

DES- DE EL CEN- TRO

FEDERICO GARCÍA
LOR-
CA
Y
GRA-
NA-
DA

1933— On September 29, García Lorca sets off for Buenos Aires, arriving October 13. On the 16th, he gives a lecture entitled, “How a City Sings from November to November.”

1934— In January: *Mariana Pineda* opens with Lola Membrives’s company at the Avenida Theater in Buenos Aires. January–February: a stay in Montevideo, where he sees José Mora Guarnido, his friend from Granada. Spring finds him at the Huerta de San Vicente, where Eduardo Blanco-Amor visits him. September: his friends in Granada prepare a dinner for him. Among these friends is the Arabic professor Emilio García Gómez, who will write the prologue to his book of poetry *Diván del Tamarit* for an edition set to be published by the University of Granada but which will never be released. The book itself will later be published in 1940.

1935— Margarita Xirgu’s company premieres *Doña Rosita the Spinster, or The Language of Flowers* on December 13 in the Principal Palace Theater in Barcelona. Public reading of *Diván del Tamarit* and of the lecture “How a City Sings from November to November.” He participates in a memorial tribute to Isaac Albéniz. Special production of *Doña Rosita the Spinster* for the flowersellers on Las Ramblas. Mass tribute in the Hotel Majestic in Barcelona.

GHAZAL OF THE DEAD CHILD

Every afternoon in Granada
a child dies, every afternoon.
Every afternoon the water sits down
to talk things over with its friends.

The dead wear wings of moss.
The wind cloudy and the wind clean
are two pheasants who circle the towers
and the day is a wounded boy.

No strand of lark remained in the air
when I found you there in the wine caves.
No crumb of cloud remained on the land
when you were drowning in the river.

A giant of water fell down the mountains
and the valley rolled by with irises and dogs.
Yor body, shaded violet by my hands,
dead on the bank, was an archangel of cold.

(*Diván del Tamarit*)

Granada has two rivers, eighty bell towers,
four thousand canals, fifty springs, a
thousand and one fountains, and one
hundred thousand residents. It has a
factory that makes guitars and bandurrias,
a store that sells pianos and accordions
and harmonicas and, most of all, drums.
It has two routes for singing, Salón and
the Alhambra, and one for weeping, the
Alameda de los Tristes. It is the crown of
European romanticism, with a legion of
fireworks that build towers of noise with
an art similar to the Plaza de los Leones,
and which must make the water of the
four-sided pools tremble.

(*How a City Sings from November to November*)

I long to see you come back
to Granada one evening
when the air is salty,
nostalgic for the sea.
A yellow lemon grove,
a bloodless jasmine,
entangled by stones
that will block your way,
and tuberoses spinning like windmills
will make my rooftop crazy.
Will you return?

(*Doña Rosita the Spinster,
or The Language of Flowers*)

1936— July: He is interviewed by Luis Bagaría for *El Sol*, a Madrid newspaper. On July 12, he reads *The House of Bernarda Alba* to doctor Eusebio Oliver, Jorge Guillén, Dámaso Alonso, Pedro Salinas and Guillermo de Torre. On the 13th, he visits the offices of *Cruz y Raya* and leaves a note for José Bergamín: “Dear Pepe, I’ve been in to see you and I think I’ll be back tomorrow,” along with the manuscript of *Poet in New York*, which will be used for the first posthumous editions of the book (New York and Mexico City, 1940). Later that day, he takes the night train to Granada. On the 14th, he sets up at the Huerta de San Vicente. On the 18th, the festival of San Federico, a coup is brought against the government of the Republic. On the 20th, his brother-in-law, Manuel Fernández-Montesinos, the socialist mayor of Granada, is detained. On the 23rd, the Albayzín surrenders. On August 6, a Falange squadron carries out a search of the Huerta, hoping to find a transmitter used for contacting Moscow. On the 9th, another group enters the Huerta, this time searching for the brother of the caretaker, Gabriel Perea Ruiz. The show of violence frightens Federico, causing him to seek refuge in the house of the Rosales family, in the center

of the city. The Rosales brothers are friends of Lorca; some of them are also noted Falangists. On August 16, he is detained there by Ramón Ruiz Alonso and taken to the Civil Government. On the same day, the city’s mayor, Manuel Fernández-Montesinos is assassinated along with twenty-nine others. Despite Manuel de Falla and Luis Rosales’s efforts in his favor, Federico García Lorca is brought to Víznar, on the outskirts of Granada. It is there that, on the 19th of August, he is shot along with with banderilleros Francisco Galadí Melgar and Joaquín Arcollas Cabezas, and the Pulianas village schoolteacher, Dióscoro Galindo González, near the Fuente Grande, called Ainadamar, or fountain of tears, between Alfacar and Víznar.

“Do you think it was right for the keys to your land, Granada, to be returned?”
“It was a terrible thing, although they say the opposite in schools. A remarkable civilization was lost, a poetry, an astronomy, an architecture, and a fineness, unique in the world, in order to give way to a poor, frightened city, a place of “piety,” where the worst middle classes in all of Spain are now shaking. . . . I sing to Spain and feel it in my marrow, but even deeper than that, I am a man of the world and brother of all. Naturall, I do not believe in political borderlines.

(To Bagaría, 1936)

THE GREAT FOUNTAIN, OR THE FOUNTAIN OF TEARS (BETWEEN ALFACAR AND VÍZNAR)

My hearts lies by the cold fountain.
(F. G. L.)

Oh fountain of tears,
oh fields of Alfacar, lands of Víznar.
The night wind—
why does it bring you sand and not blood?
why does it slice the water like my cry?

Do not tell the dawn of your grief,
do not rend the day of its hope,
of tuberoses and green shadow;
but in the jagged night—
cut crosswise by the scythe of the winds
that do not forget—weep, weep with me.

And weep, too, great fountain,
oh fountain of tears.
Be now forever this thirst,
this briny sea,
oh fields of Alfacar, lands of Víznar.

Dámaso Alonso

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GHAZAL OF THE LOVE THAT HIDES FROM SITE

Just to hear
the bell of the Vela
I made you a crown of verbena.

*Granada was a moon
drowned in the ivy.*

Just to hear
the bell of the Vela
I clawed at my Cartagena garden.

*Granada was a doe
pink among the weathervanes.*

Only to hear
the bell of the Vela
I burned in your body
Without knowing whose it was.

(*Diván del Tamarit*)

1898— Federico García Lorca is born on June 5 in Fuente Vaqueros, in the valley of Granada, to Federico García Rodríguez, a landowner, and Vicenta Lorca, a primary school teacher. He will be the oldest of four siblings (in addition to Luis, who lives 1900–1902): Francisco (born in 1902), Concha (born in 1903), and Isabel (born in 1910). Early letters with his mother and Antonio Rodríguez Espinosa illustrate this period.

1907— The family moves to Asquerosa (today Valderrubio), also within the valley. They later move to Granada, in 1909. He continues his studies at the Colegio del Sagrado Corazón and the public high school. Some of the grotesque characters in *Doña Rosita the Spinster* will be inspired by the teachers at this school. During this period, he also studies piano, and composes the odd musical sketch in the turn-of-the-century style. He also learns guitar, both classical and flamenco.

SOLITAIRE (ZUJAIRA)

Over the pianissimo
of gold...
my lonely
poplar.

Without a harmonical
bird.

Over the pinissimo of gold...

The river at its feet
runs dark and deep
beneath the pianissimo
of gold.

And I with evening
on my shoulders
like a little lamb
the wolf has slain
beneath the pinissimo
of gold.

One time the plow stopped. It had
hit something hard. The next second,
the shining steel blade lifted a Roman
mosaic up from the earth. It had an
inscription I no longer remember,
but for some reason the names of
the shepherds Daphnis and Chloe
spring to my memory. . . . My earliest
emotions are tied to the earth and
working in the fields.

(in Buenos Aires, 1934)

My entire childhood is a village.
Shepherds, fields, sky, solitude.

(Interview with “Proel,” 1935)

1915— After graduating from high school, he enrolls in the common “preparatory period” in Philosophy, Letters, and Law at the University of Granada.

1916— Antonio Segura, his music teacher, dies in May. Federico then abandons his musical studies and devotes himself with intensity and dedication to writing, including an autobiographical essay called, “My Village.” From June 8–16, he embarks on a study trip organized by his teacher Martín Domínguez through Andalucía, to Baeza (where he meets with Antonio Machado), Úbeda, Córdoba, and Ronda. From October 15 to November 8, another

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trip, this time to El Escorial, Ávila, Medina del Campo, Salamanca (where he meets with Miguel de Unamuno), Zamora, Santiago de Compostela, La Coruña, Lugo, León, Burgos, Segovia, and Madrid.

1917— He publishes the prose piece “Symbolic Fantasy” in the *Bulletin of the Artistic and Literary Center* in Granada, for the 100th anniversary of the birth of José Zorrilla. In April, he returns to Baeza with Domínguez Berrueta. July brings another study trip to Madrid, Burgos, and Palencia. He neglects his university studies. In March 1918 he gives a reading at the Artistic Center in Granada of excerpts from *Impressions and Landscapes* (from his study trips), which will be published in April of that year.

THE TRANQUIL VILLAGE

The houses are small and white and
all kissed with moisture. When it
evaporates, the water from the rivers
drapes them in a gauzy morning chill,
with such silver and nickel that, when
the sun rises, the village looks, from
a distance, like a great precious stone.
Later, at midday, the mists dissolve,
and the village appears as if sleeping
on a blanket of green. The church
tower is so low that it hardly stands
apart from the houses and when its
bells ring, they ring, it seems, from the
heart of the earth. It is surrounded by
poplar groves that laugh and sing; they
are palaces for birds, for willows and
brambles that, in summer, bear fruit
that is sweet and dangerous to pick.

(*My Village*)

At the crossroads lies the Albayzín,
full of fear and fantasy, of barkings
dogs and sorrowful guitars, of dark
nights in white-walled streets, the
Albayzín of tragic superstition, of
women telling fortunes, of strange
Gypsy rituals, of suffering souls, of
pregnant women, the Albayzín of old
prostitutes who know about the evil
eye, of seductresses, of bloody curses,
of passion . . .

(*Impressions and Landscapes*)

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From 1915 on ward, El Rinconcillo, a group of young intellectuals who gather in Café Alameda in Granada, counts Federico as one of its members. Others who attend the gatherings include his brother Francisco, José Mora Guarnido, Constantino Ruiz Carnero, Francisco Soriano, Melchor Fernández Almagro, Antonio Gallego Burín, Miguel Pizarro, José Fernández Montesinos and his brother Manuel (a doctor and later Federico's brother-in-law), Hermenegildo Lanz, Ángel Barrios, Ismael González de la Serna and Nakayama Koichi, from Japan. In 1918 he stages a play called *The Story of the Treasure* along with Barrios, Pizarro, and M. Á. Ortiz. Up until 1923, there is not a single intellectual in Granada who doesn't pass through these gatherings, according to Francisco García Lorca. Attendees of El Rinconcillo put up ceramic plaques honoring distinguished figures associated with Granada (Debussy, Gautier, Soto de Rojas), and invent the apocryphal poet Isidoro Capdepón Fernández.

1919- In autumn, Federico moves to the Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid, where he will live during various periods until 1928.

1920- *The Butterfly's Evil Spell* premieres on March 22 at the Eslava Theater in Madrid and flops monumentally. His father insists he continue his university studies. He begins to write the *Suites*, which he publishes, in part.

1921- June: *Book of Poems* is released in Madrid.

1922- Falla, staying in Granada, promotes contest of Cante Jondo (deep song) with the support of El Rinconcillo. In February, Lorca delivers a lecture entitled "Cante Jondo: Early Andalusian Song" at the Artistic Center. In June he reads part of "Poem of the Deep Song" at the Alhambra Palace hotel. The contest takes place June 13–14, in the Plaza de los Aljibes at the Alhambra. Among those to receive awards are an old flamenco singer named Diego "El Tenazas" Bermúdez and the boy who will eventually become known as Manolo Caracol.

IN MEMORIAM AUGUST 1920

Sweet poplar,
sweet poplar,
you have
turned gold.
Yesterday
you were green,
a green crazy
with glorious
birds.
Today you are downcast
under the August sky
as I am beneath
the sky of my red spirit.
My tender heart
will catch
the captive fragrance
of your trunk.
Rough grandfather
of the field!
You and I,
we have both
turned gold.

(*Book of Poems*)

Then Falla decided to organize a Cante Jondo contest with the help of all the Spanish artists and the festival was by all accounts a triumph and a resurrection. Those who before would sneer now adore, but I've got their number. They are hung up on some criteria of high authority but will be the first to jump to the other side, because they have never understood it. This is why whenever I come across a frigid intellectual or some library fellow who rolls his eyes when he hears someone singing soleares, I will hurl at his face the fistful of white cream that the movies have taught me always to carry hidden in my right hand.

(*The Architecture of Cante Jondo*)

LAST LIGHT

In blue
confusion
distant bonfire
(skewering the mountain's
heart).
Birds who play at wind
amongst the poplars
and streambeds growing deeper
deeper down.

(from the suite *Six Songs at Nightfall*)

1923- He holds a "Modern Art Festival" in his house on Acera del Casino, on the occasion of the day of the Epiphany (Reyes). An offering of puppet theater is presented, including *Mystery of the*

Three Kings, along with *The Two Talkers*, a Cervantean interlude, and *The Girl Who Waters Basil and the Very Inquisitive Prince*, with music by Falla, puppets by Hermenegildo Lanz and scenery and direction by Lanz and García Lorca. He graduates with a degree in law.

1924- In the summer, Juan Ramón Jiménez and his wife Zenobia Camprubí visit the family. The first texts of Jiménez's *Forgotten Granada* date from this period, which Juan Ramón will never see published in book form.

1925- The family acquires the Huerta de San Vicente, a property where Federico will spend much of his time beginning in the following summer.

1926- January–February: excursions to the Alpujarras and Guadix with Falla, Alfonso García Valdecasas, José Segura and other Granadinos. In February, activities begin at the new Scientific and Literary Athenaeum in Granada, an offshoot of the Artistic Center, with a lecture called *The Poetic Image of Luis de Góngora*, and, in October, a course, with a discussion entitled "Paradise Closed for Many, Gardens Open for Few," about the poet Pedro Soto de Rojas, a follower of Góngora.

This is not the first time I, Don Cristóbal, drunken puppet married to Doña Rosita, spring out from the hand of Federico García Lorca onto the tiny stage where I may live forever and never die. The first time was in the poet's house. Do you remember, Federico? It was spring in Granada and the living room in your house was full of children, who said, "The puppets are made of flesh, so why do they stay so small and never grow?" The famous Manuel de Falla played piano and there, for the first time in Spain, Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* was played. I still remember the smiling faces of the newspaper saleschildren, whom the poet made come inside and stay among the curls and ribbons of the rich children.

(Address to the public in Buenos Aires, 1934)

Granada is unable to leave its home. It is not like other cities, situated on the shores of an ocean or a great river, who journey away and return enriched with what they have seen. Granada, solitary and pure, gets even smaller, clings to its extraordinary soul and has no more route of exit than its towering natural gate to the stars. Because of this it has no thirst for adventure, it doubles in on itself and turns to the use of diminutives to draw in its imagination, in the same way it draws in its body to avoid flights of fancy and harmonizes, with restraint, its interior architecture with the living architecture of the city.

(*Paradise Closed for Many, Gardens Open for Few, a Gongorian Poet of the Seventeenth Century*)

I adore Granada, but what I adore is living on another plane, living in the world of Carmen, and all the rest is nonsense. Living nearby to what one loves and feels. Lime, myrtle, and fountain.

(To Melchor Fernández Almagro, first half of August, 1924)

1927- *Songs (1921–1924)* is published. *Mariana Pineda* opens on June 24 in the Goya Theater in Barcelona, and on October 12 at the Fontalba Theater in Madrid, with Margarita Xirgu's company and sets by Dalí.

GRANADA 1850

From my window
I can hear the fountains fall.

A finger of grapevine
and a beam of sunlight
point to the spot
where my heart is.

In the August air
the clouds go by.
I dream I'm not dreaming
inside the fountain.

(*Songs*)

What a sad day in Granada,
The stones began to cry,
To see Mariana die
Because she would not speak.
Marianita alone in her room,
With only one thought in mind,
"If only Pedrosa could see me,
embroidering the freedom

(*Mariana Pineda*)

I am freedom because love demanded it,
Pedro, the freedom for which you left me!
I am freedom wounded by mankind.
Love, love, and eternal solitude.

(*Mariana Pineda*)

1928- At the beginning of March, the first issue of the literary magazine *Gallo* (Rooster) is released. Its editors also publish a parody magazine *Pavo* (Turkey). In April: the second and final issue of *Gallo*. The publisher of the *Revista de Occidente* publishes *Gypsy Ballads*. In September: *Mariana Pineda* is published in the popular collection La Farsa. In October: a lecture is held at the Granada Athenaeum on "Imagination, Inspiration, Escape." Days later, in a "Night Out for *Gallo*," the headliner, "New Painting Sketch."

If you ask me why I say, "A thousand crystal tambourines wound the dawn light," I will tell you that I have seen them in the hands of angels and trees, but I will not know what more to say, nor much less how to explain the significance. And it is good for it to be so. With increasing speed, man approaches through poetry the cliff to which the philosopher and mathematician turn their backs in silence.

(Lecture-recital for *Gypsy Ballads*)

So, the truly regenerative movement has been cubism, with its three periods. Discipline, love, and law. Death of perspective and abstract exaltation of volume. I have here its profile. The arrival of 1926. The cubist lesson is already well taken advantage of. But a sad cerebralism, and a tired intellectualism, invades painting. . . . Where are we going? We are going toward instinct, toward chance, pure inspiration, the fragrance of that which is direct.

(*New Painting Sketch*)

What to do, my God, in order to shake Granada from the magical stupor in which it lives? . . .

(*Story of Gallo*)

1929- May: *Mariana Pineda* opens at the Cervantes Theater, played by Margarita Xirgu's company, followed by a banquet in the Alhambra Palace hotel. Some days later, García Lorca reads several poems on the hotel's stage. On June 19 he sets off for New York, where he will arrive one week later. During the summer, he visits the writer Federico de Onís in Newburgh, New York.

1930- In February, he works with the flamenco singer and dancer Encarnación López Júlvez, La Argentinita, on harmonies for popular Spanish songs. Having returned to Granada, he finishes *The Public*.

1931- La Voz de su Amo (His Master's Voice) publishes a series of five records, entitled *Canciones populares antiguas* (Old Folk Songs), with harmonies and piano by García Lorca—the sound of this piano is the only documented audio available of him today—and sung by La Argentinita. April 14: proclamation of the Second Republic. June: *Poem of the Deep Song* is published by Ulises. August: at the Huerta de San Vicente, García Lorca finishes the play *When Five Years Pass*. September: in response to the honor bestowed upon him by his village (the republican local government of Fuente Vaqueros has named a street for him) he gives a lecture in praise of books.

1932- October: the theater company La Barraca performs at the theater of Isabel la Católica in Granada. November: reading of a lecture about María Blanchard in Pontevedra and Lugo.

If one day, if God continues to help me, I attain glory, half of that glory will belong to Granada, which shaped and modeled this creature who I am: a born poet with no recourse to change. Now, more than ever, I require the silence and spiritual density of the Granada air to sustain the duel to the death I fight with my heart and with poetry.

(*Mariana Pineda* in Granada, 1929)

Whoever has lived as I have lived and in such a time and city as barbaric from a social perspective as Granada must believe that women are either impossible or foolish. A frenzied fear of the sexual and a dread over "what will they say?" turns women into automatons out for a stroll, under the gaze of big-bottomed mamas wearing men's shoes and growing little hairs from the sides of their chins.

(*Elegy for María Blanchard*)

I think being from Granada predisposes me to a sympathetic understanding of those who are persecuted. The Gypsy, the black man, the Jew, . . . the Moor, whom we all carry inside.

(To Rodolfo Gil Benumeña, 1931)