

Cantares: Songs with Spanish Flair Translations

De los álamos vengo, madre

Composer: Joaquín Rodrigo Vidre

Poet: Anonymous

I come from the poplars, mother,
To see how the breeze stirs them.
From the poplars of Seville,
From seeing my pretty friend.
From seeing how the breeze stirs them.
I come from the populars. Mother,
To see how the breeze stirs them.
From the populars of Seville,
From seeing my pretty friend

Alma sintamos

Composer: Pablo Esteve

Poet: Pablo Esteve (1730 – 1794)

This song was written for the famous singer María Antonia Fernández,
who was nicknamed Caramba!

Soul, let us grieve!
Eyes, weep for my Caramba,
Who died just now!
Alas, poor little girl, All goodness,
That has no venial sin.

Olas Gigantes

Composers: Manuel De Falla and Joaquín Turina

Poet: Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer (1899 – 1900)

Vast waves, breaking with a roar
on deserted and distant strands,
shroud me in a sheet of foam,
bear me away with you!

Hurricane gusts, snatching
the tall wood's withered leaves,
dragging all along in dark turbulence,
bear me away with you!

Storm clouds rent by lightning,
with your edges bordered in fire,
snatch me up in a dark mist,
bear me away with you!

Bear me away, I beg, to where vertigo
eradicates my memory and reason...
Have mercy...I dread being left
alone with my grief!

Del Cabello más sutil

Composer: Fernando Jaumandreu Obradors

Poet: Anonymous

Of the hair most delicate
That you have in your braids
I have to make a chain
To bring you to my side
A jug in your house
Darling, I would like to be
To kiss you on the mouth
When you went to drink.

El Vito

Composer: Fernando Jaumandreu Obradors

Poet: Anonymous

An old woman is worth a silver coin,
And, a young girl is worth a copper coin,
But as I am so poor,
I go for the cheapest.
On with the dancing,
On with the dancing, ole!
Stop your teasing, sir,
Or else I will blush!

Note: A vito is a dance full of fire, performed in the taverns by women standing on a table before an audience of bullfighters.

Cantares

Composer: Joaquín Turina Pérez

Poet: Ramón de Campoamor (1817 – 1901)

Sing, I feel closer to you,
The more I run from you.
For your image haunts
The very shadow of my thoughts
Tell me again,
For yesterday I was spellbound:
I heard you without listening
And I looked at you without seeing.

Cantar del alma

Composer: Federic Mompou Dencausse

Poet: San Juan de la Cruz (1542 – 1591)

That eternal spring is hidden,
but well I know where it rises,
though it is night.

I do not know its source, for it has none,
but I know that all things stem from it,
though it is night.

I know there is nothing more beautiful
and that sky and earth drink from it,
though it is night.

I know its streams to be so full
that they water hell, heaven and mankind,
though it is night.

The stream that rises from this spring
is, well I know, so broad and so mighty,
though it is night.

This living spring that I desire
I see as the bread of life,
though it is night.

Cubo Dentro de un Piano

Composer: Xavier Montsalvatge Bassols

Poet: Rafael Alberti (1902 – 1999)

When my mother wore a strawberry ice for a hat
and the smoke from the boats was still Havana smoke.

Mulata from Vuelta Abajo ...

Cadiz was falling asleep to fandango and habanera and a little parrot at the piano tried to
sing tenor.

... tell me, where is the flower that a man can really respect.

My uncle Anthony would come home in his rebellious way.

The Cabaña and El Príncipe resounded in the patios of the port.

(But the blue pearl of the Caribbean shines no more. Extinguished. For us no more.)

I met beautiful Trinidad ...

Cuba was lost, this time it was true.

True

and not a lie.

A gunner on the run arrived, sang Cuban songs about it all.

Havana was lost

and money was to blame ... The gunner went silent, and fell.

But later, ah, later they changed SÍ to YES.

Translation: Richard Stokes & Jacqueline Cockburn © 2013

Cantarcillo

Composer: Eduard Toldrá Soler

Poet: Lope Felix de Vega Carpio (1562 – 1635)

As you rummage through the palms,
Holy angels,
That my child might sleep, still the branches.

Palms of Bethlehem

That the furious winds,

Which sound so much,

Move angrily:

Do not make noise,
Run more slowly,
That my child might sleep,
Still the branches.

The divine child,
That is weary
of sorrows of the earth,
for his rest,
he wishes a little respite,
from his tender weeping.
That my child might sleep,
Still the branches.

Harsh cold surrounds him;
And you see I have nothing
To protect him.
Angels divine that go on flying,
That my child might sleep,
Still the branches.

Esta es su carta

Composer: Manuel Fernández Caballero

Poet: Miguel Echegaray y Eizaguirre (1848-1927)

It is your letter, it is your letter!
It is the mailmen, one after another is what I want the most.
My poor man lives and loves me.
What does it tell me?
We will see.
Why, my God, can't I read?
If I cannot read this letter, what writing will I ignore.
But none will know, what the little boy will tell Pilar.
They read me the letter badly and quickly and they always end up laughing.
Those laughs cannot be.
Why, God, can't I read?
The four faces are full, this is your signature, what does it say?
He will tell me that he really loves me, that I am cute and rich.
He will tell me that he is praying, that he does not forget Pilarica.
He will tell me that he is hungry and thirsty and sick and tired
and that he goes by hoses and ponds without bread or shoes.
He will tell me that Cuba is neither beautiful nor sweet like sugar cane.
He who thinks about his poor woman who cries in Spain.
Will you say other things? It may well be.

My God, why can't I read?
Maybe his return will be announced me.
Maybe you will find yourself sick, oh God!
To never see him come back anymore...
Cruel doubt, I'm already assaulted.
It makes my heart beat, what will you tell me?
I do not know...why God can't I read?
Ah God, why? Why can't I read?