

And what happened to Silvio?

A translation of <https://campanitasdefe.com/2019/05/25/y-que-paso-con-silvio/>

Summary. This little bell tells what happened in a long meeting with **Silvio Rodríguez** in 2004 in **Havana**. The writing includes a poem “**Creí que creías**” (‘I thought you believed’) and a song “**Sí, sí hay humanidad**” (‘**Yes, there is humanity**’), which I composed for him. The poem, recited by **Joel Espinosa Solís** and accompanied on piano by **José Portillo**, can be listened to [here](#). The song, arranged by **Jorge Wrves Román** under the direction of **Lázaro Alemán López** and interpreted by **Leonel Mederos Bravo**, can be listened to [here](#).

The poem and the song may also be visualized as YouTube videos in the text.

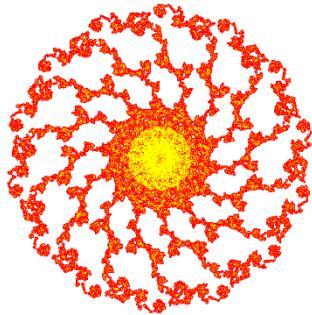
The blog [Presentation](#) provides information about the purpose of these little bells and the blog [Organization](#) shows how the entries are grouped by categories. This entry belongs to the categories “**Cuban little bells**” and “**Some additional advice**.”

To celebrate my **30 years of spiritual life**, a few weeks ago I carried out a beautiful journey through my homeland. Just as it is recounted in the [previous](#) little bell, in addition to giving **sixteen** lectures during my stay, I was interviewed twice on the program “**Construyendo Sociedad**” (‘**Building Society**’) of the radio station of **Universidad Piloto de Colombia**.

In the second of those interviews, conducted by my friend **Felipe Santamaría**, I shared how a musical project was forged that has become a vital dream — that is, one day to form a great band [Shanti Setú/Bridge of Peace](#) to sing to the **Lord** a **new song**. As you can hear in Spanish [here](#), if you take **an hour** to do so — oh, such a long interval that we no longer have in these sad modern times — the dialogue focused on my love since childhood for **Cuban music** and, in particular, on my interaction with the great musicians **Silvio Rodríguez** and **José María Vitier**.

These two artists have already been mentioned on the blog. While **Silvio** appeared in the first post as the good “culprit” of my attempts at songwriting — and this due to an unspoken silence on his part after I met him in **Havana** in 1995 — **José María** surfaced in the story of my return to the island, when in 2002 I took part in a first international congress on **Complexity Theory** and had the good fortune of meeting him together with his wife **Silvia**, that is, **Silvia Rodríguez**.

If you listen to the charming interview or read the two little bells just mentioned, you shall notice that such do not include what happened when I had the chance to see **Silvio** again. From this arises the title of this little bell, which continues the story...



... Indeed, in January of 2004, how time flies, I returned to **Cuba** for the second biennial congress on **Complexity** and, unlike what had happened two years earlier, this time **Silvio** was there, and so we were able to have a beautiful encounter.

We met in the lobby of my hotel, located at the convention center where the congress was being held. There we spent four uninterrupted hours together, pausing only at the end to have a soft drink. After a warm greeting and my congratulations, since he had just become both a father and a grandfather, we began to warm up, and very soon the topic of conversation turned to “**believing or not believing**” in **God**.

Once the essential theme was defined, the first thing he told me — calmly and firmly — was that **he didn't believe**, to which I instinctively replied that **I did**. Honestly, his statement took me by surprise, as for years I had drawn nourishment from the direct **connections** between many of **his songs** and the theme of **divine love**. What, then, did he mean in his compositions like “*¿Qué hago ahora?*” (*What do I do now?*), “*Sólo el amor*” (*Only love*), “*El reparador de sueños*” (*The repairer of dreams*), and so many others? Was it not **Jesus** whom he had found and who now inspired him to ask what to do next? Wasn't the **love** that turns clay into a miracle the very love of the creator **God**? Wasn't it **Jesus**, again, the repairing “*enanito*” (*the little one*) who did his best work by bringing everything into his own **light**?

He told me that he had indeed read the **Bible** since childhood and that this had surely influenced him, and — so as not to completely dismiss my assumption — he emphasized that there were other acquaintances of his who also mistakenly believed that he believed.

Having brought to him recent copies of my books, I then delved into the message of **La Higuera & La Campana** (*The Fig Tree & The Bell*) to share with him, in particular, how —

starting from **modern science** and in a way that resonated with his song “**Tocando Fondo**” (“**Hitting rock bottom**”) — I had experienced a true **epiphany** that changed my life. Our conversation unfolded slowly, and he gave it his full attention. On my part, I made every effort to ensure he could grasp the mathematical and physical explanations, knowing he would have no trouble recognizing the common symbols between my work and his. I remember well how everything flowed beautifully in a respectful and profound “**back-and-forth.**”

Using the visual aids in my books, we concentrated on the most important themes, chapter by chapter. That is how we explored the **diabolical multiplicative cascades** of natural **turbulence**, the **logistic** equation to understand the **infernal chaos** in the excessive heating of fluids, and a **renewing and vital transformation** capable of **overcoming death** and carrying everything toward **infinity** in a **singular bell.**

We spoke of **apocalyptic downpours** inspired by a **chaotic fig tree** from **science**, as in his songs “**El vigía**” (“**The watchman**”), “**Rabo de Nube**” (“**Tail of a cloud**”), “**Y tantos huesos chocarán**” (“**And so many bones will collide**”), and “**El día feliz que está llegando**” (“**The happy day that is coming**”); we reflected on essential signs and the victory of the **plus** over the **minus** and of **equilibrium** over **turbulence**, as in his works “**¿Qué signo lleva el amor?**” (“**What sign does love carries?**”, “**Canto arena**” (“**Singing sand**”), “**La maza**” (“**The mallet**”), “**Entre el espanto y la ternura**” (“**Between fright and tenderness**”), and “**Lo de más**” (“**Everything else**”); we considered the inherent **falsehood** in the immense **inequalities** of the world and their **diabolical** origin, as understood in his “**El viento eres tú**” (“**You are the wind**”) and “**Quiero cantarte un beso**” (“**I want to sing you a kiss**”).

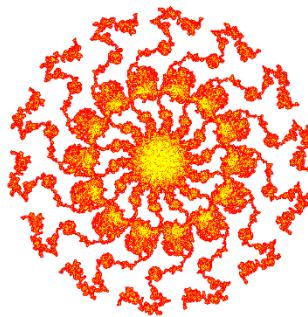
And I told him — perhaps not during that meeting but before or after — that I believed the **Mother** that was walking shoulder to shoulder with her clan in “**Cuando digo futuro**” (“**When I say future**”) was in fact the **Virgin Mary**, “**La Lupe**,” “**Our Lady of Guadalupe**,” “**the Rose**,” whom I also saw in his “**Casiopea**,” “**En estos días**” (“**In these days**”), and “**En el jardín de la noche**” (“**In the garden of the night**”).

We covered a lot of ground and in the end we exalted the preeminence of **love**, on my part understood as that of **Jesus** given for us, and on his part in his “**Jerusalén año cero**” (“**Jerusalem year zero**”) and in the same **love** that I perceive in several of his beautiful hymns like “**Por quién merece amor**” (“**For whom deserves love**”) and “**Con un poco de amor**” (“**With a little bit of love**”).

The encounter was, without doubt, very beautiful, and I'm sure that, having been different and unexpected, it was also very special for him. I understand that he appreciated the way, even if strange given its perspective based on *science*, in which my *conversion* and *epiphany* happened, for, a few months later, when I shared that same testimony with the Nobel laureate José Saramago with him, he acknowledged that this was exactly what we had talked about.

Sometimes, when I give lectures about "*The Hypotenuse*" — whose theme appears in the little bells *Jesus, the equilibrium* and *Jesus, the hypotenuse* — I choose to name the troubadour to capture greater attention from the audience. And it's there that I take the opportunity to say that he vigorously exclaimed, "*what a well-chosen name!*" when he understood in **Havana** what the "*devil's staircases*" were.

The meeting postponed for almost ten years, since the time we briefly met, ended with a long handshake during which I told him that I believed he was very close to believing, to which he replied saying, "*it could be...*" or "*perhaps it could be...*," which I didn't know was part of his song "*Qué sé yo*" ('*What do I know*') contained in his latest and wonderful album "*Cita con Ángeles*" ('*Meeting with Angels*') that he had just given me and, therefore, I hadn't yet heard ...



... Upon returning home, happy to have shared the good news of our salvation with my troubadour — not a small thing! — I made use of various songs by the great **Silvio** to write a long poem titled "*Creí que creías*" ('*I thought you believed*') that tries to explain that my "*confusion*" had not been merely an act of *madness*, even if it's true that my favorite song of his is precisely "*Locuras*" ('*Fits of Madness*').

My composition, as a grateful tribute, is recited below after its lyrics, accompanied on piano by an improvisation of my best song X = Y, which I have wished **Silvio** would perform, perhaps on a duet with me. Such a poem follows, line by line and stanza by stanza, the progressive order of the 71 songs found here, in a **Spotify** playlist beautifully curated by my

friend **Sharel Charry**, which also appears in Spanish after the recitation of the poem. This collection can be listened to in any order, of course, and ultimately represents only a sample of the great output of the singer-songwriter who has accompanied, with his special lyricism and depth not just a few people, that is, to many, which does not express exactly the same thing, but, at the end, is the same.

I THOUGHT YOU BELIEVED

*For Silvio Rodríguez
based on 71 of his songs*

I thought you believed
for thousands of loves,
for a forgotten sign,
oh trinity to destiny!
for flowers, colors
and days with shelter...

I thought you believed
in finding laughter,
in a singing rock,
oh primal lie!
in a good sand
without a rushing wind...

I thought you believed
for woman and star,
for desire and seed,
oh son and the father!
for rose in the night
her clan and that chair...

I thought you believed
for bones clashing,
for a deep tune,
oh cry of death!
for light and its sky
intact, aware...

I thought you believed
for stale problem,
for wings, tenderness,
oh signs of the soul!
for sung kisses
and serene goblins...

I thought you believed
for launched dream,
for sane madness,
oh God and His act!
for little dwarf on earth
drying your tears...

I thought you believed
for awakened word,
for bleeding love,
oh King and His year!
for incarnated “I hope”
watchman of the flock...

I thought you believed
for your coordinates,
for terrible summer,
oh harpy snake!
for singular caress
and a later, still...

I thought you believed
for your hitting bottom,
for a bird at twelve,
oh night of John!
for mallet, silence
and cause with no chance...

I thought you believed
for virtue in play,
for all hope,

oh eternal dew!
for that found
in the Bible and effort...

I thought you believed
for bone and chisel,
for sweet abyss,
oh that bright star!
for stubborn tomorrow
perhaps with him...

I thought you believed
for water and dawn,
for pure friendship,
oh my gardener!
for a lit sun
waiting its hour...

I thought you believed
sensitive poet,
since you already suspected
the whole orchestra.

I thought you believed
oh close the orchard,
I knew you suffered
for those without celebration.

Come, let's go brother,
the rain is near,
humble shamelessness
provides its reward.

Come, let's go brother,
of sap and of salt,
there comes nesting
your total theme.

Come, let's go brother,
it is coming with joy,
your longed-for day
finally approaches.

Come, let's go brother,
with faith in the grace,
your greatest friend
defeated all pain.

Come, let's go brother,
with faithful impulse,
let's unite the flag
with honeyed verse.

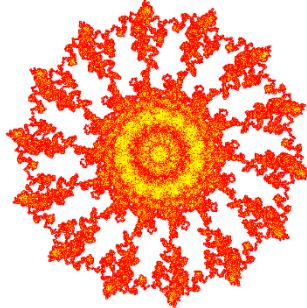
Come, let's go brother,
loyal human being,
life always gifts
always what is more.

(January 2004)

The poem you just read can be listened to in Spanish [here](#)...

The 71 songs cited, are, in order: 1. Con un poco de amor, 2. Por quien merece amor, 3. Juego que me regaló un 6 de Enero, 4. Días y flores, 5. Mi casa ha sido tomada por las flores, 6. Te conozco, 7. Río, 8. La primera mentira, 9. Canto arena, 10. El viento eres tú, 11. Testamento, 12. Leyenda, 13. Debo, 14. En el jardín de la noche, 15. Cuando digo futuro, 16. Historia de las sillas, 17. Y tantos huesos chocarán, 18. Tonada de la muerte, 19. Al final de este viaje en la vida, 20. La gaviota, 21. El problema, 22. No hacen falta alas, 23. Entre el espanto y la ternura, 24. Solo el amor, 25. Quiero cantarte un beso, 26. El día feliz que está llegando, 27. En busca de un sueño, 28. Locuras, 29. Reparador de sueños, 30. Si seco un llanto, 31. Pequeña serenata diurna, 32. Son desangrado, 33. Jerusalén año cero, 34. Ojalá, 35. La tonada inasible, 36. El vigía, 37. Casiopea, 38. Sueño de una noche de verano, 39. Sueño con serpientes, 40. Leyenda de los dos amantes, 41. Te amaré, 42. Tocando fondo, 43. Causas y azares, 44. La maza, 45. Ya no te espero, 46. Verbos en juego, 47. Venga la esperanza, 48. La gota de rocío, 49. Qué hago ahora, 50. El dulce abismo, 51. Yo te quiero libre, 52. Se demora, 53. Si tengo un hermano, 54. Como esperando abril, 55. Anoche fue la orquesta, 56. Lo que quisiste ser, 57. Sin hijo ni árbol ni libro, 58. Canción de

navidad, 59. Rabo de nube, 60. La vergüenza, 61. En el claro de la luna, 62. Que signo lleva el amor, 63. En estos días, 64. Alabanzas, 65. La cosa está en, 66. Amigo mayor, 67. Quien fuera, 68. Ala de colibrí, 69. Vamos a andar, 70. La vida, y 71. Lo de más ...



... Although I do not endorse the **obstinacy** that prevents sincere **conversion** to the **truth**, nor modern **rebellions** of **Eves** that allow discarding defenseless beings from their wombs, nor do I share a **vindictive** metaphor of a **celestial being** who comes to kill, like a scoundrel, other scoundrels, I believe that **Silvio Rodríguez**, for his multiple poetic contributions to the Spanish language and primarily for his compositions about the "**Let's walk**" ('**Vamos a andar**') of true **love**, should be awarded, as it happened with **Bob Dylan**, the **Nobel Prize in Literature**.

Like three fourteen-pointed suns above in a pattern **inside the Gaussian bell**, so be it, hopefully (**ojalá**)

In the already mentioned album "**Cita con Ángeles**" ('**Meeting with Angels**') there is also a song already named, "**Quiero cantarte un beso**" ('**I want to sing you a kiss**'), in which the troubadour expresses that such a thing is not possible amid the many troubles happening in the world that cast doubt on the very existence of **humanity**, which clearly also happen in these days of 2025 when the poem and the song come out. Inspired by such a piece, and also in response to his song "**Cita con Ángeles**" on the same album, I wrote the following song which expresses that **Jesus** is the reason **humanity** does exist: only the **real love of the faithful son** — "**son**" in Spanish is an essential rhythm — who always provides, through his mercy, a **truthful kiss**.

I know **Silvio** liked this song and the previous poem. I know it because **José María Vitier** told me so.

In the end, his beautiful phrase in *green* is true, and thus I summarize our understanding with just a caveat in *blue*: *just a little bit of love, of the one from Christ, and I am something*

...

THERE IS HUMANITY

To sing a kiss...

With so much a mess
to the right and left,
with so much misfortune
it seems there isn't.

With so much distance
thunders and revenge,
with so much mystery
it might not be.

With so much greed
up and down,
with so many funerals
oh "God without power."

With so much suspense
implacable inertia,
with so much injustice
is hard to believe...

But love conquers
surely, without stain,
in a full instant
of exquisite ardor.

And in an eternal act
two sticks recall
oh palpable verse:
the just one returned.

Thus, I rewrite
immutable psalter,
thus, I dare
a dream and a song.

That is why today I try
to extend grace,
that is why I send you
a kiss of the son.

Son in English, all the love...

Yes, there is humanity
that is the truth,
a good friend
gave lasting peace.

Yes, there is humanity
oh it is all truth,
symphony of heaven
loyal healing.

Yes, there is humanity
colossal verb,
sincere infant
multiplied the bread.

Yes, there is humanity
oh let's go and sing,
his hour approaches
that of brotherhood.

Yes, there is humanity
oh look it is true,
his real mercy
heals all evil.

Yes, there is humanity
and it is here and there,

with all certainty
there comes his unity.

Yes, there is humanity
his sign is the plus,
it heals all sadness
with his charity.

Yes, there is humanity
oh they will pay in time,
oh the day is coming
the one of freedom.

Yes, there is humanity
and a capable archangel,
oh madness converges
the brilliant story.

Yes, there is humanity
oh let's go and praise,
the signs align
truth is coming back...

(April 2004)



The song, not by chance accompanied by a hummingbird, and arranged **Jorge Wrves Román** under the direction of **Lázaro Alemán López** and interpreted by **Leonel Mederos Bravo**, may be visualized [here](#)...