



Un Jardín Porteño

GCC – Gupo de Canto Coral - Néstor Andrenacci

Text translations by James Surges

CD 1

2) *Papa Balthazar*

Music: Sebastian Piana (1903 – 1994) (arr. Javier Zentner)

Text: Homero Manzi (1907 – 1951)

Sleep, Peter, my boy,
for he's on his way
surrounded by clouds and sky,
Papa Balthazar.

His white sack is filled
with a hundred noise-makers,
with a drum
and a top with a long string,
and a freight train,
and a wagon.

Sleep, Peter, my boy,
for he's on his way
astride his loping camel,
Papa Balthazar.

An angel was born in the East,
with skin the color of tea.
Two doves accompany him,
and a burro from Bethlehem.

Three kings seek his cradle
beyond a blue star.
The Mother, Mother Mary,
and the child, the Baby Jesus.

My child, my child Peter,
please don't forget him;
my child who is the blackest
and poorest of all, Balthazar.

My Peter wrote a letter,
 Papa Balthazar.
 And an angel with white wings
 took it away.

My child dreams
 of the noise-maker
 of the drum
 and the top with the long string
 and the freight train,
 and the wagon.

Sleep, Peter, my boy,
 for he's on his way
 surrounded by clouds and sky,
 Papa Balthazar.

He wants a new soldier
 and a sword, and a rifle,
 and to float up to the
 sky, a candle balloon.

He wants a white clown,
 and a train set,
 and a long-haired bear,
 and a toy kitten stuffed with sawdust.

My child, my child Peter,
 please don't forget him;
 my child who is the blackest
 and poorest of all, Balthazar.

4) *The Bar Owner of Santa Lucia*

Music: Enrique Maciel (1897 – 1962) (arr. Mario Esteban)
 Text: Héctor Pedro Blomberg (1889 – 1955)

She was blond, and her blue eyes
 reflected the glories of the day,
 and she sang like a mockingbird,
 the bar owner of Santa Lucia.

She was the flower of the old Parish.
 What gaucho wasn't in love with her?
 Soldiers from four garrisons
 would be found sighing in her bar.

The red-hatted songster crooned to her
 with a sweet strumming of guitars

from the railing that smelled of jasmine,
from the patio fragrant with diamelas:

"I love you deep in my soul, woman,
and someday you'll just have to be mine.
Then the nights in the neighborhood will ring
with all the guitars of Santa Lucia."

A songster from Lavalley finally stole her away
back at the end of the year 1840.
Her blue eyes no longer lit up
the Parish of Santa Lucia.

The partisans of Rosas no longer came
to sing their vidalas and cielos to her.
And at the railing of the bar,
the jasmines died for want of her.

But the red-hatted songster returned
to the empty patio to sing
one last, painful serenade
that the breeze from the river carried away:

"Where are you and your blue eyes,
oh woman who never was mine?
How the guitars cry for you,
the guitars of Santa Lucia!"

6) *Nothing*

Music: José Dames (1907 – 1994) (arr. Eduardo Ferraudi)
Text: Horacio Sanguinetti (1914 – 1957)

I've arrived at your house
I don't know how I made it!
They've told me that you're no longer here,
that you'll never come back;
they've told me that you've gone away!
Ah, the snow that lies upon my soul!
The silence at your doorstep!
As I neared the threshold,
a heavy chain of pain
weighed upon my heart.

*Nothing, nothing left at the house where you were born,
only cobwebs woven among the weeds.
The rose garden, too, is gone.
Surely it died when you left.
Everything is a cross!
Nothing, nothing more than sadness and silence.*

*No one to tell me if you're even alive.
Where are you, so that I can tell you
how sorry I am and that I've come back looking for your love!*

I've left your house behind,
I'm headed I don't know where
Without wanting to, I say good-bye to you,
and it's as if the echo of your voice
responds from nowhere.
At your locked door,
for pain of you have I prayed,
and at your gate has rolled
a tear that blossomed
from my poor heart.

Nothing, nothing left at the house where you were born !

CD 2

Three Songs after Poems by Quevedo

Music: Fernando Moruja (1960 – 2004)

Text: Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580 – 1645)

1) The First Husband's Greatest Happiness: No Mother-in-Law

Father Adam, weep not,
my good man, leave your grieving,
for in all the world you were
the luckiest of all mortals.

From the start
you enjoyed the richness of the world
without tailors or merchants,
those scourges of another age.

To give you a companion,
the Lord chose to bide
until a time came
when you felt lonely.

She cost you but one rib,
this woman He gave you.
now they take every bone we've got,
and more behind our backs.

You slept, and a woman
you found upon waking.
Today if a husband dozes

there's another Adam at his side.

Your woman had no mother.
What great fortune, to be envied!
You enjoyed a world free of old ladies
and the immortal mother-in-law.

Should you complain about the serpent
that tempted both of you to bite,
consider how much better the serpent is
than a mother-in-law.

So Adam, sir, less whining;
leave off with moaning.
Know the serpent's worth,
and don't mistreat him so.

And if you wish to trade him
for a mother-in-law of today,
be careful what you wish for
because a thousand will take you up on it.

This from one who is possessed by a mother-in-law,
as he is led away
by a priest and a sacristan
to have her cast out.

2) Various Lineages of Bald Men

Mothers, you who have daughters,
may God grant you the good fortune
not to give them away to bald men,
but rather to people with fuzz.
Learn from my pain, all of you;
they married me off in a bad way
to a capon whose head
is naked down to the nape.

There are priestly kinds of baldness;
of this type there are many.
With their tonsures,
husbands look like friars.

There are back-of-the-head kinds of baldness,
and there are those whose bald spots
have been so large,
that pantaloons were needed to cover the dirty things.

There are men learning to be bald,
who clump and sweep their hair together,

and so, covering the melon,
 they end up looking like furies.
 Bald go the men, mother,
 bald they go;
 but they'll grow some hair.

If in this life we want men
 in order to peel them clean,
 and they come already peeled,
 if there is nothing to peel, what shall we do?
 Better to die than give ourselves up to baldness.
 Beware, daughters of Adam!
 Bald go the men, mother,
 bald they go;
 but they'll grow some hair.

3) *To a Man With a Big Nose*

There once was a man stuck to a nose,
 there once was a superlative nose,
 there once was a half-living alchemist's retort of a nose,
 there once was a swordfish with hairy nostrils;
 a sundial with a grotesque face,
 there once was an elephant above a mouth,
 a full-length skirt of a nose, a hunched scribe of a nose,
 a badly-nosed Publius Ovidius Naso.
 There once was the prow of a warship,
 there once was a great pyramid of Egypt,
 the whole twelve tribes of noses, it was;
 there once was an infinite nose-ishness,
 a horse-faced, clown-mask arch-nose,
 an enormous chilblain, purple and fried.

4) *There Is a Death*

Music: Victor Torres (1956)

Text: Macedonio Fernandez (1874 – 1932)

Do not take me to the shadows of death
 where my life will become shadow,
 where only lives what has been.
 I do not want the life of memory.
 Give me other days like these of life.
 Oh, do not so soon make me absent
 and make of me absence.
 Do not take away my Today!
 I wish to remain in myself.
 For there is a death if eyes turn away the look of love,
 Leaving only the look of living.

That look contains the shadows of Death.
 For Death is not that which drains life from cheeks;
 But rather, this is Death: this blankness in eyes that behold.

5) *I Believed*

Music: Victor Torres (1956)

Text: Macedonio Fernandez (1874 – 1932)

Not everything does Love achieve, since it cannot
 break the tendrils with which Death touches.
 But little can Death achieve
 if in a heart where there is Love, the fear of it dies.
 Little can Death achieve because fear of it
 cannot enter a heart where there is Love.
 May Death reign over Life. Love reigns over Death.

6) *Mi Lumía*

Music: Javier Zentner (1951)

Text: Oliverio Gironde (1891 – 1967)

Since the poem that comprises the lyrics of this work makes use of an invented language, an attempt to translate it would be pointless. This much can be said: the poem's magical, hybrid passages evoke images of light in the vastness of time, allude to the myths and mysticisms of gods both eternal and dead, and make somehow viscerally palpable a sensuousness, a glimpse of fecund galaxies afloat in a mysterious, ecstatic and personal cosmos of brilliance.

7) *Life*

Music: Marcelo Delgado (1956)

Text: Cristina Piña (1949)

As weightless
 as a ray of light
 that touches the petal,
 the flower,
 the stem.

As a note
 that pulses in the folds
 of the air
 cleans the gaze,
 makes possible the sun.

Like a drop of dew
 at the dawn's climax,
 an intimate sparkle in the garden,

the promise of light.

Like this, just as airily,
does she
appear.

8) *In the Mountains*

Music: Julio Viera (1943)

Text: Leónidas Lamborghini (1927 – 2009)

facing the mass.
the mass which utters the echo: which
the echo uttered:
the echo that uttered the name of identity.
the mass uttered the vertigo of
identity: that which the mass uttered, but which is
silence. that
echo: the abyss of identity: the echo. the name, but which is
the echo of that which is the name facing
the mass. the echo of the echo: echo.
on the road of the mass, its echo: the vertigo
in the abyss of the mass of
its echo which.
the vertigo which is named: identity. the echo in
identity in the abyss
facing
the mass which utters that echo that vertigo but which is
silence.
that vertigo facing: the echo of the echo of identity. that
abyss of the name which is named in the echo of
the mass. the name: echo of the echo
on the road its
of the mass. the name
named facing the mass. that which the mass utters but which is
silence.
the identity that utters but which is echo and echo of echo
which the echo uttered of the mass but which is
silence.
the name that is named
facing the mass but which is
echo and abyss and vertigo
which is named facing
the mass.
the name of identity: vertigo
the name of identity: abyss. and echo of echo.
the mass:
the silence of the mass.

13) *The Princess' Nose*

Music: Jorge Maronna (1948)
Text: Marcos Mundstock (1942)

Black velvet
covered the mirrors
of the castle
of the Princess Adela
at the height of the nose

and Adela was not happy
on account of her
nose.

Her highness did not wish
to see that nose so enormous,
repulsive, deformed,
that ruined her beauty.

Her highness did not wish
to see such a monstrosity.
She truly did not wish to.

She also used a veil
of black velvet.

Until one day a certain Marquis,
in love of course,
forgot all decorum
when, with his soul inflamed, he saw
a certain fire in the regard
of Adela,
as well as her consternation.

In the throes of desire, the Marquis
tried to kiss her
through the velvet.
His hasty movement
caused the veil to fall.

Adela felt as though the world were crumbling
down around her.
Terror seized her,
and with the bit of voice that she could muster,
in pain,
she said:

"Now everything is lost for me!
My end has come!

Now you have seen the macabre appearance
of my respiratory member
(if you will pardon my language)."

And the Marquis, curious, said:
"Your nose, I am looking at it.
The tragedy, or the error,
what is it?
I don't understand.
What is the problem with your nose?"

It isn't what one might call straight,
but with your gracious mouth,
it goes perfectly.

It is neither small nor pugged,
but it provides a perfect complement
to your regard."

Finally overcoming her complex,
Adela approached a mirror.
She pulled away the black veil that covered it,
gazed at herself intently
and said:

"I have torn away the veils.
This nose is mine.
It may not be the one I would have wished for.
So what?"

The princess and her nose,
from that point onward, were happy
because she
saw herself as beautiful
regardless of her nose.

And so Adela
lived happily ever after.
She forgot all about her
nose.

And what about the Marquis,
after this prologue so bombastic?

Well, after that,
the two kept seeing each other for a while,
and it was fantastic.

Translations: James Surges (2011)