**LA MUJER QUE YO QUIERO - Liner notes**

In 1983, I released the album *HA-ISHÁ SHE-ITĪ* (in Spanish *LA MUJER QUE YO QUIERO*). This was a tribute album to contemporary Spanish music which I had listened to while living in Spain between the ages of 12 and 18 years. The idea of translating the songs to Hebrew came from my dear friend and partner in writing, Israeli poet Yehonatan Geffen. He heard me sing some of these songs in Spanish and was disturbed at not understanding a word. I then translated some songs for him in a literal manner and he made the final Hebrew adaptation. We worked on the songs casually over the next four years, and I slowly included some of them into my regular shows.

In November 1982, I went into the studio with producer Luis Lahav (who had a very clear sound in his mind for the album), and after a month of recording we created an album which was to change my place in the roster of most popular artists in Israel. The album also changed the face of the music industry in the country: it reached 5 times platinum status in a very short time, and between albums and cassettes and bootleg copies, literally every household in the country was listening and singing these songs which were born in Spain and reborn in Israel.

Now in 2023, I am recounting the turn of events from 40 years ago.  There has been an unfinished mission going in my mind over the last few years – I wanted to re-record those songs in their original Spanish language, so the audience in Israel could be reminded that what has become such a part of Israel’s songbook was actually born in Spain.

I started working on playing the Spanish versions over a few months in 2022, and decided to go to Madrid to record the album in a very pure and raw recording with just my voice and guitar. My friend, Spanish producer Javier Limón, let me use his wonderfully intimate studio in Madrid where I recorded my last album, *En Casa Limón*. I worked on preparing the songs for an entire month, practicing intensely the wonderful words of some of the greatest poets, writers and composers. I thought I knew the songs well until I tried performing them, and found I was far from ready.

On October 9th, 2022, I had the songs ready and met with the sound engineer, Aure Escalleja. We set up the most intimate recording scenario and I sang through all nine songs in one very long nine-hour session. I had slotted two days for this process, but as the day went and the recordings felt strong, I decided to give it all I had while in that state of mind. This was very intense – I don’t remember an experience like this in the studio throughout my 45-year career. I felt like I had been through a metamorphosis. I had immersed myself totally into the songs and the lyrics, and it was late at night when I finished. I hadn’t eaten all day, and water had been my only sustenance.

The next day when I woke up, I felt as if I had let a very emotionally conjured story out of the depth of my soul. As I started to unwind, I recalled that before taking off for Madrid and the recording session, my wife Nili commented that it seemed that I was in another space, that I was not quite ‘on the ground’ – and now it made sense – I was so immersed and committed to the songs that I was just waiting to let them out.

“La Mujer Que Yo Quiero,” the title song of the album, “Tío Alberto”and “Que Va Ser De Ti” are all cover versions from the epic **Joan Manuel Serrat** album *Mediterráneo*. I discovered Serrat through Spanish friends in Madrid when I was 17. Serrat made an album based on the poems of Antonio Machado, an incredible work, as Machado had died while trying to flee the fascist army during the Spanish civil war. The work of Serrat has inspired me throughout my career. I admire his pride of the Catalan culture, singing in Catalan, being one of the leaders of the movement of Nova Çansó and his political stand against fascism. But most importantly, I greatly respect his songwriting and performance. He started writing and recording in Spanish in the end of the 1960s. When I went back to Israel at 18 for military service, I took with me the *Mediterráneo* album which was a huge success at the time. I listened to it over and over, and learned some of the songs. These songs, translated into Hebrew, became part of the *Ha-Ishá She-Ití* album eight years later.

**Paco Ibañez** was a name I heard frequently amongst my friends. Ibañez was a troubadour and folk singer in exile in Paris, who had recorded and set to music many works by Federico García Lorca, Rafael Alberti and other renegade poets. I loved his guitar playing and the folk melodies that sounded as though they had been written hundreds of years ago. “LA MÁS BELLA NIÑA” is a melody to a Luis de Góngora poem from the 17th century about a young widow who just lost her husband at the front lines. She is destined to live alone the rest of her life as she cries to her mother of her dark fate. In 1983 I hosted Paco Ibañez in some of the big shows I did after the huge success of the album. He couldn’t believe his eyes as thousands of people were singing along with us in Hebrew. It was very powerful. At 88, Paco was and still is the renegade performer with his guitar!

**Manzanita** was a hero to me and many others in Spain with his amazing guitar playing and his thick husky flamenco voice, singing melodic pop songs. Manzanita gave his songs a flare for the deep culture of the gypsy tradition and the duende of flamenco. He also came to Israel to be a guest on the second album of the translated songs, *Ha-Ishá She-Ití 2*. In the first album he had three songs, two of which he wrote, and one which he covered, “RAMITO DE VIOLETAS.” I had known the original version of “Cecilia” - but when I heard Manzanita’s version, back in the seventies, it helped me turn the Hebrew version into my own. In 1999, Manzanita was a guest at my Masada sunrise show. It was an amazing experience with him and his two sons, Rafa and Jose. Manzanita died in 2004. May he rest in peace.

**ABOUT THE WRITERS**

**Luis de Góngora** was a Spanish baroque lyric poet and a Catholic priest (1561 - 1627). His style was characterized by what was called culteranismo, also known as Gongorismo. The style of writing affected and influenced writers and poets for several centuries including Federico Garcías Lorca and the Generation of ‘27.

Born in Valencia in 1934, **Paco Ibañez** grew up partly in exile in Paris until he was 14 when his mother took him back to her family’s village in the Basque country. Paco became a folk singer/recording artist, writing music to the poetry of Federico Garcías Lorca, Leon Felipe, Luis de Góngora , Rafael Alberti and many more . His voice and guitar have been a distinguished sound that retains the influences of the troubadours of his time. In Paris during the 1968 riots, he became known as the rebel singer after his performance at the Sorbonne. He still is a rebel today.

**Leon Felipe** was born in 1884 in Tábara, Zamora, and died in 1968 in Mexico, where he lived in exile. Leon was a modernist poet, part of the ‘27 generation. During the civil war he fought in the Spanish Republican Army against the Nationalist faction, and for this, he spent the remainder of his life in exile.

**Evangelina Sobredo Galanes** was a singer-songwriter who brought in the influence of American folk rock. Her performing name was ‘Cecilia’ – a name taken from the Simon and Garfunkel song. She had a very successful run with three solo albums and nine singles. Her songs were covered and performed by many singers from all over the Spanish and Latin world, such as Julio Iglesias, Massiel, Mocedades and others. She died in a car crash upon returning from a show to Madrid in 1976.

**Manzanita – née José Hortega Manuel Heredia –** lived from 1956 to 2004. Manzanita was a groundbreaking flamenco musician, guitarist and singer. He was one of the first singer-songwriters to write intimate love songs and mix them with Flamenco. He had major success with songs like “Verde”, “Ramito de Violetas”, “Dentro de tu Alma” and “Por Tu Ausencia”. He was regarded by many as one of the most esteemed Flamenco artists as well as a brilliant guitarist and a great singer.

**Federico García Lorca**(1898 – 1936) was perhaps the best known Spanish poet and playwright of the 20th Century. Born and raised in Andalusia near Granada, his poetry reflected on the life and culture of southern Spain. Lorca was also a member of the ‘27 Generation which was influenced by European Surrealist, Simbolista and Futurist poetry. He created a theatre, La Barraca where he produced some of his best-known plays: *YERMA, BLOOD WEDDING*, and the *HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA*. His book *POETA EN NUEVA YORK*, was written while spending time in the city. Federico Garcías Lorca was assassinated during the civil war in Spain and the whereabouts of his grave is unknown. In 1986 an album was recorded with many international artists including Leonard Cohen, Paco de Lucía and myself, to commemorate Lorca and his poetry book of New York .

**Joan Manuel Serrat**was born in 1943 in Barcelona, and is considered the most important living Spanish singer-songwriter. He is also considered the pioneer of the Catalan Nova Cançó (Nueva Canción). Serrat’s songwriting was influenced by great Spanish poets: Antonio Machado, Miguel Hernandez, Mario Benedetti, and many others. During the years of the Franco dictatorship, Serrat was very critical and released two albums composed to the poems of Machado and Hernandez, who were symbols of the fight against the fascist regime. In 1974 Serrat was exiled to Mexico after making comments regarding anti-death sentences and the violence of the Franco regime. He remained in exile until after Franco’s death. The album title song from Serrat’s *Mediterráneo* was voted as the best Spanish song of the 20th century. Over the years, many artists in the Spanish and Latin world have paid tributes to Serrat and his music. In 1983 *HA-ISHÁ SHE-ITÍ (LA MUJER QUE YO QUIERO)* became the bestselling album of all time in Israel, and introduced Serrat and other Spanish singer songwriters to an Israeli audience. Since then, Joan Manuel Serrat has performed several times in Israel.

Credits:

Producer: David Broza

Guitar: David Broza

Vocals: David Broza

Recording & mixing engineer: Aurelio Estebanez (Casa Limón, Madrid)

Mastering: Greg Calbi, Sterling Sound

Graphic design - Rafa Sañudo (The Raro Company, Madrid)

Photography: Adam Lubroth

Artist management: Susan Rosenberg