

## La Madre Triste *The Sad Mother*

Duerme, duerme, dueño mío,  
sin zozobra, sin temor,  
aunque no se duerma mi alma,  
aunque no descanse yo.

Duerme, duerme y en la noche  
seas tú menos rumor  
que la hoja de la hierba,  
que la seda del vellón.

Duerma en ti la carne mía,  
mi zozobra, mi temblor.  
En ti ciérrense mis ojos:  
¡duerma en ti mi corazón!  
*Gabriella Mistral*

*Sleep, sleep, my love  
Without worry, without fear,  
Although my soul can't sleep,  
Although I cannot rest.*

*Sleep, sleep and in the night,  
May your murmuring be as soft  
As a whisper of grass,  
or the wool of a lamb.*

*May my body find peace in you,  
My worries, my fears,  
In you may my eyes close;  
And may my heart find rest in you!  
(composer's translation)*

### PROGRAM NOTE

While strings keen a contrapuntal lament, the sad mother croons a lullaby to the baby swaddled and swaying on her back. Her melody is a paraphrase of a 15<sup>th</sup> century Sephardic folksong, originally sung by Spanish Jews fleeing their own persecution. Intermittently, children sing along with the strings, echoes of hope and consolation.

Originally the middle movement of a larger work, **Piececitos**, La Madre Triste is a vivid musical meditation on motherhood, migration and exile based on poems by Gabriela Mistral, the first Latin American to win a Nobel Prize in Literature. Set in the original Spanish, **Piececitos'** five songs for voice, violin, cello and piano interweave Latin American dance rhythms with haunting melodies: lullabies and laments of a mother on her treacherous journey toward refuge.

La Madre Triste and **Piececitos** as a whole use traditional musical patterns and pre-existing quotations to blend or contrast with newly composed elements/ Folkloric wisdom, generational and cultural ties clash in a mother's inner dialogue of hope, terror and love as she struggles toward refuge for her children.

### • PERFORMANCE NOTES

- *poco f* is always quieter than *mf*
- Bowing/phrasing:  
Sometimes slurs indicate bowings and sometimes are used to indicate extended melodic lines. Their intent should be clear from context. All bowings are merely suggestions.
- Dynamics and metronome markings are indications of gesture and mood rather than as specific, rigid requirements
- Dance rhythms reflect their origins, enticing and never rigid.