
dejaron cruel amargura,
porque nada fue verdad.
Besos falsos de tu boca,
juramentos, ilusiones,
mataron mis ambiciones,
sin un poco de piedad.

Pero, por el mal que vos me hiciste,
solo dice mi alma triste,
mentirosa, mentirosa.
Todo lo que me has hecho pasar,
penas, llanto,
con otro lo has de pagar.

Ya encontrarás quien un amor fingirá
entonces sí, vas querer sin mentir,
has de ser vos la que al final llorará.
Siempre de mi te acordarás al sufrir.

The liar

How much I loved you, I can say that I never
could love another woman as I loved you.
Youth will never return
and I can bid ambition goodbye
What a time it was, fleeting hours that passed,
I came to know all the value of passion.
How many happy words of love I heard,
that I always submissively and faithfully believed.

The caresses of your hands,
your tender words,
they left a cruel bitterness,
because nothing was true.
False kisses from your lips,
oaths, illusions
killed my ambitions.
without a bit of pity.

But, for the wrong that you did me,
my sad soul can only say,
liar, liar.
Everything you've put me through,
sorrows, crying,
you'll pay for it with another person.

Now you will find someone who pretends to love
then yes, you will love them without lying,
it will be you who cries in the end.
You will always remember to suffer for me.

Turina: *Tres Poemas*

Words by Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer

Olas gigantes

Olas gigantes que os rompéis bramando
En las playas desiertas y remotas,
Envuelto entre las sábanas de espuma,
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Ráfagas de huracán, que arrebatáis
Del alto bosque las marchitas hojas,
Arrastrando en el ciego torbellino,
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Nubes de tempestad que rompe el rayo
Y en fuego ornáis la desprendidas orlas,
Arrebatado entre la niebla oscura,
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Llevadme, por piedad, adonde el vertigo
Con la razón me arranque la memoria...
¡Por piedad! ... ¡Tengo miedo de quedarme
Con mi dolor a solas!

Tu pupila es azul

Tu pupila es azul, y cuando ríes,
Su claridad sūave me recuerda
El trémulo fulgo de la mañana
Que en el mar se refleja

Tu pupila es azul, y cuando lloras,
Las transparentes lágrimas en ella
Se me figuran gotas de rocío
Sobre una violeta

Tu pupila es azul, y si en su fondo,
Como un punto de luz radia una idea,
Me parece en el cielo de la tarde
¡Una perdida estrella!

Giant waves

Giant waves that break, roaring,
On the deserted and remote beaches,
Wrapped between the sheets of foam,
Take me with you!

Bursts of hurricane that snatch
The withered leaves from the tall forest,
Swept up in the blind tornado,
Take me with you!

Stormy clouds that break with lightning
With fire you adorn the unfastened edges,
Snatched away amidst the dark mist,
Take me with you!

Take me, for mercy, to where frenzy,
For good reason, can tear out my memory...
Have mercy! ... I am afraid to stay
Alone with my pain!

Your eye is blue

Your eye is blue, and when you laugh,
Its soft clarity reminds me
Of the shimmering glow of the morning
That is reflected in the sea

Your eye is blue, and when you cry,
Its transparent tears
Appear to me like dewdrops
On a violet.

Your eye is blue, and if behind it,
Like a point of light, there radiates an idea,
It looks to me like a lonely star
In the afternoon sky!

Besa el aura

Besa el aura que gime blandamente
Las leves ondas que jugando riza;
El sol besa a la nube en Occidente,
Y de purpura y oro la matiza;
La llama en derredor del tronco ardiente
Por besar a otra llama se desliza,
Y hasta el sauce, inclinándose a su peso,
Al río que le besa, vuelve un beso.

Kissing the air

Kissing the gently moaning air,
The light waves play and ripple;
The sun kisses the cloud in the West,
And tinges it with purple and gold;
The flame surrounding the burning trunk
Slides itself to kiss another flame,
And even the willow, bending under its weight,
Returns a kiss to the river that kisses it

Three Songs by Sylvia (arr. Woods)

Words by Sylvia Rexach

En mis sueños

Volverás esta noche otra vez
a encontrarte en mis sueños
Llegarás otra vez
a brindarme un instante del sueño
Y aunque sea un sueño, y te tenga
por unos momentos,
Dejarás una estela de amor
en mi pensamiento

Surgirás entre nubes y estrellas,
brillando en la sombra
Y a mí descenderás cuando escuches
mi voz que te nombra
Y aunque mi despertar ponga fin
a tan dulce derroche
Sé que tú volverás porque vuelvo a soñar
esta noche

Nuestra luna

Nuestra luna se encuentra muy sola
Hoy nos ha buscado
Nuestra luna que ignora las cosas
Que nos han pasado
Su llanto es un lamento
Sus lágrimas estrellas
Y en las noches más bellas
La luna llora más

Nuestra luna que ayer nos miraba
Por entre las palmas
Nuestra luna no sabe el secreto
De nuestras dos almas
Se pregunta, ¿dónde están aquellos?
Se pregunta, ¿qué habrá sido de ellos?
¿De aquellos que una vez estuvieron aquí?

In my dreams

You'll return again tonight
to find yourself in my dreams
You'll visit again
to offer me a moment of rest
And though it's a dream, and it has you
only a few moments,
You'll leave a trail of love
in my thoughts

You'll rise through the clouds and the stars,
shining in the dark
And you'll come down to me when you hear
my voice calling you
And though I'll awake and put an end
to this sweet indulgence
I know that you'll return because I'll go back to sleep
tonight

Our moon

Our moon finds herself so lonely
Today she searched for us
Our moon who ignores the things
That have happened to us
Her crying is a lament
Her tears are stars
And on the most beautiful nights
The moon cries the most

Our moon who watched us yesterday
From between the palm trees
Our moon doesn't know the secret
Of our two souls
She asks herself, where are those two?
She asks herself, what has become of them?
Of those who once lingered here?

Matiz de amor

Canta mi corazón
Abrazado a la luz de un recuerdo
Evocando dulcemente
Un instante que tuvo algo de eterno

Mi canción lleva en el corazón matiz de amor
Abrazado a la luz de un recuerdo de emoción
Frágil luz que brinda una esperanza, una ilusión
A mi corazón nacido para amar

Recordar es volver a vivir aquel ayer
Es volver amar y volver a soñar con su querer
Y loco el corazón, sediento de pasión
Aspiro el aroma de todo su amor
Quedándose en el alma un suave matiz de amor

A shade of love

My heart sings
Wrapped in the light of a memory
Sweetly evoking
A moment that had something eternal

My song bears a shade of love in my heart
Wrapped in the light of an emotional memory
A fragile light that offers a hope, an illusion
To my heart that was born to love

To remember is to relive that past day
To love again and to dream of you wanting me
And with my heart parched for desire
I inhale the aroma of all your love
Leaving in my soul a gentle shade of love

Obradors: *Canciones Clásicas Españolas*

La mi sola, Laureola (words by Juan Ponce)

La mi sola, Laureola
La mi sola, sola, sola
Yo el cautivo Leriano
Aunque mucho estoy ufano
Herido de aquella mano
Que en el mundo es una sola.
La mi sola, Laureola
La mi sola, sola, sola

Mine only, Laureola

Mine only, Laureola
Mine only, only, only
I am the captive Leriano
Though I'm so proud
I'm wounded by that hand
Of which there is only one in the world
Mine only, Laureola
Mine only, only, only

Con amores, la mi madre (words by Juan Anchieta)

Con amores, la mi madre,
Con amores me dormí;
Así dormida soñaba
Lo que el corazón velaba,
Que el amor me consolaba
Con más bien que merecí.
Adormecióme el favor
Que amor me dió con amor;
Dió descanso a mi dolor
La fe con que le serví
Con amores, la mi madre,
Con amores me dormí!

With love, my Mother

With love, my Mother,
With love I went to sleep;
As I slept, I dreamed
Of what my heart concealed,
That love consoled me
With more good than I deserved.
Your favor lulled me to sleep
What love I was given, with love
Put to rest my pain
Through the faith with which I served you.
With love, my Mother,
With love I went to sleep.

Del cabello más sutil (Traditional)

Del cabello más sutil
Que tienes en tu trenzado
He de hacer una cadena
Para traerte a mi lado.
Una alcarraza en tu casa,
Chiquilla, quisiera ser,
Para besarte en la boca,
Cuando fueras a beber.

From the finest hair

From the finest hair
That you have in your braid
I would make a chain
To bring you to my side.
Dearest, I wish I was
A jar in your house,
To kiss you on your mouth,
Whenever you went to drink.

De Falla: *Siete canciones populares españolas*

Traditional

El paño moruno

Al paño fino, en la tienda,
Una mancha le cayó;
Por menos precio se vende,
Porque perdió su valor.
¡Ay!

The Moorish cloth

The fine cloth in the store
Has been stained;
It will be sold at a lower price
Because it has lost its value.
Ah!

Seguidilla murciana

Cualquiera que el tejado
Tenga de vidrio,
No debe tirar piedras
Al del vecino.
Arrieros semos;
¡Puede que en el camino
Nos encontremos!

Seguidilla from Murcia

Anyone whose roof
Is made of glass
Should not throw stones
At their neighbor's roof.
Let us be mule drivers;
Maybe on the street
We will meet!

Por tu mucha inconstancia
Yo te comparo
Con peseta que corre
De mano en mano;
Que al fin se borra,
Y creyéndola falsa
¡Nadie la toma!

For all your inconstancy,
I compare you
To a penny that runs
From hand to hand;
Which eventually fades,
And believing it to be fake,
No one takes it!

Asturiana

Por ver si me consolaba,
Arrimeme a un pino verde,
Por verme llorar, lloraba.
Y el pino como era verde,
Por verme llorar, lloraba.

Jota

Dicen que no nos queremos,
Porque no nos ven hablar.
A tu corazón y al mío
Se lo pueden preguntar.

Ya me despido de tí,
De tu casa y tu ventana,
Y aunque no quiera tu madre,
Adiós, niña, hasta mañana.
Aunque no quiera tu madre...

Nana

Duérmete, niño, duerme,
Duerme, mi alma,
Duérmete, lucerito,
De la mañana.
Nanita, nana.
Duérmete, lucerito
De la mañana.

Canción

Por traidores, tus ojos,
Voy a enterrarlos;
No sabes lo que cuesta,
«Del aire»
Niña, el mirarlos,
«Madre, a la orilla, Madre.»

Dicen que no me quieres,
Ya me has querido.
Váyase lo ganado,
«Del aire.»
Por lo perdido,
«Madre, a la orilla, Madre»

[Song] from Asturia

To see if it would console me,
I took myself to a green pine,
When it saw me crying, it cried.
And the pine, how green it was,
When it saw me crying, it cried.

Jota

They say we don't love one another
Because they have never seen us talking.
But they may just ask
Your heart and mine.

Now I leave you,
Your house and your window,
And even if your mother doesn't want it,
Goodbye, my girl, until tomorrow,
Even if your mother doesn't want it...

Lullaby

Sleep, child, sleep
Sleep, my soul,
Sleep, little light
Of the morning
Lullaby, lullaby
Sleep, little light
Of the morning.

Song

Because your eyes are traitors,
I will forget them.
You don't know what it costs,
("From the air")
Little girl, to look into them.
("Mother, at the shore, Mother")

They say you do not love me,
But you've loved me before.
Leave behind what was won,
("From the air")
For it has been lost,
("Mother, at the shore, Mother")

Polo

¡Ay!
¡Guardo una pena en mi pecho,
Que a nadie se la diré!

¡Malhaya el amor, malhaya,
Y quien me lo dió a entender!
¡Ay!

Polo

Ah!
I hold a pain in my chest,
That I cannot share with anyone!

A curse on love, and a curse
On the one who let me understand it!
Ah!