

Ute Lemper
FOREVER

THE LOVE POEMS OF
Pablo Neruda

Music by UTE LEMPER
and MARCELO NISINMAN



STEINWAY & SONS

With this album, I want to honor the beloved poet PABLO NERUDA from Chile, Poet, Politician and Diplomat, Nobel Price winner for Literature in 1971. Garcia Lorca called him one of the greatest poets of the 20th century. Besides his political legacy and his unforgettable writings, that stand as an outcry against oppression and dictatorship, he gave us the most beautiful gift of the love poems.

I chose these very poems to celebrate love, passion and life. First I invented all the melodies to find the right lines and feelings through the precious words and the rhythm and sound of the original phrases. My intention was to invent the most loving, moving and tender songs and melodies I could possibly imagine, but at the same time with strong emotion of pain and hurt and passion. Implosions and explosions as the temperament of Neruda himself represents.

I have been inspired by a Universe of great song writers like Leo Ferre, Astor Piazzolla, Kurt Weill, George Moustaki, Jacques Brel and many others. With utmost care and delicacy and immense joy I tried to bring these Love Poems to a musical life. Somehow they had already long invaded my mind and heart, and existed in my vision with melody and rhythm. I felt their existence in the music of life. Since Neruda's wife Mathilda was Argentinian, and both spent many years in exile in Argentina, the element of Tango adds a perfect colour to the songs.

Everyone on this project has given all their heart and talent to this album, John Benthall and Vana Gierig and also Andy Ezrin at the core of the band on guitar and piano, to Steve Millhouse and Todd Turkisher bringing foundation and groove to the tunes. The most beautiful gift of the Bandoneon sound celebrated by Tito Castro with delicacy and romance and by Victor Villena with virtuosity and fierceness. I need to especially mention Jesse Mills on Violin who embellished many songs with his gorgeous improvisations. A special thanks goes to Freddy Torrealba, who flew in from Chile to play his Charango. He offers the beautiful authentic flair of the music of his country. I also want to especially thank our Chilean string arranger Juan Antonio Sanchez who brought such sophistication and great emotion of his country to the music.

Thank you to Marcelo Nisinman for collaborating with me on the harmonics of most of the songs.

Thank you to my friend Charl Kroeger (designck) for the beautiful artwork and package design.

And love to my children Max, Stella, Julian and Jonas.





'The greatest poet in the twentieth century in any language'. That's how Gabriel García Márquez described Pablo Neruda, the Chilean who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. Forty years after his death on September 23, 1973, in the wake of Augusto Pinochet's military coup - Neruda's lyrical love poetry, humanism and, above all, his infectious passion for life remain as vital and relevant as they ever were.

Lovers everywhere still woo each other with verses from Neruda's *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* - nearly nine decades after the book's initial publication in 1924. Ute Lemper memorably performs the celebrated Poem Twenty as 'The Saddest Poem' on this CD. Neruda himself was keen to turn his back on the inward-looking anguish of his early collections - including the magnificent first two volumes of *Residence on Earth* - after the assassination of his great friend, Federico García Lorca, in Spain in August 1936.

From then on, Neruda's poetry underwent a metamorphosis, becoming a weapon for social and political justice. Yet the first two *Residences*, published in the 1930s, contain poems of hermetic beauty and formidable lyrical intensity - as can be witnessed in Ute Lemper's sumptuously elegiac version of 'Madrigal escrito en el invierno' (Madrigal Written in Winter), with the hypnotic voice of Neruda reciting the poem in the background, and her delicious 'Oda con un lamento' (Ode with a Lament). Ute also selects Neruda's later 'Alianza (sonata)' from his Third Residence, a collection published in 1947 - although the poem, stunningly interpreted by Ute, first appeared separately in 1940.

In Neruda's life, actions could be as significant as words. Before he formally joined the Chilean Communist Party in 1945, he saved the lives of more than 2,000 Spanish Republican refugees from Franco's fascism, shipping them out from southern France to Valparaíso, in Chile, aboard a fishing-boat, the *Winnipeg*, in 1939. This rescue operation stood out as his favourite poem, he wrote later. And in 1948, he rose in the Senate in Santiago and denounced the dictatorial regime of President Gabriel González Videla. From then on, Neruda was in mortal danger. He fled underground for a remarkable year in hiding in safe houses in Chile - during which he wrote much of his potent epic of personal and historic betrayal, *Canto General* - before escaping across the Andes on horseback.

Among Neruda's many other books, the *Elementary Odes* - elegant, sensual and life-affirming songs to everyday objects - and his exhilarating, if not entirely trustworthy, *Memoirs* are to be relished. One of my personal favourites among all his works is the 1958 collection, *Extravagaria*, full of marvelously witty self-mockery.

Ute Lemper sings magnificent versions of seven songs based on Neruda's *The Captain's Verses* (first published anonymously in Naples in 1952) - intensely moving love poems he dedicated to his lover and future third wife,

Matilde Urrutia, and to Capri, the island they shared for a few weeks that year. These songs are the 'La noche en la isla' (Night on the Island), which Ute sings in French as 'La nuit dans l'île'; the powerful 'Si tú me olvidas' (If You Forget Me); the poignant 'Tus manos' (Your Hands); the gloriously lilting 'El viento en la isla' (The Wind on the Island); the tender, melodious 'Ausencia' (Absence); the intimate 'El sueño' (The Dream) and the gentle yet quietly impassioned 'Siempre' (Always).

Four decades after he died, Pablo Neruda and his poetry continue to exert a powerful influence through their passion for love, friendship, social justice - and life itself. Even the manner of Neruda's death recently became the subject of world attention following the exhumation of his body in Chile on April 8, 2013, to investigate the possibility that he might have been poisoned in his Santiago hospital by political enemies.

- Adam Feinstein

Biographical Note:

Adam Feinstein's acclaimed biography, *Pablo Neruda: A Passion for Life*, was published by Bloomsbury in the UK and the USA in 2004 and is being re-issued in an updated version in 2013.

Arranged by Ute Lemper and Band

String arrangements by **Juan Antonio Sanchez** (from Chile)

Musicians:

Tito Castro and **Victor Villena** on Bandoneon

John Benthall on Guitar

Steve Millhouse on Bass

Vana Gierig on Piano

Todd Turkisher on Percussion

Wolfram Koessel on Cello

Dov Scheindlin on Viola

Jesse Mills on Violin

Special Guest:

Freddy Torrealba (from Chile) on Charango



La nuit dans l'île

Original title: La Noche en la Isla

(Los Versos del Capitan)

French adaptation by Christian Rinderknecht / Claude Couffon

Toute la nuit
j'ai dormi avec toi
près de la mer, dans l'île.
Sauvage et douce
tu étais entre le plaisir et le sommeil,
entre le feu et l'eau.
Très tard peut-être
nos sommeils se sont-ils unis
par le sommet ou par le fond, là-haut
comme des branches agitées par le même vent,
en bas comme rouges racines se touchant.

Peut-être ton sommeil s'est-il aussi dépris du mien
et sur la mer et sur sa nuit
m'a-t-il cherché comme avant toi et moi,
quand tu n'existais pas encore,
quand sans t'apercevoir
je naviguais de ton côté
et que tes yeux cherchaient
ce qu'aujourd'hui
- pain, vin, amour, colère
- je t'offre à pleines mains à toi,
la coupe qui attendait de recevoir
les présents de ma vie.

J'ai dormi avec toi
toute la nuit alors
que la terre en sa nuit tournait
avec ses vivants et ses morts,
et lorsque je me réveillais soudain,
par l'ombre environné,
mon bras te prenait par la taille,
La nuit ni le sommeil n'ont pu nous séparer.

Peut-être ton sommeil s'est-il aussi dépris du mien
et sur la mer et sur sa nuit
m'a-t-il cherché comme avant toi et moi,
quand tu n'existais pas encore,
quand sans t'apercevoir
je naviguais de ton côté
et que tes yeux cherchaient
ce qu'aujourd'hui
- pain, vin, amour, colère
- je t'offre à pleines mains à toi,
la coupe qui attendait de recevoir
les présents de ma vie.

je naviguais de ton côté
et que tes yeux cherchaient
ce qu'aujourd'hui
- pain, vin, amour, colère
- je t'offre à pleines mains à toi,
la coupe qui attendait de recevoir
les présents de ma vie.

J'ai dormi avec toi
et ta bouche, au réveil,
sortie de ton sommeil
m'a donné la saveur de la terre,
d'algues, d'onde marine,
qui s'abrite au fond de ta vie.
Alors j'ai reçu ton baiser
que l'aurore mouillait
comme s'il m'arrivait
de cette mer qui nous entoure.

Night on the Island

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

All night I have slept with you
Next to the sea, on the island.
Wild and sweet you were between pleasure and sleep,
Between fire and water.

Perhaps very late
Our dreams joined
At the top or at the bottom,
Up above like branches moved by a common wind,
Down below like red roots that touch.

Perhaps your dream
Drifted from mine
And though the dark sea
Was seeking me
As before,
When you did not yet exist,
When you did not yet exist,
When without sighting you
I sailed by your side,
And your eyes sought
What now-
Bread, wine, love, and anger-
I heap upon you
Because you are the cup
That was waiting for the gifts of my life.

I have slept with you
All night long while
The dark earth spins
With the living and the dead,
And on the shadow
My arm encircled your waist.
Neither night nor sleep
Could separate us.

I have slept with you
And on walking, your mouth,
Come from your dream,
Gave me the taste of earth,
Of sea water, of seaweed,
Of the depth of your life,
And I received your kiss
Moistened by the dawn
As if it came to me
From the sea that surrounds us.

Madrigal Escrito en Invierno

(Residencia en la Tierra)

En el fondo del mar profundo,
en la noche de largas listas,
como un caballo cruza corriendo
tu callado callado nombre.

Alójame en tu espalda, ay, refúgiame,
aparéceme en tu espejo, de pronto,
sobre la hoja solitaria, nocturna,
brotando de lo oscuro, detrás de ti.

Flor de la dulce luz completa,
acúdeme tu boca de besos,
violenta de separaciones,
determinada y fina boca.

Ahora bien, en lo largo y largo,
de olvido a olvido residen conmigo
los rieles, el grito de la lluvia:
lo que la oscura noche preserva.

Acógeme en la tarde de hilo,
cuando al anochecer trabaja
su vestuario y palpitá en el cielo
una estrella llena de viento.

Acércame tu ausencia hasta el fondo,
pesadamente, tapándome los ojos,
crúzame tu existencia, suponiendo
que mi corazón está destruido.

Madrigal Written in Winter

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

*In the depths of the deep sea,
in the night of long lists,
like a horse your silent
silent name runs past.*

*Lodge me at your back, oh shelter me,
appear to me in your mirror, suddenly,
upon the solitary, nocturnal pane,
sprouting from the dark behind you.*

*Flower of sweet total light,
bring to my call your mouth of kisses,
violent from separations,
resolute and delicate mouth.*

*Now then, in the long run,
from oblivion to oblivion the rails
reside with me, the cry of the rain:
what the dark night preserves.*

*Welcome me in the threadlike evening,
when at dusk it works upon
its wardrobe and in the sky a star
twinkles filled with wind.*

*Bring your substance deep down to me,
heavily, covering my eyes,
let your existence cut across me, supposing
that my heart is destroyed.*

If You Forget Me

(Los Versos del Capitan)

Original title : Si Tú Me Olvidas
English adaptation by Donald D. Walsh

I want you to know one thing.
You know how this is:
if I look at the crystal moon,
at the red branch of the
slow autumn at my window,
if I touch near the fire
the impalpable ash
or the wrinkled body of the log,
everything carries me to you,
as if everything that exists,
aromas, light, metals,
were little boats that sail
toward those isles of yours
that wait for me.

Well, now,
if little by little
you stop loving me
I shall stop loving you
little by little.

If suddenly
you forget me
do not look for me,
for I shall already have
forgotten you.

If you think it long and mad,
the wind of banners
that passes through my life,
and you decide to leave me at the shore
of the heart where I have roots,
remember that on that day, at that hour,

I shall lift my arms
and my roots will set off
to seek another land.
But if each day, each hour
you feel that you are destined for me
with implacable sweetness,
if each day a flower climbs up to your lips to seek me

ah my love, ah my own,
in me all that fire is repeated,
in me nothing is extinguished
or forgotten,

my love feeds on your love,
beloved, and as long as you live
it will be in your arms
without leaving mine.



Tus Manos

(Los Versos del Capitan)

Cuando tus manos salen,
y amor, hacia las mías,
qué me traen volando?
Por qué se detuvieron
en mi boca, de pronto,
por qué las reconozco
como si entonces antes,
las hubiera tocado,
como si antes de ser
hubieran recorrido
mi frente, mi cintura?

Su suavidad venía
volando sobre el tiempo,
sobre el mar, sobre el humo,
sobre la primavera,
y cuando tú pusiste

tus manos en mi pecho,
reconocí esas alas
de paloma dorada,
reconocí esa greda
y ese color de trigo.

Los años de mi vida
yo caminé buscándolas.
Subí las escaleras,
crucé los arrecifes,
me llevaron los trenes,

las aguas me trajeron,
y en la piel de las uvas
me pareció tocarte.
La madera de pronto
me trajo tu contacto,

la almendra me anunciaba
tu suavidad secreta,
hasta que se cerraron
tus manos en mi pecho
y allí como dos alas
terminaron su viaje.

Your Hands

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

When your hands go out,
Love, toward mine,
What do they bring me flying?
Why did they stop
at my mouth, suddenly,
Why do I recognize them
As if then, before,
I have touched them,
As if before they existed
They had passed over
My forehead, my waist.

Their softness came
Flying over time,
Over the sea, over the smoke,
Over the spring
And when you placed

Your hands on my chest,
I recognized those golden
Dove wings,
I recognized that day
And that color of wheat.

All the years of my life
I walked around looking for them
I went up the stairs,
I crossed the roads,
Trains carried me,

Waters brought me,
And in the skin of the grapes
I thought I touched you.
The wood suddenly
brought me your touch,

The almond announced to me
Your secret softness,
Until your hands
Closed on my chest
And there like two wings
They ended their journey.

El Viento en la Isla

(Los Versos del Capitan)

El viento es un caballo:
óyelo cómo corre
por el mar, por el cielo.

Quiere llevarme: escucha
cómo recorre el mundo
para llevarme lejos.

Escóndeme en tus brazos
por esta noche sola,
mientras la lluvia rompe
contra el mar y la tierra
su boca innumerable.

Escucha como el viento
me llama galopando
para llevarme lejos.

Con tu frente en mi frente,
con tu boca en mi boca,
atados nuestros cuerpos
al amor que nos quema,
deja que el viento pase
sin que pueda llevarme.

Deja que el viento corra
coronado de espuma,
que me llame y me busque
galopando en la sombra,
mientras yo, sumergido
bajo tus grandes ojos,
por esta noche sola
descansaré, amor mío.

Wind on the Islands

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

The wind is a horse:
hear how he runs
through the sea, through the sky

He wants to take me: listen
how he roves the world
to take me far away.

Hide me in your arms
just for this night,
while the rain breaks
against sea and earth
its innumerable mouth.

Listen how the wind
calls to me galloping
to take me far away.

With your brow on my brow,
with your mouth on my mouth,
our bodies tied
to the love that consumes us,
let the wind pass
and not take me away.

Let the wind rush
crowned with foam,
let it call to me and seek me
galloping in the shadow,
while I, sunk
beneath your big eyes,
just for this night
shall rest, my love.

Alianza/Sonata

(Residencia en la Tierra)

English adaptation by Donald D. Walsh

Neither the heart
Cut by a sliver of glass
In a wasteland of thorns
Nor the atrocious waters seen
In the corners of certain houses
Waters like eyelids and eyes
Could hold your waist in my hands
When my heart lifts its oak trees
With your unbreakable thread of snow

Night sugar spirit of crowns, redeemed
Human blood your kisses banish me
And surge of water with remnants of the sea
Strikes the silences that wait for me
Surrounding the worn-out chairs
Wearing doors away

Noches con ejes claros,
partida, material, únicamente
voz, únicamente
desnuda cada día.
Sobre tus pechos de corriente inmóvil,
sobre tus piernas de dureza y agua,
sobre la permanencia y el orgullo
de tu pelo desnudo,
quiero estar, amor mío, ya tiradas las lágrimas
al ronco cesto donde se acumulan,
quiero estar, amor mío solo con una sílaba
de plata destrozada, solo con una punta
de tu pecho de nieve.

Ya no es posible, a veces
ganar sino cayendo,
ya no es posible, entre dos seres
temblar, tocar la flor del río:

hebras de hombre vienen como agujas,
tramitaciones, trozos,
familias de coral repulsivo, tormentas
y pasos duros por alfombras
de invierno.

Between lips and lips
there are cities of great ash
And moist crest
Drops of when and how, indefinite traffic
Between lips and lips, as if along a coast
Of sand and glass, the wind passes

That is why you are endless
Gather me up, as if you were all solemnity
All nocturnal like a zone
Until you merge with the lines of time
Advance in sweetness

Ven a mi lado hasta que las digitales
hojas de los violines
hayan callado, hasta que los musgos
arraiguen en el trueno, hasta que del latido
de mano y mano bajen las raíces.

*Ni el corazón cortado por un vidrio
en un erial de espinas,
ni las aguas atroces vistas en los rincones
de ciertas casas, aguas como párpados y ojos,
podrían sujetar tu cintura en mis manos
cuando mi corazón levanta sus encinas
hacia tu inquebrantable hilo de nieve.*

Nocturno azúcar, espíritu
de las coronas,
redimida
sangre humana, tus besos

me destierran,
y un golpe de agua con restos del mar
golpea los silencios que te esperan
rodeando las gastadas sillas, gastando puertas.
Nights with bright pivots,
Departure, matter, uniquely
Voice, uniquely
Naked each day.
Upon your breasts of still current,
Upon your legs of harshness and water,
Upon the permanence and pride
Of your naked hair,
I want to lie, my love, the tears now cast
Into the raucous basket where they gather,
I want to lie, my love, alone with a syllable
Of destroyed silver, alone with a tip
Of your snowy breast.

Its is not possible, at times,
To win except by falling,
It is not possible, between two people,
To tremble, to touch the river's flower:
Man fibers come like needles,
Transactions, fragments,
Families of repulsive coral, tempests
And hard passages through carpets
Of winter

Entre labios y labios hay ciudades
de gran ceniza y húmeda cámara,
gotas de cuándo y cómo, indefinidas
circulaciones:
entre labios y labios como por una costa
de arena y vidrio, pasa el viento.

Por eso eres sin fin, recógeme como si fueras
toda solemnidad, toda nocturna
como una zona, hasta que te confundas
con las líneas del tiempo.
Avanza en la dulzura,

Come to my side until the digital
Leaves of the violins
Have become silent, until the moss
Takes root in the thunder,
until from the throbbing
Of hand and hand
the roots come down



Siempre

(vocal improv. by Ute Lemper, Piano by Vana Gierig,
speaking voice by Freddy Torrealba)

Antes de ti
No tengo celos
Ven con un hombre a la espalda
Ven con cien hombres en tu caballera
Ven con mil hombres entre tu pecho y tus pies
Ven como un río
Lleno de ahogados
Que encuentra el mar furioso
La espuma eterna, el tiempo

Traelos todos
Adonde yo te espero
Siempre estaremos solos
Siempre estaremos tu y yo
Solos sobre la tierra
Para comenzar la vida

Tito Castro
Bandoneon

Always

(Los Versos del Capitan)
Original title: Siempre
English adaptation by Donald D. Walsh

I am not jealous
of what came before me.
Come with a man on your shoulders,
come with a hundred men in your hair,
come with a thousand men between your breasts
and your feet, come like a river
full of drowned men
which flows down to the wild sea,
to the eternal surf, to Time!

Bring them all
to where I am waiting for you;
Bring them all
To where I am waiting for you
we shall always be alone,
we shall always be you and I
alone on earth,
to start our life!
Alone on earth
To start our life!

Freddy Torrealba
Charango

Vana Gierig
Piano

Jesse Mills
Violin

Víctor Villena
Bandoneon

Ausencia

(Los Versos del Capitan)
Partly French adaptation by Christian Rinderknecht /
Claude Couffon

Apenas te he dejado,
vas en mí, cristalina
o temblorosa,
o inquieta, herida por mí mismo
o colmada de amor, como cuando tus ojos
se cierran sobre el don de la vida
que sin cesar te entrego.

Amor mío,
nos hemos encontrado
sedientos y nos hemos
bebido toda el agua y la sangre,
nos encontramos
(Amor mío,
nos hemos encontrado)
con hambre
y nos mordimos
como el fuego muerde,
dejándonos heridos.

Je te laisse aussitôt
Tu circule en mois cristallina
Ou tremblante ou inquiète
Blessée par moi ou tout d'amour comble
Comme en cet instant
Où tes yeux se ferment sur le présent de ta vie
que je ne cesse de t'offrir

Mon amour
Quand nous nous sommes rencontrés
Nous avions soif et nous avons
bu toute l'eau et tout le sang,
Quand nous nous sommes rencontrés

(Mon amour
Quand nous nous sommes rencontrés)
Nous avions faim
Alors nous nous sommes mordus
Comme le feu il nous resta
Des blessures

Mais attend moi
Garde moi ta douceur
Te t'offrirais aussi une rose

Pero espérame
guárdame tú dulzura.
Yo te daré también
una rosa.

Absence

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

I have scarcely left you
When you go in me, crystalline
Or trembling,
Or uneasy, wounded by me
Or overwhelmed with love, as when your eyes
Close upon the gift of life
That without cease I give you.

My love,
We have found each other
Thirsty and we have
Drunk up all the water and the Blood,
We found each other
Hungry
And we bit each other
As fire bites,
Leaving wounds in us.
But wait for me,
Keep for me your sweetness.
I will give you too
A rose.



John Benthall
Guitar

Steve Millhouse
Bass

Todd Turkisher
Percussion

El Sueño

(Los Versos del Capitan)

Andando en las arenas
yo decidí dejarte.

Pisaba un barro oscuro
que temblaba,
y hundiéndome y saliendo
decidí que salieras
de mí, que me pesabas
como piedra cortante,
y elaboré tu pérdida
paso a paso:
cortarte las raíces,
soltarte sola al viento.

Ay, en ese minuto,
corazón mío, un sueño
con sus alas terribles
te cubría.

Te sentías tragada por el barro,
y me llamabas y yo no acudía,
te ibas, inmóvil,
sin defenderte
hasta ahogarte en la boca de arena.

Después
mi decisión se encontró con tu sueño,
y desde la ruptura
que nos quebraba el alma,
surgimos limpios otra vez, desnudos,
amándonos
sin sueño, sin arena,
completos y radiantes,
sellados por el fuego.

The Dream

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

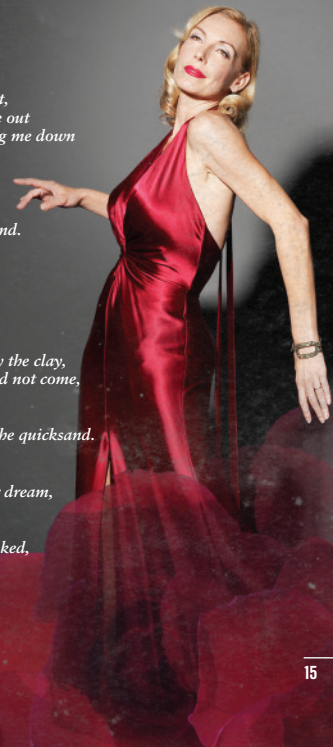
*Walking on the sands
I decided to leave you.*

*I was treading a dark clay
That trembled
And I, sinking and coming out,
Decided that you should come out
Of me, that you were weighing me down
Like a cutting stone,
And I worked out your loss
Step by step:
To cut off your roots
To release you alone in the wind.*

*Ah in that minute,
My dear, a dream
With terrible wings
Was covering you.*

*You felt yourself swallowed by the clay,
And you called to me and I did not come,
You were going, motionless,
without defending yourself
Until you were smothered in the quicksand.*

*Afterwards
my decision encountered your dream,
and from the rupture
that was breaking our hearts
we came forth clean again, naked,
loving each other
without dream, without sand
complete and radiant,
sealed by fire.*



Oda con un Lamento

(Residencia en la Tierra)

Oh niña entre las rosas, oh presión de palomas,
oh presidio de peces y rosales,
tu alma es una botella llena de sal sedienta
y una campana llena de uvas es tu piel.

Por desgracia no tengo para darte sino uñas
o pestañas, o pianos derretidos, o sueños
que salen de mi corazón a borbotones,
polvorientos sueños que corren como jinetes negros,
sueños llenos de velocidades y desgracias.

Sólo puedo quererte con besos y amapolas,
con guiraldas mojadas por la lluvia,
mirando cenicientos caballos y perros amarillos
Sólo puedo quererte con ola a la espalda,
entre vagos golpes de azufre y aguas ensimismadas,
nadando en contra de los cementerios que corren
en ciertos ríos
con pasto mojado creciendo sobre las tristes tumbas de yeso,
nadando a través de corazones sumergidos
y pálidas planillas de niños insepultos.

Hay mucha muerte, muchos acontecimientos
funerarios
en mis desamparadas pasiones y desolados besos,
hay el agua que cae en mi cabeza,
mientras crece mi pelo,
un agua como el tiempo, un agua negra desencadenada,
con una voz nocturna, con un grito
de pájaros en la lluvia, con una interminable
sombra de ala mojada que protege mis huesos:
mientras me visto, mientras
interminablemente me miro en los espejos y en los vidrios,
oigo que alguien me sigue llamádome a sollozos
con una triste voz podrida por el tiempo.

Tú estás de pie sobre la tierra, llena
de dientes y relámpagos.
Tú propagas los besos y matas las hormigas.
Tú lloras de salud, de cebolla, de abeja,
de abecedario ardiendo.
Tú eres como una espada azul y verde
y ondulas al tocarte, como un río.

Ven a mi alma vestida de blanco, con un ramo
de ensangretadas rosas y copas de cenizas,
ven con una manzana y un caballo,
porque allí hay una sala oscura
y un candelabro roto,
unas sillas torcidas que esperan el invierno,
y una paloma muerta, con un número.

Ode with a Lament

(English translation: Donald D. Walsh)

*Oh girl among the roses, oh crush of doves,
oh fortress of fishes and rosebushes,
your soul is a bottle filled with thirsty salt
and your skin, a bell filled with grapes.*

*Unfortunately I have only fingernails to give you,
or eyelashes, or melted pianos,
or dreams that come spurting from my heart,
dusty dreams that run like black horsemen,
dreams filled with velocities and misfortunes.*

*I can love you only with kisses and poppies,
with garlands wet by the rain,
looking at ash-gray horses and yellow dogs.
I can love you only with waves at my back,
amid vague sulphur blows and brooding waters,*

*swimming against the cemeteries that flow
in certain rivers
with wet fodder growing over the sad plaster tombs,
swimming across submerged hearts
and pale lists of unbursed children.*

*There is much death, many funereal events
in my forsaken passions and desolate kisses,
there is the water that falls upon my head,
while my hair grows,
a water like time, a black unchained water,
with a nocturnal voice, with a shout
of birds in the rain, with an interminable
wet-winged shadow that protects my bones:
while I dress, while
interminably I look at myself in mirrors
and windowpanes,
I hear someone who follows me, sobbing to me
with a sad voice rotted by time.*

*You stand upon the earth, filled
with teeth and lightning.
You spread the kisses and kill the ants.
You weep with health, with onion, with bee,
with burning alphabet.
You are like a blue and green sword
and you ripple, when I touch you, like a river.*

*Come to my heart dressed in white, with a bouquet
of bloody roses and goblets of ashes,
come with an apple and a horse
because there is a dark room there and
a broken candleholder,
some twisted chairs waiting for winter,
and a dead dove, with a number.*





The Saddest Poem / Nr.20

(XX Poemas de Amor y una canción desesperada)
Original title: Poema XX, English adaptation: Donald D. Walsh

I can write the saddest lines tonight.
Write for example: 'The night is fractured
and they shiver, blue, those stars, in the distance'
The night wind turns in the sky and sings.

I can write the saddest lines tonight.
I loved her, sometimes she loved me too.
On nights like these I held her in my arms.
I kissed her gently under the infinite sky.
She loved me, sometimes I loved her too.
How could I not have loved her huge, still eyes.

I can write the saddest lines tonight.
To think I don't have her,
to feel I have lost her.
Hear the vast night, vaster without her.
Lines fall on the soul like dew on the grass.
What does it matter that I couldn't keep her.
The night is fractured and she is not with me.
That is all.
Someone sings far off.
Far off.

my soul is not content to have lost her.
As though to reach her, my sight looks for her.
My heart looks for her: she is not with me

The same night whitens, in the same branches.
We, from that time, we are not the same.
I don't love her, that's certain, but how I loved her.
My voice tries to find the breeze to reach her.
Another's kisses on her,
like my kisses.
Her voice, her bright body,
infinite eyes.

I don't love her, that's certain, but perhaps I loved her.
Love is brief: forgetting lasts so long.

Since, on these nights, I held her in my arms,
my soul is not content to have lost her.
Though this is the last pain she will make me suffer,
and these are the last lines I will write for her.

Poema XX

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.
Escribir, por ejemplo: "La noche esta estrellada,
y tiritan, azules, los astros, a lo lejos".
El viento de la noche gira en el cielo y canta.
Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.
Yo la quise, y a veces ella también me quiso.
En las noches como ésta la tuve entre mis brazos.
La besé tantas veces bajo el cielo infinito.
Ella me quiso, a veces yo también la quería.
Cómo no haber amado sus grandes ojos fijos.

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.
Pensar que no la tengo.
Sentir que la he perdido.
Oír la noche inmensa, más inmensa sin ella.
Y el verso cae al alma como al pasto el rocío.
Qué importa que mi amor no pudiera guardarla.
La noche está estrellada y ella no está conmigo.
Eso es todo.
A lo lejos alguien canta.
A lo lejos.
Mi alma no se contenta con haberla perdido.
Como para acercarla mi mirada la busca.
Mi corazón la busca, y ella no está conmigo.

La misma noche que hace blanquear los mismos árboles.
Nosotros, los de entonces, ya no somos los mismos.
Ya no la quiero, es cierto, pero cuánto la quise.
Mi voz buscaba el viento para tocar su oído.
De otro. Será de otro.
Como antes de mis besos.
Su voz, su cuerpo claro.
Sus ojos infinitos.
Ya no la quiero, es cierto, pero tal vez la quiero.
Es tan corto el amor, y es tan largo el olvido.

Porque en noches como esta la tuve entre mis brazos,
mi alma no se contenta con haberla perdido.
Aunque éste sea el último dolor que ella me causa,
y éstos sean los últimos versos que yo le escribo.

Ute Lemper FOREVER THE LOVE POEMS OF Pablo Neruda

- 1 La nuit dans l'île – French adaption (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 2 Madrigal Escrito en Invierno (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 3 If You Forget Me – English adaptation (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 4 Tus Manos (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 5 El Viento en la Isla (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 6 Alianza / Sonata – partial English adaptation (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 7 Siempre – Improvisation by Lemper and Gierig (Lemper Voice, Gierig Piano / Speaking Voice by Freddy Torrealba)
- 8 Always – English adaptation (Neruda / Lemper)
- 9 Ausencia – partial French adaptation (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 10 El Sueño (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 11 Oda con un Lamento (Neruda / Lemper, Nisinman)
- 12 The Saddest Poem /Nr. 20 – English adaptation (Neruda / Lemper)

Produced by Ute Lemper

Artistic concept, direction, all melodies and vocal compositions by Ute Lemper



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Ute Lemper FOREVER THE LOVE POEMS OF Pablo Neruda

All Songs written by UTE LEMPER
With collaboration by MARCELO NISINMAN

Arranged by UTE LEMPER and BAND
String arrangements by JUAN ANTONIO SANCHEZ (from Chile)

Special Guest FREDDY TORREALBA (from Chile) on Charango

Tito Castro and Victor Villena on Bandoneon, John Benthall on Guitar,
Steve Millhouse on Bass, Vana Gierig on Piano, Todd Turkisher on Percussion,
Wolfram Koessel on Cello, Dov Scheindlin on Viola, Jesse Mills on Violin

Recorded and mixed at Sear Sound New York City
Chief engineer Chris M. Allen, assistant engineer Kevin Harper

Mastered by Scott Hull at Master Disc New York City

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1. *La nuit dans l'île* 5:39
 2. *Madrigal Escrito en Invierno* 3:47
 3. *If You Forget Me* 7:35
 4. *Tus Manos* 3:57
 5. *El Viento en la Isla* 5:11
 6. *Alianza / Sonata* 6:35
 7. *Siempre* 3:11
 8. *Always* 4:07
 9. *Ausencia* 4:07
 10. *El Sueño* 3:57
 11. *Oda con un Lamento* 7:36
 12. *The Saddest Poem / Nr. 20* 7:08

Produced by Ute Lemper
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