Mano a Mano: Tres Poemas Negros

A short set of Cuban songs

A short duo program from mezzo-soprano Fanny Lora and pianist Alexandra Lutkevich, collaborators on the *Through My Eyes* concert tour: three songs by Cuban composer Mariela Rodríguez, set to poems by Emilio Ballagas and performed in Spanish, framed by a spoken introduction and conversation with the audience. An intimate voice-and-piano program, it offers an opportunity to experience Hispanic classical music through music and poetry. Creating these shorter programs is one of the ways I work to bring this repertoire to Latino community audiences and make it more accessible.

The music



Mariela Rodríguez (b. 1986) is a Cuban composer based in Valladolid, Spain. She trained at Havana's National School of Music and the Higher Institute of Art of Cuba, and this cycle won the 2011 Harold Gramatges First Prize of Composition, awarded by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC). *Tres Poemas Negros* sets three poems by Emilio Ballagas (1908–1954), drawing on Afro-Cuban poetry and the playful, rhythmic scenes of Cuban life. We perform the set in its original version for voice and piano.

1. **Poema de la jícara**
   A joyful cry to the jícara, the dried pumpkin bowl: "I don't want a white or black gourd, but only its name, flavor of air and river."
2. **Para dormir a un negrito**
   A tender lullaby with a playful warning: "If you don't hush soon, the crazy man will come for you and will scare you."
3. **Pregón**
   A hawker's song that comes "like a wave of flavors": pineapple, soursop, mango, and mamey, plantains and apples too.

The artists

Fanny Lora

Mezzo-soprano

Fanny Lora is a Dominican-American mezzo-soprano, Alexander Technique teacher, and producer who specializes in Spanish and Latin American repertoire. She creates and performs immersive concert programs every season, with recital tours including "Españolería: A Spanish Song Experience," "Andaluz," and "En Cuerpo & Alma" in both the United States and the Dominican Republic (Teatro Nacional). She is the founder and artistic director of Mano a Mano Ensemble, and tours *Through My Eyes* with pianist Alexandra Lutkevich. Fanny resides with her family in Holliston, MA.



Alexandra Lutkevich

Piano

Alexandra Lutkevich is an accomplished collaborative pianist, educator, and vocal coach. Alexandra is Visiting Assistant Professor at Wheaton College, where she directs the Wheaton Chorale and Chamber Singers, accompanies instrumentalists, and teaches piano. Over the last fifteen years, Alexandra has accompanied, directed and coached hundreds of choral rehearsals and performances, voice recitals, and musical productions, including with Handel and Haydn's Youth Chorus, Boston Children's Chorus, Weston Drama Workshop, Framingham State University, The Walnut Hill School, and the MMEA All-State Festival.

The performance

Music	About 10 minutes: three songs for voice and piano
The full visit	Spoken introduction, the set, and conversation with the audience, about 25 to 30 minutes together
Format	Voice and piano; venue piano setup to be confirmed
A natural fit for	Hispanic cultural organizations, heritage celebrations, schools, libraries, and community concert series

Mano a Mano: Tres Poemas Negros, performed live $600

Booking and questions: Fanny Lora · fannylora@fannylora.com · www.fannylora.com · Holliston, MA · Prepared November 8, 2026