



El Gran Teatro del Mundo

La vida es sueño

St Mary's Church
Friday 24 May 7.30pm

El Gran Teatro del Mundo
Alice Julien-Laferrière, Andrés Murillo *violins*
Michael Form *recorders*
Miriam Jorde *oboe, taille de hautbois*
Martin Jantzen *viol*
Jonas Nordberg *theorbo*
Julio Caballero *harpsichord and artistic direction*

La vida es sueño
(‘Life is a Dream’)

Ouverture (from *Roland*) **Jean-Baptiste Lully** 1632-87

First Dream

Prelude for the Night (*Le triomphe de l’amour*, 1681) **Lully**

Récit for the Night

Prelude and *récit* for the Mystery

Noires filles du Styx (*Médée*, 1693) **Marc-Antoine Charpentier** 1643-1704

Air for the happy shadows and the infernal deities **Lully**
(*Proserpine*, 1680)

Dieu du Cocyte et des royaumes sombres (*Médée*) **Charpentier**

Second Dream

Ulisse’s Sleep (*Circé*, 1695) **Henri Desmarets** 1661-1741

La Nuit ramène en vain le repos dans le monde **André Campra** 1660-1744
(*L’Europe galante*, 1697)

Entrée of the Dreams (*Le triomphe de l’amour*) **Lully**

Ah ! Tu me trahis (*Amadis*, 1684)

Mais déjà, de la mort (*Médée*) **Charpentier**

Air for the Furies (*Sémélé*, 1709) **Marin Marais** 1656-1728

Third Dream

Esprits de haine et de rage (*Armide*, 1686) **Lully**
Roland's Sleep (*Armide*) arr. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert 1629-91
Par le secours d'une douce harmonie (*Roland*) arr. Jonas Nordberg
Ritournelle (*Armide*)
Air for the demons and the monsters (*Amadis*)

Fourth Dream

Atys' Sleep (*Atys*, 1676) **Lully**
First *air* for the Gruesome Dreams
Second *air* for the Gruesome Dreams

Fifth Dream

Quels sons charmants (*Alcyone*, 1706) **Marais**
Symphony for the sleep
Tempest of the sleep
Ô Ciel, quel affreux orage!

Passacalles (*Instrucción de música sobre la guitarra española*, 1674) **Gaspar Sanz** 1640-1710
arr. Julio Caballero

The Dawn

Symphony **Marais**
(from Suite in D, *Pièces en trio*, 1692)

Please reserve applause for the end of each section

We are grateful to the Embassy of Spain for supporting this concert



Segismondo's monologue from Pedro Calderón's play *La Vida Es Sueño*

Es verdad; pues reprimamos
esta fiera condición,
esta furia, esta ambición
por si alguna vez soñamos.
Y sí haremos, pues estamos
en mundo tan singular,
que el vivir sólo es soñar;
y la experiencia me enseña
que el hombre que vive sueña
lo que es hasta despertar.

Sueña el rey que es rey, y vive
con este engaño mandando,
disponiendo y gobernando;
y este aplauso que recibe
prestado, en el viento escribe,
y en cenizas le convierte
la muerte (¡desdicha fuerte!);
¡que hay quien intente reinar,
viendo que ha de despertar
en el sueño de la muerte?

Sueña el rico en su riqueza
que más cuidados le ofrece;
sueña el pobre que padece
su miseria y su pobreza;
sueña el que a medrar empieza,
sueña el que afana y pretende,
sueña el que agravia y ofende;
y en el mundo, en conclusión,
todos sueñan lo que son,
aunque ninguno lo entiende.

Yo sueño que estoy aquí
destas prisiones cargado,
y soñé que en otro estado
más lisonjero me vi.
¿Qué es la vida? Un frenesí.
¿Qué es la vida? Una ilusión,
una sombra, una ficción,
y el mayor bien es pequeño;
que toda la vida es sueño,
y los sueños, sueños son

That is true: then let's restrain
This wild rage, this fierce condition
Of the mind, this proud ambition,
Should we ever dream again:
And we'll do so, since 'tis plain,
In this world's uncertain gleam,
That to live is but to dream:
Man dreams what he is, and wakes
Only when upon him breaks
Death's mysterious morning beam.

The king dreams he is a king,
And in this delusive way
Lives and rules with sovereign sway;
All the cheers that round him ring,
Born of air, on air take wing.
And in ashes (mournful fate!)
Death dissolves his pride and state:
Who would wish a crown to take,
Seeing that he must awake
In the dream beyond death's gate?
And the rich man dreams of gold,
Gilding cares it scarce conceals,
And the poor man dreams he feels
Want and misery and cold.
Dreams he too who rank would hold,
Dreams who bears toil's rough-ribbed
hands,
Dreams who wrong for wrong demands,
And in fine, throughout the earth,
All men dream, whate'er their birth,
And yet no one understands.

'Tis a dream that I in sadness
Here am bound, the scorn of fate;
'Twas a dream that once a state
I enjoyed of light and gladness.
What is life? 'Tis but a madness.
What is life? A thing that seems,
A mirage that falsely gleams,
Phantom joy, delusive rest,
Since is life a dream at best,
And even dreams themselves are dreams.

Our programme *La vida es sueño* ('Life is a dream') borrows the title of the play by Pedro Calderón (1600-81) for this musical journey through the night and dreams, and the powerful symbolism that surrounds them, evoking a magical, mysterious, threatening and secret world.

El Gran Teatro del Mundo, specialists in French music from the time of the Sun King, revisits the operas of the Grand Siècle with an exclusively instrumental interpretation of scenes in which night is the best ally of love, and sleep, death's best friend. Night and dreams have always aroused fascination and fear in human beings. But those who defy these barriers and ally themselves with these elements have access to a world as attractive as it is dangerous.

Segismundo's monologue from Calderón de la Barca's play *La vida es sueño* is probably the best-known excerpt from this Baroque masterpiece. It also constitutes the starting point for this dreamlike journey through the Baroque *topos* of sleep and night, omnipresent in all forms of Baroque art, from Spanish Golden Age literature to the French lyric tragedies of the age of the Sun King or the Shakespearean tradition. Allegorical characters such as the Night, the Dream and the Mystery often recur in French Baroque opera, and speak to us of a seductive world, of an apparent calm, where love and forbidden passions find their refuge. The dream is the perfect weapon with which to penetrate the psyche of the heroes and heroines who are the protagonists of the stories in this programme and to reach the Achilles heel of all of them: their noble but humanly vulnerable feelings.

The structure of the programme is made up of five differentiated dreams in which different situations and environments related to the nocturnal world and the afterlife are portrayed. They are followed by a theatrical recitation of Segismundo's monologue by the ensemble's artistic director. At the end, a musical epilogue takes us back to the Calderonian metaphor of awakening as a reflection of death itself.

The historical reductions used in this programme allow the listener to enjoy this rich orchestral repertoire, with a reduced group of soloists. This confers a colour, individualism and intimacy to the programme that complements its dreamlike atmosphere.

JCP

El Gran Teatro del Mundo

The artistic conception of El Gran Teatro del Mundo is based on the conviction that an interpretation that is both consistent with the aesthetics of the period and sincere is capable of awakening the universal emotions contained in the Baroque repertoire and, in this way, of reaching today's audiences.

The ensemble, under the direction of Julio Caballero Pérez, specialises in the French Baroque, although its programmes include repertoire ranging from the German seventeenth century to the classical repertoire. Since its formation in 2016, it has performed at numerous festivals and venues such as Oude Muziek Utrecht, Urbino Musica Antica, Riga Early Music Festival, Festival d'Ambronay, Festtage Alte Musik Basel, the Centro Botín in Santander, the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels (BOZAR), the International Festival of Sacred Art in Madrid (FIAS) and the Festival Llums d'Antiga in Barcelona.

El Gran Teatro del Mundo has been a beneficiary of the European project Emerging European Ensembles (EEEmerging), which promotes and develops high level early music ensembles in the European Union within the framework of the Creative Europe programme. It won the Cambridge Early Music Prize at the 2019 York Early Music International Young Artists Competition, was selected as a promising ensemble for the 2017 International Young Artists Presentation (IYAP) in Antwerp (Belgium) and was awarded the prize for the best performance of a Spanish work at the 2017 edition of the Antón García Abril International Chamber Music Competition.

elgranteatromundo.com

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