

CUBA VA!



Photo by Barbara Dane

SONGS OF THE NEW GENERATION OF REVOLUTIONARY CUBA

Written, arranged, performed and
produced in Cuba by the
Experimental Sound Collective of I.C.A.I.C.
(Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Arts and Industries)
Sung in Spanish, with illustrated booklet,
including complete texts and English translations.

The music on this LP record of contemporary Cuban songs will come as something of a shock, perhaps, to many North American and Western European listeners. All of us have preconceptions of what "revolutionary art" is like -- conceptions inevitably shaped by certain simplistic notions, all too often fostered by somewhat heavy-handed party administrators. Not the least of the difficulties is that the revolutionary art of socialism in power is, of necessity, significantly different from that art which is produced in the course of the revolutionary uprising. This last is a crucial question which frequently leads to considerable confusion since critics, intellectuals and even "revolutionaries" of capitalist countries tend to judge the art of socialism by values and standards emanating from bourgeois society.

It is clear that the revolutionary energy of today is centered in that so-called Third World of exploited colonial and neo-colonial peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Chinese, Algerian, Vietnamese and Cuban Revolutions originate in this energy, while the struggles in Angola, Bolivia, Indochina and the Middle East indicate that the confrontations of the next decade will undoubtedly continue the pattern. That this is principally a world of color in which class exploitation has assumed a radical form is, of course, a cultural factor of the utmost significance.

One must listen to this record of recent Cuban songs with an abiding sense of Cuba's relation to that "under-developed" world, and likewise with an awareness of the history and geography of the giant crocodile of the Antilles; for this is the way in which Cuba itself listens to this music, and to do otherwise is to fail to comprehend the relationship of these songs to their natural surroundings.

For countries like Cuba, emerging from centuries of "underdevelopment" foisted upon them by the ruthless depredations of imperialism, the achievement of a socialist national identity represents a liberation of both the land and the personality of the people. There was a time when one might see national cultural identity in a somewhat folkloristic sense; the Anglicization, Americanization, Francoization, etc. of the colonial world inevitably led to a debasement of national tradition to which revolutionaries responded with a massive assertion of the national culture, irrespective of class lines.

But the more sophisticated world of neo-colonialism has largely replaced the naked aggressions of old-style imperialism. Today, imperialism utilizes puppet regimes and native infra-structures to maintain its economic and political strangleholds on the peoples of the Third World. And these regimes, in turn, obliged to validate themselves in the eyes of their own peo-



ple, attempt to utilize national cultural traditions as window-dressing aimed at disguising the fact that real power still resides in the giant banks and corporations of the U.S.A. and other capitalist countries.

And so the struggle for a national culture, which once seemed to be revolutionary almost by definition, must now be viewed even more urgently in class terms. It is not enough to exalt the folklore of the people if that very tradition is being used to pacify unrest, reinforce outmoded values, and legitimize oppressive authority.

One aspect of cultural "under-development" is the fact that the exploited peoples have, by and large, been cut off from most of world culture. The intellectual elite of neo-colonial countries cloak themselves in a familiarity with surrealist art, European music and American literature in order to "pass" as full-fledged members of the international bourgeois intellectual community; but they wear this art more for its stylishness than its substance. The people, meanwhile, have been conditioned to feel

that such common achievements of humanity are beyond their grasp or perception.

National liberation, therefore, unleashes two important cultural trends: the assertion of a true national personality and a new, non-subservient relationship to world culture in general. A liberated people wants to nurture its own identity as it has developed over the course of centuries; but it also simultaneously wants to become a part of the intellectual life of the planet as a whole. And those who may want to restrict such a people to their "own" cultural traditions have simply found a new path to traditional bourgeois paternalism.

The work of the Experimental Sound Collective in Cuba should be seen as a part of this liberating process. Intensely ideological in content, it is attempting to reflect not only Cuba's socialist aspirations, but an awareness of Cuba's relationship to the rest of the world. It is a living reply to those who believe that the culture of socialism is inevitably characterized by political simplistics and intellectual parochialism.

- Irwin Silber

The Experimental Sound Collective

The EXPERIMENTAL SOUND COLLECTIVE of the Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Arts and Industries (ICAIC) has a very specific goal: to create a music growing out of the new Cuban society. In the very act of liberating themselves from colonialism, imperialism and capitalism, the Cuban people have made it possible to choose their own cultural direction freely, for the first time in their history. The revolutionary artist, therefore, is charged with the special responsibility of reassessing the positive values of his own roots, as well as making a new appraisal of all the outside influences of the past period, in order to find the elements which will form the basis of a fusion suitable to the new demands of a collective society based on entirely new values.

We begin with simple guidelines: to be Cuban, to be revolutionary, to reflect the new consciousness of young people formed during this time, to be unrestricted in technique or style and open to all possibilities, and to never consider what we do as "the final word" but as part of a process. Our first decision was to begin doing things. We recorded music individually and collectively, without thinking of any specific goal or line. After a period of work, we began to collectively ana-

lyze what we had done, and to discuss the directions which seemed to be forming. We had each come with a different work experience, but at the end of the year we found that even in our individual work we were moving along common lines.

This record includes a small part of the work we did in that period. It was selected on the basis of a group decision to express certain political ideas which are important to young Cubans today, because this is who we are, who we try to represent, and toward whom our work is directed. We make music for Cuba, for the Third World, and for the liberation struggles of this era in history. If other listeners can relate to that, we are happy to share with them as well.

Civilization has always progressed through the fusion of cultures. We have inherited the riches of the fusion which occurred when African and various European influences came together in America. We are working now in a society where the possibilities exist for a very high degree of participation in the new fusion, where every farmer, every worker can contribute what he has, through the 'aficionado' movement through the opening



Noel Nicola



Sergio Vitier



Pablo Milanés



Leo Brouwer

of radio and television to all, and through the very socialization process he is living.

We study all these sources, these roots, technically and analytically, to discover their strength and also what factors may have inhibited their growth. Through a social analysis, one discovers that since the instruments of making and dispersing mass culture all over the world are, for the most part, controlled or owned outright by imperialism, particularly U.S. imperialism, the development of a genuine "world culture" has been held back, and what we have has been deformed. What some call "world culture" is, in fact, imperialist culture, which is a synthetic product put together out of materials sacked from the same countries whose material wealth is being stolen daily, repackaged in super technology.

In the creation of this pseudo-internationalist culture, world imperialism owns the machines which manufacture the other machines which make the music. It owns the musical instrument factories, the hi-fidelity equipment factories, the machinery and materials for pressing records, and distributing them on a massive scale. It owns the radio networks, or intrudes on other air-space with the Voice of America, or Radio Free Etc., and the regular Miami AM radio beams its corrupt lifestyle and corresponding music toward Cuba everyday. All those influences are impossible to avoid. The difference here is, we are no longer "innocent victims" but rather as we begin to understand how all this works and why it is done, then we can select or reject as we see fit, according to our own definition of what we need.

We are struggling every day to free ourselves from the deformation of taste which is the result of colonial domination. The old idea that popular song lyrics should be simply entertaining was part of that, but now we understand that it is possible to be genuinely entertaining while making our ideological points clearly and poetically. And we also understand how much ideology is expressed in form, melody, rhythm, style, and technique as well as lyrics.



Eduardo Ramos



Silvio Rodríguez



Pablo Menéndez



Genaro (Caturra) García

For instance, we don't criticize the Beatles for a lack of technique, which they obviously have in plenty, or for not getting across any ideology, because they do that very well. We criticize the ideology itself, which for us is reactionary and against the interests of our generation everywhere. We feel about all the so-called "world music" of today that while it is sometimes very rich in technique, form and technical achievement, it is generally empty and negative in content. Even when the lyrics are literally progressive, or seemingly revolutionary, the form and technique bring their own content to bear; that total statement always reflects the class that owns it, and sells it, and benefits from it. And that class is not our class. It is the imperialist class which would like to dominate us everywhere.

We don't work in a vacuum. We eat the same food, wear the same clothes, catch the same buses, take part in the same voluntary work brigades in the agriculture, live in the daily realities of the nation. We perform in factories and for small audiences in the agriculture, holding dialogues with the people who come to listen. We jam with all kinds of musicians, and travel all over the country as often as possible. If our job is to be a cultural vanguard, then we have to be integrated completely with our society, to sum up a vast amount of collective experience, the creativity of millions.

Part of the definition of "vanguard" would have to be the possibility of training ourselves as specialists, and dedicating ourselves to that task. Therefore, like other professional musicians, artists, scientists and technicians, who are now learning their skills in Cuban schools, we are given every opportunity to study counterpoint, harmony, structure, solfeggio, composition, and the techniques of our individual instruments. In listening sessions, we analyze the work of other groups. We study electro-acoustics, and have the use of facilities where we can make experiments in this science. We have the opportunity to put all this to practical use through our work with the Film Institute, where we create soundtracks for short newsreels and didactic films, longer documentaries and feature films.

Mention must be made of the limitations imposed on our work by the economic blockade of Cuba. It means in practice that musical instruments and electronic equipment are in very short supply, and much of the most up-to-date is non-existent. A simple hi-fidelity phonograph which can reproduce today's lp records well is a rarity, even in the homes of musicians. A broad base of technically-trained musicians and engineers doesn't exist, because in the past one was a



El grabador; the engineer
Jeronimo Labrada



Emiliano Salvador



Leoginaldo Pimentel

always obliged to go abroad for such training. (Excellent musicianship on a folk level is taken for granted in Cuba.) Recording facilities are very limited, so that the multi-track effects achieved on this record were the result of painstaking over-dubbing on ancient machines. Our engineer, who works with the group full-time, is very skillful and well-trained, but he has to work with an old Ampex and a handful of Nuemann microphones which have seen better days. We have no portable amplification or recording equipment.

We have pooled all the materials we could find individually, and so our collective has a practical base along with its theoretical one. Together we learn to take full advantage of what we have, or can make. We understand what the blockade has meant for other kinds of workers, and that this, added to the inheritance of colonial underdevelopment, means that thousands of hours of hand-labor must still be done to produce the simplest things. We support the concept fully that Cuba's revolutionary priorities must be the mechanization of agriculture and industry before all else.

The people in the group are: Sergio Vitier, from an intellectual family in Matanzas, with a classical guitar background; Emiliano Salvador, from the small town of Puerto Padre, where his father is a popular bandleader; he is a graduate of the National School of Art and can usually be found jamming on piano with jazz groups; Leoginaldo Pimentel, son of a farmer in Camaguey, also a graduate of Cubanacan (National School of Art) and one of Cuba's best drummers; Pablo Milanés, Silvio Rodríguez, and Noel Nicola who are all singer/songwriters representative of the new generation in Cuba; Leonardo Acosta, jazz musician since before the revolution, widely travelled both as newspaperman and musician, specialist on alto sax, flugelhorn, and recorders; Eduardo Ramos, the bassist and one of the most advanced

composers in the group along with Sergio; Caturla Garcia who came from the Municipal Band where he still plays flute; Lucas de la Guardia who plays clarinet and also works as an editor of animated drawings at ICAIC, but who is best known as the founder of several popular vocal groups; Pablo Menéndez, lead guitar and trombone is a 19-year-old American from Berkeley who has been living in Cuba for the past five years.

Leo Brouwer, the founder of the group, was head of the Music Department at the Film Institute. He saw the need for a group which could devote itself to the demanding task of developing a new popular music growing out of the great burst of energy released by the triumph of the Cuban revolution. As a teacher at the new Conservatory of Music for several years, he was acquainted with the enormous potential among the younger musicians. As a guitarist of internationally acknowledged excellence, and as an electronic/contemporary composer of unsurpassed ability, he has much to offer such a group, and has given freely of all this, with revolutionary generosity and modesty. He has also arranged for us to have the best available teachers to augment our studies. He set out to find fresh, open musical minds which could learn and grow together into a genuine collective, and we have tried to meet his expectations.

We respectfully and gratefully dedicate this work to our teachers and friends, Leo Brouwer, Fred Smith, and Juan Elosegui, and to the Cuban people who have inspired and supported it, for whom it was created. Cuba Va!

Pablo Menendez on behalf of the
Experimental Sound Collective

Music composed, arranged and performed by members of
GRUPO DE EXPERIMENTACION SONORA of the I.C.A.I.C.
(Instituto Cubano de Artes e Industrias Cinematograficas)

Leonardo Acosta, Genaro (Caturla) García, Pedro Guapachá,
Lucas de la Guardia, Pablo Menéndez, Pablo Milanés, Noel
Nicola, Leoginaldo Pimentel, Eduardo Ramos, Silvio Rodríguez,
Emiliano Salvador, Sergio Vitier

Producer of the group: Lidia Herrero
Engineers: Jeronimo Labrada, Ricardo Istueta
Copyist: Roberto Ferrer

"Cuando Digo Futuro" arranged by Armando Guerra
Recorded in the studios of I.C.A.I.C., Havana, Cuba, 1970 - 71

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About The Songs

CUBA VA! was written collectively, especially for the film made by Felix Greene in 1970 during an extended visit to Cuba. Each of the singers contributed a verse, and the music was created spontaneously in the studio. The title could be translated in a number of ways: Cuba is going ahead, "right on, Cuba", Look out, Cuba's coming, all of which add up to the general feeling of optimism and enthusiasm for our revolution!

THE SIGN SAYS THERE (Reza el Cartel Atrás) was written in 1968 by Noel Nicola. We all know that socialism isn't a vaccination against the disease of bureaucracy. After the enemies from the outside are defeated, the people must always struggle against these internal enemies, and the artists in Cuba of every medium have directed much sharp criticism toward this problem. The film "Death of a Bureaucrat" is a sharply satirical comedy which plays continuously throughout the country, and is one of the first feature-length films made by the film industry, which was born only after the triumph of the revolution. There are political cartoons in every publication, posters and billboards, and songs like these. More than that, there has been an intensive government campaign to cut down the numbers of people who work in offices and assign them, instead, to productive work of every kind.

GUN AGAINST GUN (Fusil Contra Fusil) was one of the many songs and poems written immediately after the death of Che Guevara. It has been very popular in Cuba, on the radio and television, and has been performed by many artists besides the composer, who sings it here. The arrangement is a product of our collective methods of work.

ETERNALLY YOLANDA (Eternamente Yolanda) is a personal statement, a love song to the composer's wife. But what a difference from the old-fashioned Latin

love-lyric in which the naked and unrelieved machismo (male supremacy) usually finds the woman threatened with being killed, or offering to kill herself if things do not go as HE wishes! You can find in the song a little of what depths are possible in individual love once the whole society becomes unalienated, able once again to give love without demanding a price, and to accept love freely and without shame.

I BEGIN THE DAY (Comienzo el Día) is Noel Nicola's commentary on the dialectics between the private, inner world of the young poet/musician who would like to give in to the indulgence of his personal whims and sensations completely, and on the other hand is aware of his ties of love and dedication to the outside world. It also expresses the extraordinary demands made on every individual to continuously transcend himself to keep up with the needs of the new society growing by leaps and bounds all around him, his doubts about his own capacity to do that, and at last his determination to give it a good try!

YOUR NAME, HO CHI MINH (Su Nombre, Ho Chi Minh) is a collaboration of artists from two widely separated generations in Cuba. Félix Pita Rodríguez is a poet born in 1909, who was part of the pre-revolutionary "vanguard" poetry movement during the '20s and '30's. He has lived in Europe, Latin America, and recently visited Vietnam. The music was written by Pablo Milanés, now in his twenties, and is a beautiful illustration of the blending of a decidedly Cuban rhythmic base, in this case the music of the Trova and the Son, and Pablo's innovation of adding European baroque chord changes. He performs it in an unmistakably Cuban manner, which appeals very strongly to the Cuban people, and the contents of the song express the identification with and support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people which all Cubans feel. Apart from this song, Pablo has also written an entire cycle of six songs based on the poems

of Ho Chi Minh from prison, which has been presented in a television special with simultaneous readings of the poetry done by Vietnamese students presently studying in Cuba.

WHEN I SAY FUTURE (Cuando Digo 'Futuro') was written for the film "Testimonio", and was arranged by Armando Guerra.. Sometimes people lose perspective about the future, and accommodate themselves to the present. Living daily with shortages and hard work done by hand, it is possible to lose perspective on the future that is being built, the hard labor "which is ending." Several years ago, in a speech, Fidel said that "when we run out of patience, we will look for more," preparing the people for the long struggle to create socialism and overcome underdevelopment. Silvio talks about the twenty thousand who died in the armed struggle, and the many remaining whose lives were stunted by the long years of privation before, but also about the union of productive forces which will provide the basis of the future - man and woman. He tells us how important everything is to the revolution, from the children on the beach, to the young girl who worries about the length of a skirt, to the people who work every day in the production of food and other necessities, and reminds us that the people of Cuba are always prepared to defend all that.

THE YOUNG YEARS (Los Años Mozos) opens with the sound of a baroque F-trumpet, a sound which does not occur in Cuba. It was produced by recording a flugelhorn and then doubling the speed. You will hear the sound of the "tres," a typical instrument of Cuba which has three double strings on a six-string guitar body, and which also appears in Side 1, Bands 4 and 5, and Side 2, Band 5. The intention of the words is very clear.

TRANSPARENT WALLS (Muros Transparentes) is the kind of arrangement which demands a 16-track recording studio, but was accomplished by skillful engineering and overdubbing. The

sound like a jet plane taking off was made by scraping the strings of a grand piano and blowing on a kazoo simultaneously. Noel's inventiveness is apparent on this and also "The Sign Says There," where he plays everything himself. On that song you can hear the African Thumb Piano which he had to make himself. The text is a commentary on the remains of false "morality" which grew in pre-revolutionary times but which is outdated now.

THE KING OF THE FLOWERS (El Rey de las Flores) is in the imagery of a fairy tale, and describes a mythical kingdom. There is a parallel theme: one can create a dream world of "peace and love" but it will still be affected by the very real world outside, by the reactionary violence going on in it; by the same token, one can create an island of socialism where "the king of the flowers works and works and his people work also" together in mutual cooperation and concern, but it can be injured by arbitrary acts of aggression from outside at any moment, as all Cubans are aware, and as they have experienced.

DON'T ASK ME (No Me Pidas) is a declaration of a maturing process. The poet says that he no longer impulsively or grandiosely throws himself into things without trying to make some judgement about what the outcome will be. This individual development is part of the collective growth of the nation, from the early euphoric days after the triumph of the revolution, when everyone thought that everything could be accomplished right away, with a maximum of effort, to the present, when sober evaluations are being collectively made about what must and will be done over the long haul. Not to say that the original goals were too high or unreachable, but that the original evaluation of what it would take to meet them was made without experience. It is easy, in a way, to make an extravagant dedication to high ideals in revolutionary times, but the new dedication to truth includes the collection of evidence for evaluation. Or as good old Engels put it, "Freedom is the recognition of necessity."

Side 1, Band 1:

CUBA VA!

Words and Music by:

**Silvio Rodríguez, Pablo Milanés y
Noel Nicola**

Del amor estamos hablando
Por amor estamos haciendo
Por amor se está hasta matando
Para por amor seguir trabajando
Que nadie interrumpa el rito
Queremos amar en paz
Para decir en un grito: Cuba va...

Quiero abrir mi voz al mundo
Que llegue al último confín
De norte a sur y de este a oeste
Y que cualquier hombre pueda
Gritar sus propias esperanzas
Sus heridas y sus luchas
Cuando diga: Cuba va...

Puede que algún machete
Se enrede en la maleza
Puede que algunas noches
Las estrellas no quieran salir
Puede que con los brazos
Haya que abrir la selva
Pero a pesar de los pesares
Como sea: Cuba va...

Side 1, Band 2:

REZA EL CARTEL ALLI

Words and music by Noel Nicola

Hoy por la mañana
A primera hora
Estuve hablando con un cajón . . . de ideas
Mi nombre estaba anotado en su agenda,
Mi nombre era una sigla de lata,
Mi nombre era un traje sin un hombre dentro
Mi nombre era un traje sin un hombre
Dentro de él.

Hoy por la mañana
A primera hora
Estuve sentado en un banco de tiempo
"SEQUESE LA VIDA ANTES DE ENTRAR"
"ROMPASE LA RISA ANTES DE ENTRAR"
"CUELQUE SU CEREBRO
ANTES DE ENTRAR"
Reza el cartel allí.

CUBA VA! (3:00)

(Written especially for Felix's Greene's
film, "Cuba Va!")

We're talking about love
We're building for love,
One would even kill for love,
In order to keep on working for love.
Let no one interfere with the ritual;
We want to love in peace,
And to proclaim with a shout, Cuba Va!

I want to raise my voice to the world,
And to reach the furthest corners,
North to south, east to west,
And that every man be able
To cry out his own hopes, his wounds,
His struggles,
When he says, "Cuba Va!"

It may be that some machete
Gets tangled in the underbrush.
It may be that some nights,
The stars don't want to come out.
It may be that with our bare arms
We'll have to open up the jungle.
But all those weights can never hold us back!
Cuba Va!

THE SIGN SAYS HERE (3:48)

First thing this morning,
At the break of day,
I was talking to a box...of ideas.
My name was already entered in his notebook.
My name was a tin pair of initials,
My name was a suit with no man inside,
My name was a suit with no man inside..of it.

First thing this morning,
At the break of day,
I was sitting on a time bench.
"DRY YOUR LIFE BEFORE ENTERING"
"WIPE OFF YOUR SMILE BEFORE
ENTERING"
"CHECK YOUR BRAINS BEFORE ENTERING"
The sign says there.

Hoy por la mañana
 A primera hora
 Estuve alternando con un ser-gaveta
 Para él las personas se miden por metros,
 Para él "buenos" o "malos" y
 "Vivos" o "muertos",
 Para él no hay consigna si no es su consigna...
 Para él no hay consigna si no es su consigna gris.

Hoy por la mañana
 A primera hora
 Estuve afilando un cuchillo de viento
 "SEQUESE LA VIDA ANTES DE ENTRAR"
 "ROMPASE LA RISA ANTES DE ENTRAR"
 "CUELQUE SU CEREBRO
 ANTES DE ENTRAR"
 Reza el cartel allí,
 Reza el cartel lamentablemente allí.

Side 1, Band 3:
FUSIL CONTRA FUSIL
 by Silvio Rodríguez

El silencio del monte va,
 Preparando un adiós.
 La palabra que se dirá
 In memoriam será.
 La explosión.
 Se perdió
 El hombre de este siglo allí.
 Su nombre y su apellido son
 Fusil contra fusil.
 Se quebró,
 La cáscara del viento al sur
 Y sobre la primera cruz
 Despierta la verdad.
 Todo el mundo tercero va,
 A enterrar su dolor.
 Con granizo de plomo harán,
 Su agujero de honor,
 Su canción.
 Dejarán
 El cuerpo de la vida allí,
 Su nombre y su apellido son
 Fusil contra fusil.
 Cantarán
 Su luto de hombre y de animal,
 Y en vez de lágrimas echar
 Con plomo llorarán
 Alzarán
 Al hombre de la tumba al sol,
 Y el nombre se repartirán
 Fusil contra fusil.

First thing this morning,
 At the break of day,
 I was conversing with a file-drawer being.
 For him, persons are measured by meters.
 For him, either good/bad or alive/dead.
 For him there is no slogan if it isn't his slogan.
 For him there is no slogan if it is not his grey
 slogan.

First thing this morning,
 At the break of day,
 I was sharpening a wind-knife.
 "DRY YOUR LIFE BEFORE ENTERING"
 "WIPE OFF YOUR SMILE BEFORE
 ENTERING"
 "CHECK YOUR BRAINS BEFORE ENTERING"
 The sign says there.
 The sign, unfortunately, says there.

GUN AGAINST GUN (3:00)

The silence of the forest
 Is preparing a goodbye.
 The word that will be said
 In memoriam is
 Explosion.
 He was lost,
 The man of this century, there.
 His first name and his last name are
 Gun against gun.
 It broke,
 The shell of the wind to the south,
 And on the first cross,
 Truth awakened.
 All the Third World
 Buries its sorrow,
 With a hail of lead,
 It will hollow out its place of honor,
 Its song.
 They will leave
 The body of life there.
 His first name and his last name are
 Gun against gun.
 They will sing
 Their mourning song of man and animal,
 And instead of tears
 They will cry lead.
 They will lift the man
 From the tomb toward the sun,
 And between them they will share his name,
 Gun against gun.

Side 1, Band 4:

ETERNAMENTE YOLANDA

Words and Music by Pablo Milanés

Esto no puede ser no más que una canción
Quisiera fuera una declaración de amor
Romántica sin reparar en formas tales
Que pongan freno a lo que siento ahora a raudales
Te amo, te amo, eternamente te amo
Si me faltaras no voy a morirme
Si he de morir quiero que sea contigo
Mi soledad se siente acompañada
Por eso a veces sé que necesito
Tu mano, tu mano, eternamente tu mano
Cuando te vi sabía que era cierto
Este temor de hallarme descubierto
Tu me desnudas con siete razones
Me abres el pecho siempre que me colmas
De amores, de amores, eternamente de amores
Si alguna vez me siento derrotado
Renuncio a ver el sol cada mañana
Rezando el credo que me has enseñado
Miro tu cara y digo en la ventana
Yolanda, Yolanda, eternamente Yolanda.

Side 1, Band 5:

COMIENZO EL DÍA

by Noel Nicola

Es tan temprano y tú ya me despiertas,
No me dejas dormir. Algo sucede.
A ojos cerrados busco la ventana
Para mirarte a ti mientras los abro.

Te digo que estás bella como nunca
Así, sin arreglarte aún el pelo;
Rodamos en un beso cama abajo
Y siento que estás viva de milagro

Comienza el día así, como si nada,
Apretado a tus pechos pidiendote café y amor
Comienzo el día aún alucinado,
Los ruidos suenan lejos a esta hora turbia
Afuera la gente hace lo suyo por vivir,
Afuera la gente quiera averiguar
Afuera la gente habla del amor,
Afuera me están llamando

Comienzo el día
Y antes de que me hables
Ya te he hecho mil promesas
Que no voy a cumplir
Comienzo el día y al mirar hacia afuera
Me entra como un mareo y tengo que sentarme:
Afuera la vida apenas comenzó,
Afuera todo tiene que cambiar,
Afuera los lobos son lobos aún,
Afuera hay que salir armado

ETERNALLY YOLANDA (4:16)

This can be no more than a song.
I wish it could be a declaration of love,
Romantic, without concern for any such forms,
That would put a brake on what
I am feeling now in such abundance.
I love you, I love you, eternally I love you.
If you weren't around, I wouldn't die,
Because if I have to die,
I want it to be with you.
My solitude feels less alone,
That's why sometimes I know
That I need your hand, your hand,
Eternally your hand.
When I saw you I knew it was true,
This fear of finding myself uncovered.
You stripped me, with seven reasons.
You open my chest,
Every time you overwhelm me
With loves, eternally with loves.
If I ever feel defeated,
I will renounce seeing the sun every morning,
Reciting the creed you've taught me.
I'll look at your face,
And I'll say, in the window,
Yolanda, Yolanda, eternally Yolanda.

I BEGIN THE DAY (4:05)

It's so early, and you're already waking me up.
You don't let me sleep. Something's going on.
Eyes closed, I'm looking for the window.
So that I can look at you while I open them.

I tell you that you're prettier than ever,
Like that, before you fix your hair.
We roll down the bed in a kiss.
And I feel you're alive by a miracle.

I begin the day, as if it was nothing,
Close to your breasts,
Asking you for coffee and love.
I begin the day, still hallucinating.
The noises sound far-off at this murky hour.
Outside, people are going about making a living,
Outside, people want to find out why.
Outside, people speak of love.
Outside, they are calling me.

I begin the day,
And before you talk to me,
I've already made you a thousand promises
That I'm not going to keep.
I begin the day, and as I look outside,
I get kind of dizzy, and have to sit down.
Outside, life is just starting.
Outside, all has to change.
Outside, wolves are still wolves.
Outside, you better pack a gun.

Quiero darle mi día a los que sueñan,
A los que hacen el pan de madrugada,
A los que ponen piedras sobre piedras,
A los que te mantienen tan despierta

Comienzo el día: aseguro las llaves,
Registro mis bolsillos en busca de monedas
Comienzo el día y aún detras de la puerta
Te pido un beso fuerte para salir al sol
Afuera comentan la televisión,
Afuera el sindicato discutió una ley,
Afuera la Patria está por reventar,
Afuera me están llamando
Y voy.

I want to give my days to those who dream,
To those who bake bread before dawn,
To those who put stone upon stone,
To those who keep you so wide-awake.

I begin the day,
I check my keys,
Look through my pockets to see if I have change,
I begin the day, and from the half-open door
I ask you for a big kiss, to help me out into the sun
Outside, they make comments
About last night's TV.
Outside the trade union discussed passing a law.
Outside, my country is about to burst forth.
Outside, they're calling me,
And here I go!

Side 2, Band 1:

SU NOMBRE, HO CHI MINH

Words by Félix Pita Rodríguez,

Music by Pablo Milanés

Porque usted Presidente Ho Chi Minh
Poeta Ho Chi Minh
Serenos campesinos vietnamitas Ho Chi Minh
Tiene setenta y siete años de lucha en vida entera
Y porque usted ha dejado de ser
Todos sus nombres una voz,
Un aliento, una mirada
Para ser solamente y nada menos
Que tierra y sangre y huesos de la Patria
Por todas esas cosas y por muchas otras
Es difícil encerrar en jaulas de palabras
Y porque para usted la dignidad del hombre es
Más alta que el pan, más alta que la gloria
Más alta que la propia supervivencia
Su nombre Ho Chi Minh
Puede ponerse en verso

A usted puede cantarsele
Como se canta al mar y a las montañas
porque cantarle a usted Presidente,
Poeta, campesino
Es cantarle a la tierra hermosa
Y atormentada de Viet Nam
Que no tiene ya la forma de una vara de bambú
Con una cesta en cada extremo
Sino la forma gloriosa de la única puerta
Por la que puede entrarse al Mundo del futuro

YOUR NAME, HO CHI MINH (2:20)

Because you, President Ho Chi Minh,
Poet Ho Chi Minh,
Quiet Vietnamese farmer, Ho Chi Minh,
Have spent seventy-seven years in struggle,
Your whole life,
Because you have given up being
All your names
A voice, a breath, a glance,
To be only, and nothing less than
The earth, blood and bones of your homeland,
Because of all these things,
And many others which cannot be
Imprisoned in cages of words,
And because for you the dignity of man is
More important than bread,
More important than glory,
More important than one's own survival,
Your name Ho Chi Minh,
Can be put in verse.

Poets can sing to you
As one sings to the sea, and to the mountains,
Because to sing to you, Presidente,
Poet, farmer,
Is to sing to the
Beautiful and tormented land
Of Vietnam
That no longer has the shape of a bamboo pole
With a basket on either end,
But the glorious shape of the only door
Through which one can enter the future.

Side 2, Band 2:
CUANDO DIGO FUTURO
by Silvio Rodríguez

Te convido a creerme cuando digo "futuro."
Si no crees mi palabra,
Cree en el brillo, de un gesto,
Cree en mi cuerpo,
Credeen mis manos,
(Que se acaban)
Te convido a creerme cuando digo "futuro",
Si no crees en mis ojos,
Cree en la angustia de un grito,
Cree en la tierra,
Cree en la lluvia,
Cree en la savia.

Hay veinte mil buenas semillas
En el valle desde ayer.
Hay restos de desesperados,
Hay el hombre y su mujer.
Los hierros se fundieron ya.
Hay la paciencia y queda más.

Hay un país de roca
En ruinas, bajo otro país de pan.
Hay una madre que camina codo a codo
Con su clan,
Los hierros se fundieron ya.
Hay la paciencia y queda más.

Hay cuatro niños ahora mismo
Sonriendo en una playa.
Y en la trastienda de una bala
Un militar que no ha dormido
Y aquella misma muchachita vuelve
A recortar su saya;
Sí y es importante,
Desde un niño hasta el largo de un vestido.
Los hierros se fundieron ya!
Hay la paciencia,
Y queda mas. (repeat)
Yo te convido a creerme cuando digo "futuro"!

Side 2, Band 3:
LOS AÑOS MOZOS
by Pablo Milanés

Los años mozos pasaron
Y ahora saber que hay que ser y hay que estar.
Duro el camino que queda
Y ahora saber caminar,
Y hay que andar.

Fuera los falsos valores,
A mí solo llega
Quien sabe de hombre calzar
Y hasta los tristes amores
Que tantos dolores
Me hicieren un tiempo pasar.

WHEN I SAY "FUTURE" (3:12)

I invite you to believe me when I say future.
If you don't trust my word,
Believe in the splendor of a gesture;
Trust in my body,
Believe in my hands
(Which are ending.)
I invite you to believe me when I say "future."
If you don't trust my eyes,
Believe in the anguish of a cry;
Trust in the land,
Believe in the rain,
Trust in the sap.

There are twenty thousand good seeds
In the valley since yesterday.*
There are remains of desperate people;
There is man and woman.
The irons are already melted,
But there is patience, and more remains.

There is a country of rock,
In ruins, under another country of bread.
There is a mother who walks
Shoulder to shoulder with her clan.
The irons are already melted,
But there is patience, and more remains.

There are four children right now
Smiling on a beach somewhere.
And in the backroom of a bullet,
A soldier that hasn't slept.
And that same young girl
Shortens her skirt again;
All is important,
From a child to the length of a dress.
The irons are already melted,
But there is patience, and more remains,
I invite you to trust me when I say "future."

*Refers to the 20,000 dead during the armed struggle in Cuba.

THE YOUNG YEARS (1:50)

The youthful years have passed,
And now we have to know what we must be,
And that we must be.
Hard is the road that lies ahead,
And now we must know how to walk,
And that we must go on.

Down with false values!
I am only touched
By those who know how to walk in men's shoes.
And even the sad love affairs,
That once gave me such pain,
Have passed.

Y ahora tengo mis poros abiertos
 Para lo que hay que hacer
 Y esta hecho,
 O esperar mi muerte
 Abriendome el puente
 Y diciendome, "Puedes pasar."

Los años mozos pasaron
 Y ahora saber que hay que ser y hay que estar.
 Duro el camino que queda
 Y ahora saber caminar,
 Y hay que andar.

Side 2, Band 4:

MUROS TRANSPARENTES

by Noel Nicola

Uno va a hacer algo, y siente voces,
 Vienen de otra parte de la noche.
 Vienen de milenios entregados
 A sacrificar las emociones.
 Como si fuera poca la carga que trae el hombre
 Trae el amor atado con cien cadenas de bronce.
 Podría librarse ya de ese falso peso.
 Podría ir dejando de tenerle miedo a un beso
 Que libremente vuele por la humanidad!
 Hasta cuando va a durar el ruido?
 Hasta que la gente se decida
 A hacer el amor y amar de frente
 En casas con muros transparentes.
 (Si fueras mas desinhibida, ay, vida!)

Side 2, Band 5:

EL REY DE LAS FLORES

by Silvio Rodríguez

Al rey de las flores lo conocí
 Por la tarde, hace algún tiempo;
 Me llamo la atención su tono de arcoiris
 En la piel y su corona de papel.

El rey de las flores tiene su pueblo
 En un bosque muy remoto,
 Dos pulgadas detrás del sol;
 Cada inquilino en una flor
 Y en cada piso está el amor.

El rey de las flores tiene lagartos
 Que cantan de salto en salto.
 Tiene batallones de abejas chiquitas
 Y arañas, babosas y aves bonitas.

And now all my pores are open,
 To what must be done,
 And is done.
 Or I wait for death to open the bridge for me,
 Telling me: You can go on.

(repeat verse one)

TRANSPARENT WALLS (2:12)

You go to do something, and you hear voices,
 Coming from some other part of the night.
 They come from centuries of
 Doing without emotions.
 As if the burden man carries
 Wasn't enough in itself!
 With his love tied by a hundred chains of bronze.
 He could have freed himself by now
 From that false weight.
 He could have left behind the fear of a kiss
 That flies so freely through humanity!
 When will that noise ever stop?
 When people decide to make love,
 And to love face to face,
 In houses with transparent walls.
 (If you were only more uninhibited, oh, honey!)

THE KING OF THE FLOWERS (2:14)

I met the King of the Flowers,
 Some time ago, one afternoon.
 The rainbow tint of his skin,
 And his crown of paper,
 Attracted my attention.

The town of the King of the Flowers
 Is far away in the woods,
 Two inches behind the sun.
 Every tenant in a flower,
 And love on every floor.

The King of the Flowers has lizards
 That sing from leap to leap.
 He has battalions of small bees,
 And spiders, and slugs,
 And beautiful birds.

El rey de las flores trabaja y trabaja
(Su pueblo también trabaja).
Derrumba los bosques de hierba tan altos,
Navega en los charcos de agua del campo.

El rey de las flores
Tiene sus fabricas dentro de la tierra;
Cada obrero hace una flor
Que en primavera crecerá,
Si no, una mosca las lloverá.

Sobre los floridos campos
Del rey de las flores
Veo a mi hijo
Y llamandolo hay una voz:
Quedó partido en dos mitades
Por una bomba que cayó.

The King of the Flowers
Works and works.
(His people also work.)
He tumbles down the forests
Of tall grass.
He sails in the puddles
Of country water.

The King of Flowers
Has his factories
Under the ground.
Each worker makes a flower,
Which will grow in spring.
If they don't,
A fly will rain them out.

Over the florid fields
Of the King of the Flowers,
I see my son,
And there a voice calling for him:
He was left in two pieces
By a bomb that just fell.

Side 2, Band 6:

NO ME PIDAS

Words and Music by Pablo Milanés

No me pidas, que a todo diga que sí,
Que te cansaras
Ya no tiro mi rienda al viento
Hasta el final no me aguantes,
No me aquantes,
Si ves que puedo arriesgar mi seguridad
Tierra abajo podré tenerla e iba a llegar
Esta aparente ingenuidad
Sin pretensiones, sí, es mi verdad
De mis huesos que hagan
Un polvo dorado de amanecer
Ni la muerte que me sorprenda sin querer
Lo anhelado a veces te hace
Mirar hasta trascender
Lo logrado te ve sentado descender
Un culto pleno a la verdad
Vale mil años mas que claudicar
No me pidas que a todo diga que si
Que te cansaras
Ya no tiro mi rienda al viento
Hasta el final
No me pidas que a todo diga que si
Que te cansaras.

DON'T ASK ME (2:23)

Don't ask me to say "yes" to everything.
You'll get tired.
I don't "give my reigns to the wind"
Without reservation anymore.
Don't hold me down,
If you see I might risk my security.
Down the road, I'll be able to have it,
And it's gonna come.
This apparent innocence,
Without pretensions, yes, that's my truth.
Make a golden dust of dawn with my bones.
Don't let death surprise me unintentionally.
What you strive for sometimes
Makes you transcend yourself;
What you've obtained finds you
Sitting down, slipping backwards.
Worshipping truth completely
Is worth a thousand years more than giving up.
Don't ask me to say "yes" to everything.
You'll get tired.
I don't "give my reigns to the wind"
Without reservation, anymore.
Don't ask me to say "yes" to everything.
You'll get tired.

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