

La bella Lola
Arr. Mirna Y. Cabrera
Hal Leonard # 00388336

1. After a year of no land sighting
As the war prevented me from it
I went to Havana where the one
Whom I adored lived.

Chorus

Oh! What pleasure I felt
When she pulled out her handkerchief to greet me.
And later she approached me,
She embraced me, and in that act, I thought I would die.

2. When on the beach my beautiful Lola
Walks around showing her train,
The sailors go crazy
And even the pilot loses a beat.

Chorus

3. The young Cuban girl was sad, crying
Finding herself alone and on the high seas,
The sailor would comfort her telling her
“Don’t cry, Lola, you will not drown here.”

Chorus

Program Notes

Habaneras are both a vocal musical genre as well as a dance ‘beat’ with specific rhythmic characteristics. They are classified as part of the Cuban *contradanza* musical complex, of which the oldest genre is the *contradanza criolla*, later renamed *danza*, and the newer genres include the *danzón*, *cha-cha-chá* and *mambo*. The first musical publication in Cuba in 1803 was *San Pascual Bailón*, labeled *contradanza*, a genre that remained popular throughout the rest of the nineteenth century.

The origins of *contradanzas* is an example of the process of creolization of music from several cultural sources: a) the 18th century English country dance, b) the later stylized French version of the English country dance—*contradanse*, which was simultaneously introduced to Spanish territories by the Bourbon dynasty as well as brought to Cuba in the late 1700s by French refugees fleeing the Haitian uprisings, c) already present afro-Cuban influences and who were responsible for altering the bass ostinato by adding an augmentation dot, and d) Spanish culture in the island nation. *Contradanzas* were very popular as elegant, ballroom dances during the first half of the nineteenth century in Cuba and became known outside Cuba as *habaneras*, *Havana dances*. Typically in duple meter, *habaneras*’s most recognizable musical features are a slow tempo, a rhythmic ostinato in the bass, and the Cuban *tresillo* figure in the melody.



Contradanzas habaneras, the name subsequently adopted in Cuba for this genre after its popularity abroad, became very popular throughout Spain and many of its former colonies. Its far-reaching musical influence included George Bizet's *habanera* dance in his 1875 opera *Carmen* as well as the underlying rhythmic ostinato we hear in the Argentinean *tango*. Just like many *habaneras*, *La bella Lola* is anonymous and has become part of the oral tradition with different poetic and melodic variants present. The tremolos, to be played gently so as not to cover the sound of the voices, and the arpeggios in this arrangement, are intended to imitate the accompaniment of a guitar. This is the love story between Lola ('Lola' is short for 'Dolores'), a Cuban young lady, and a Spanish sailor. It is an example of the *ida y vuelta* culture ('there and back') that existed between Cuba and Spain as regards to trade, naval prowess, loneliness at sea, and the back and forth of family ties.

Choreography

Habaneras are social, elegant dances. Singers can gently sway to the beat, where the feet are hardly lifted from the ground, without moving the hips, while waving a white kerchief sideways on the beat, or a hand fan in the front of the body for all the refrains: mm. 20-34, 35-42 (optional – mime to be engaged in a 'conversation'), 56-69, 72-78 (optional – mime to be engaged in a 'conversation'), 87-102, m. 104 move kerchief in an abrupt motion in a 'olé' style on the last beat, or if using fans, close them on the final quarter note beat.

—Thanks to choreographer Zoila 'Zoilyn' Del Pozzo for her contribution.

Errata: m. 9, bass clef, 3rd note in should be a D, not an F-sharp.