

ANNA TONNA, mezzo soprano
BRYAN MURRAY, baritone
ADRIANA SANANES, actress
LUIS GUSTAVO PRADO,
Artistic Director

Post concert talk
Mariposa Fernández

Saturday
November
11, 2023

7:00 PM to
9:00 PM

Voices for All Souls In the Bronx:
Song and Poetry Inspired in Poe and Palés



oe
alés
rado



FREE ADMISSION, reservations via **eventbrite** For more information, info@annatonna.com

📍 **Pregones / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater 575 Walton Avenue, The Bronx**



PREGONES  **PRTT**



"Voices for All Souls' in the Bronx: Songs and Poetry inspired in Poe and Palés", is a musical and poetic evening that brings theatrical readings, songs for voice and piano, and the poetry of Puerto Rican poet Luis Palés Matos (1898-1959) and Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849). Poe was one of Palés's favorite writers, and in some instances Palés' life even mirrored that of the legendary poet and writer. During this recital we will hear poems, songs by 18th and 19th century composers, combined with four newly composed songs by Luis Gustavo Prado.

The recital is structured in four separate blocks, the first being *Introduction or Exordium*. This first section brings our attention to three pieces: a monologue from Spanish playwright Calderón de la Barca's 1635, "Life is a Dream"; followed by a "reply" with Poe's 1849: "A dream within a dream" musicalized by Prado. With the song "Ven", Prado takes his first steps as a lyricist for his own music, and calls us to come closer and confront our pain and fears. In doing so, we come to the first "catharsis" of the evening. "Ven" is accompanied by original video-art by both Antonio García Escolar and Prado.

In the second section *A Guide to a Journey*, the public is invited to "an evening of song" (*velada musical, liederabend*). This kind of social custom is one that Poe would have enjoyed and experienced. The theme of this section of the recital is remembrance, in which existential and spiritual questions are posed. De la Barca's "Life is a Dream" is further highlighted with Poe's "A Dream within a dream"; this musical section ends with the 18th century poet Anne Hunter's and Joseph Haydn's "Spirit Song", where the singer becomes a disembodied spirit that wanders free and waits for her beloved.

Poe's "The Haunted Palace" is then read. Immediately following, we hear four Irish songs from Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies*, in this instance arranged by Prado for two voices, and taken from the Stevenson-Bishop's collection. These Irish melodies were extremely popular throughout the 19th century both in Europe and in the Americas; several songs from this collection are known to be among Poe's favorite songs.

In the third section (The Sacrifice) we confront painful memories through Goethe's *Mignon*, musicalized by Robert Schumann in a sensitive and passionate way. We then travel a dangerous journey to the dark side of the soul, with Poe's *Dreamland*, read in the Spanish translation by Palés Matos. With Schubert's song, "Der Doppelgänger", Palés Matos confronts his double, in the person of Edgar Allan Poe. Palés Matos, in the end, shows us the "miraculous jewel" of true understanding regarding life's suffering with his *El Palacio en Sombras* (The Palace of Shadows).

El Palacio en Sombras is an answer to Poe, and was published by Palés', written a year after the loss of his wife to tuberculosis, mother to his son Edgardo (this is one of the tragic parallels between the two poets' lives).

In a later poem, Palés simply states: "El sueño es el estado natural" (Dreaming is the natural state). We then hear the poetic voice of his niece, Nora Lil Ortega Palés (1941-2022) and mother of Luis, in the song, *En Silencio* (Silently); this poem is dated 2013, when she began to feel her mind fading, due to Alzheimer's disease.

As closure, the Epilogue ends with a duet for mezzo and baritone titled *Canciones de la Vida Media* (1927). This text by Palés invites us to peel off layers and simplify our thought; to live life more in tune with our inner selves and to find once more the pure and innocent side of ourselves, "the influx of the distant star"...

Voices for All Souls' in The Bronx: Song and Poetry

Inspired in Poe and Palés

November 11, 2023

Pregones Puerto Rican Traveling Theater

575 Walton Avenue

The Bronx, NY 10451

Luis Gustavo Prado, pianist and artistic director
Anna Tonna, mezzo soprano and presenter
baritone Bryan Murray and actor Adriana Sananes
Original video art by Antonio García Escolar and Luis Prado

I.

Entrada, Exordio: Invitation and Invocation

From *La vida es sueño: Monólogo de Segismundo*
Adriana Sananes

Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681)

A Dream within a Dream, poem by Edgar Allan Poe
Bryan Murray and Luis Prado

Luis Prado, b. 1970

Ven...Exordio, text by Luis Prado
Anna Tonna and Luis Prado

Luis Prado

II.

Trazado del camino a recorrer: Guide to a Journey

Four Irish Songs, poems by Thomas Moore
How dear to me; The song of Fionnuala; I wish I was by that dim lake; I saw thy form.
Anna Tonna, Bryan Murray and Luis Prado

John Stevenson (1761-1833), arr. Luis Prado

The Haunted Palace
Adriana Sananes

Edgar Allan Poe

The Wanderer, text by Anne Hunter
Bryan Murray and Luis Prado

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Life is a Dream, text by Anne Hunter
Anna Tonna, Bryan Murray and Luis Prado

Joseph Haydn

The Spirit Song, Anne Hunter
Anna Tonna and Luis Prado

Joseph Haydn

III.
El Sacrificio: The Sacrifice

Winterszeit I, op. 68 <i>Luis Prado</i>	Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
Nocturno (Nachtlied) op.96, n°1, poem by Wolfgang von Goethe <i>Bryan Murray and Luis Prado</i>	Robert Schumann
Mignon, op. 68, n°35 <i>Luis Prado</i>	Robert Schumann
Mignon op. 98 n°1, text by Wolfgang von Goethe <i>Anna Tonna and Luis Prado</i>	Robert Schumann
La tierra de los sueños, "a recreation" by Luis Palés Matos <i>Adriana Sananes</i>	Edgar Allan Poe
En la noche (In der Nacht) op. 74, n°4 Wolfgang von Goethe <i>Anna Tonna, Bryan Murray and Luis Prado</i>	Robert Schumann
El doble mio (Der Doppelgänger), poem by Heinrich Heine <i>Bryan Murray and Luis Prado</i>	Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
El palacio en sombras <i>Adriana Sananes</i>	Luis Palés Matos

IV.
Acto Final, Epilogue

El Sueño <i>Adriana Sananes</i>	Luis Palés Matos
En Silencio, poem by Nora Lil Ortega Palés <i>Anna Tonna and Luis Prado</i>	Luis Prado
Canciones de la vida media, poem by Luis Palés Matos <i>Anna Tonna, Bryan Murray and Luis Prado</i>	Luis Prado

"...dejamos de oírlo pero nunca termina..."



ANNA TONNA, mezzo soprano and presenter “Voices for All Souls’ Day in the Bronx: Song and Poetry inspired in Poe and Palés”

Mezzo Soprano Anna Tonna has been described as "mezzo heroine who knows how to sing Rossini" by the Rossini Gessellschaft and as "showing off her warm, secure mezzo-soprano to maximum advantage" by the New York Magazine; accolades such as these explain her constant demand as a recitalist and opera singer in both Europe and the Americas. The combination of a highly developed coloratura with a full, balanced, flexible lower register have guaranteed her acclaim as a lyric mezzo, both in familiar roles Rosina, Carmen, Dorabella, as well as in more rare repertoire by Paisiello, Vivaldi, Mascagni, Zandonai and Giordano.

Additionally, Ms. Tonna’s passion for and excellence in the recital genre have garnered her increasing acclaim in both the U.S. and Europe, particularly her path breaking explorations of the repertoire of composers from Spain and Latin America. Ms. Tonna's recitals are a source of expectation and excitement in New York City, where she has performed at both the Alice Tully Hall and Rose Center of Lincoln Center, Bargemusic, Merkin Hall, New York's Town Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. The same excitement greets her appearances in Spain, with performances at the Auditorio Nacional de España, Academia Marshall and Teatro del Escorial in Spain.

She has collaborated with Casals Festival of Puerto Rico, Festival Iberoamericano de las Artes in Puerto Rico, Música de Cámara of New York, El Festival de Segovia, Joy in Singing, Elysium Between Two Continents and the Nassau Music Festival among others. Of note amongst the countless recital of songs are appearances at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the St. Anton Palace in Valletta (Malta), the Palacio Nacional de Ajuda in Lisbon, Teatro 1793 at Villa Adlrovandi Mazzacorati in Italy, the Atheneums of Madrid and Barcelona and at the ElbPhilharmonie in Hamburg. Her recital of “Songs of post Civil War Spain ” at the Fundación Juan March of Madrid was broadcast on Radio Television Española and hailed as “a tour de force” by the Spanish newspaper ABC.

Ms. Tonna’s artistry has been recognized by the Liederkranz Foundation, The Gerda Lissner Foundation, National Opera Association, Opera at Florham/Violeta Dupont Vocal Competition, and a Fulbright Scholarship to conduct research in and perform Spanish Art Song in Spain, where she has established a thriving career. Commercial recordings that have preserved some of these efforts include The songs of Julio Gómez with disc label VERSO and her disc España alla Rossini iTinerant Classics, The Unknown Pauline Viardot with Cezanne Productions; and A Trip to Granada with Klassic Cat.

In recent years she has bowed in the role of Laura Adorno in Ponchielli's La Gioconda with the Brno State Opera (Czech Republic). In 2021 the first Spanish opera La araucana by José Lidón for Little Opera Zamora (Spain), a Zarzuela concert at the ElbPhilharmonie in Hamburg (Germany) and at the Hispanic Society Museum & Library with a recital in commemoration of the painters Joaquin Sorolla Centennial.

Appearances this past summer and fall include a recital for the Bronx Historical Society called “Songs inspired by Poe” with guitarist Francisco Roldán, several performances of “Jasón o La conquista del Vellocino” by 18th century composer Gaetano Brunetti with Camerata Antonio Soler (Spain); a recital tour titled “The Runaways” of the Instituto Cervantes in the US, together with Spanish pianist Rosa Torres-Pardo in New York City, Chicago, Albuquerque and Los Angeles; and the production “Into the Fire” by Jake Heggie as part New Camerata Opera Fall production “Flesh and Stone” in New York City. In 2024, she will appear in recitals in Spain including at Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid (Spain) in a recital titled “España alla Rossini” with Emilio González Sanz and “A Trip to Granada” at Semana Lirica “Lucrecia Arana” in Logrono (Spain) with pianist Mac McClure.

Anna is a present grantee of both the Bronx Council for the Arts and the Puffin Foundation, which has made this evening’s presentation possible.



BRYAN MURRAY, lyric baritone from New York City, has graced stages around the world from Tokyo to Berlin, Venice, and New York. He has won numerous awards including third prize in Melodie at Concours de Montreal in 2022 and first prize at the Mildred Miller, Talents of the World, and Premiere Opera competitions. His recent notable performances include portraying Zuniga in 'Carmen' at the Hogfish Music Festival, Jupiter in 'Orpheus in the Underworld' with Opera Ithaca, and the priest and fisherman in Kaija Saariaho's 'Only the Sound Remains' at renowned venues such as The Biennale in Venice, the Strasbourg Festival, and Tokyo Bunka Kaikan.

Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bryan held a one-year contract as a Stipendiat with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he showcased his versatility by performing comprimario roles in 12 different productions during the 2018/19 season. His memorable portrayals included Fiorello in 'Il barbiere di Siviglia,' Moralès in 'Carmen,' and Marullo in 'Rigoletto.'

On the concert stage, Bryan has performed alongside esteemed ensembles such as NY Baroque Inc. and Teatro Grattacielo in Manhattan, as well as the Deutsche Oper Berlin Orchestra, the Yale Philharmonia, the Jacksonville Symphony, the New Haven Symphony, and the Yale Camerata.



ANTONIO GARCIA ESCOLAR is a new director in short films, although he is no stranger to the sector, he already comes from the world of music production. He studied Electronics (Telec.) and later specialized in sound for radio and T.V., he began to work in radio stations and as a DJ. in Spanish clubs since the mid 80's, 90's and early 2000's. In 2018, he launched his own digital label company called Atelier Futura Records. In recent years he has also trained as an actor, combining this activity with the creation, together with Luis Gustavo Prado, of Atelier Futura Films with the purpose of making Conscious Cinema.

© atelierfuturafilms

Filmfreeway: <https://filmfreeway.com/AntonioEscolar>



ADRIANA SANANES (SAG-AFTRA, AEA) was a leading actress at New York's Repertorio Español for ten years, receiving a Theatre Fellowship Grant from The Princess Grace Foundation.

She has recorded over 200 audiobooks in both English and Spanish, including the Spanish versions of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman* and Pulitzer Prize winner Enrique's *Journey*, (AUDIE Award).

Recent theatre: Cervantes' *Entremeses* at Teatro Círculo (ACE Award), *Sueño* at Teatro SEA (ATI and HOLA awards) and *BUMP* at Ensemble Studio Theatre. Adriana was the stage director for Early Music New York's production of the XVIII Century musical *Malbrú* at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

www.AdrianaSananes.com



LUIS GUSTAVO PRADO is a composer and pianist born in 1970 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He currently resides in Madrid, Spain. Prado earned a Diploma in Composition from The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he studied under Ned Rorem from 1993 to 1996. He also holds a Bachelor of Music from The University of the Arts in Philadelphia, where he studied composition with Joseph Castaldo and piano with Susan Starr from 1989 to 1993. Prado's training in piano began at the Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico in San Juan, where he studied under Héctor Ledoux from 1986 to 1989.

Prado has received training in music and sound in cinema through workshops with Eduardo Armenteros and José Miguel Martínez at the SGAE Foundation in Madrid. He has also studied flamenco, intercultural musical creation, and composition through workshops and masterclasses with Pedro Ojesto, Pablo Rubén Maldonado, the Atlas Ensemble at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, and prominent composers such as Luis de Pablo, Lukas Foss, William Bolcom, George Rochberg, Bernard Rands, and Theodore Antoniou.

Prado has been awarded grants and scholarships for his work, including a grant from the SGAE Foundation for the creation of new music, a Pew Foundation Grant for the creation of a piano concerto premiered by Gary Graffman and Ignat Solzhenytsin with The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, and a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Prado's original works, arrangements, and collaborative projects include music for the Flamenco Ballet company *Estévez/Paños y compañía*, vocal and dance work for The Opera Atelier exploring the musical heritage of Cuba, and a suite for student string orchestra commissioned by the International Association of New Haven. He has also created original music for theatrical productions such as *El Sombrero* and *Encounter with Lorca: Death, Love and Art*, and composed music for a cycle of songs for mezzo-soprano and piano on poems by Juan Ramón Jiménez. Prado has also arranged music for Juan Diego Flórez and the BBC Orchestra, among others.

Video-art

Antonio García Escolar and Luis Gustavo Prado of *Atelier Futura Films* have created video-art based partly on paintings by Norman Ortega Palés, Luis' uncle and nephew of Luis Palés Matos. The video art is present to provide a backdrop to the different sections of this recital and accentuate the mood, helping the public to be immersed in the experience. Antonio has created moving pictures combining Norman's artwork with AI generated images and live video to create spaces that come from the collective unconscious and bring us closer to the mysteries of the human soul.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank The Bronx Council for the Arts and the Puffin Foundation for their support of this program. We also would like to thank Roger McCormack and Steven Payne from the Bronx Historical Society for their valuable help and input. And lastly would be our heartfelt thanks to Alvan Colón Lespier and Alexandra Minchala from Pregones Traveling Puerto Rican Theater for their help and advice in this production.

This concert is offered as an In Memoriam to:

Edward Tonna, Charles Tonna, Eva de la O, Nora Lil Ortega Palés, Edgardo Vicente Prado, Edgardo Tomás Prado, Héctor Ledoux Miranda and Norman Ortega Palés.

