

LUZ Y SOMBRA PERFORMANCE NOTES

During the first half of the twentieth century in Mexico, serenades were a way for a man to sing about his feelings to a woman. The serenade would be the vehicle that the man could use to express his love, thanks, wishes of reconciliation and other emotions to win the affection of the woman he loved. Evening was definitely the perfect time to take a group of *Mariachi* along to accompany him as he sang outside the house of the lady he was wooing.

Manuel Gutierrez Najera wrote his poem from the perspective of a man in an era where women had a somewhat different place in society. It is very clear that the subtlety with which he addresses the woman is expressed by the way Najera writes a series of lines that display the fragility of the man's emotions as he tries to woo the strong-minded woman.

In any case, the text is set to music influenced by the style of *huapango* folk music. The opening stanzas are then interrupted by a more agitated section reflecting the urgency of the man's courting. The song concludes with the recapitulation of the main theme. This piece aims to invoke the image of a serenading Mexican *charro* (cowboy) who succumbs to the charm of his beloved. Will you succumb to the charms of the music?