



**CARNEGIE HALL**  
Weill Music Institute

GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS

# MUSIC OF MEXICO

## Activity 3: Freedom and Structure in Teaching and Learning

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## GUIDE TO THE TEXT FORMATTING

Throughout this curriculum, we have used different text formats to help simplify the directions for each lesson. Our hope is that this format will allow you to keep better track of your steps while you are on your feet in class teaching a lesson.

There are two main formatting types to recognize.

- 1) Any “scripted” suggestions—especially all questions—appear in “blue” with quotation marks.
- 2) Basic action headings are set in **bold italic**. (Options are in parentheses.)

Note: For CD tracks, we list the track number first, then the title.

For example:

### MEET THE ARTIST

- **Read** Celso Duarte’s Meet the Artist handout (out loud).
- **Summarize** what the artist has said (on paper).
- “Based on what we know about Celso, what might his music sound like?”
- **Play** CD Track 1, Celso Duarte’s *Cascabel*.
- “Now that you have heard the music, were your guesses right?”
- **Transition:** “Celso Duarte is an expert at working with musical freedom and structure. To get to know his work, we will need to become experts on freedom and structure.”



## ACTIVITY 3: FREEDOM AND STRUCTURE IN *EL SIQUISIRI*

**AIM:** How do individual artists re-invent *El Siquisiri* in every performance?

**SUMMARY:** Students create verses in a traditional poetic form for the opening song of a fandango.

**MATERIALS:** Global Encounters Mexico CD

**TIME REQUIRED:** 60 minutes

**NYC AND STATE STANDARDS:** Blueprint: Music Literacy; NYS Social Studies: 1.2, 2.3

INTRODUCING *EL SIQUISIRI* (10 minutes)

- **Play** CD Track 3, Celso Duarte's *Siquisiri*, as students enter your classroom.
- **Read** "Introducing *El Siquisiri*" from the *El Siquisiri* handout.
- **Play** CD Track 3, Celso Duarte's *Siquisiri*, again as students read "*Siquisiri* lyric" from the *El Siquisiri* handout.
- "Why might beginning a fandango with a love song entice the audience and draw them into the event?"
- **Transition:** "Let's try making our own lyrics."

CREATE YOUR OWN COPLA (15 minutes)

- **Form** pairs or small groups to write an original copla.
- **Read** the About Coplas handout.
- **Play** CD Track 4, *Siquisiri* copla demonstration
- **Choose** a fandango opening for your copla, such as:
  - Hello everyone, ladies and gentlemen ...
  - Let's get dancing, let's get happy ...
  - I can't get you off of my mind ...
  - You are from this town, we (the band) are from this town ...
  - The musicians' names and instruments are ...
  - We are here to rock the house ...
  - I'm in love with you, but you won't even dance with me ...
- **Create** a written copla text of four lines, rhyming ABAB.
- **Write out** your entire copla, all eight lines, according to the sung form, to make it easier to perform.



PERFORM YOUR COPLA ALONG WITH *SQUISIRI* ACCOMPANIMENT (15 minutes)

- **Play** CD Track 5, *Squisirí* copla accompaniment.
- **Practice** reciting your copla to yourself at your seat as the accompaniment plays.
- **Perform** your copla for the class as the music plays.
- “How do our copla texts and performances entice the audience and draw them into the fandango?”
- “How did you work with freedom and structure in your text?”

COMPARING *EL SQUISIRI* COPLAS (20 minutes)

- **Examine** the different versions of *El Squisirí* lyrics on the *El Squisirí* handout.
- **Play** CD Tracks 6–8, which are three different versions of *El Squisirí*.
- **Compare** the different versions (texts, instruments, singers, and musical elements).
- “How do these texts and performances entice the audience and draw them into the fandango?”
- “How do these artists work with freedom and structure in these versions of *El Squisirí*?”





## EL SIQUISIRI HANDOUT

SG7

### INTRODUCING *EL SIQUISIRÍ*

There are only 80 *sones*, or songs, in the entire *son jarocho* tradition. Part of the tradition is that the musicians create variations or arrangements of the *sones*, including writing new verses. For example, the *son El Siquisirí* is universal. Every player of *son jarocho* knows it, and it consequently links everyone together in the tradition. Experienced performers have presented the *son* hundreds of times.

Musicians customarily use *El Siquisirí* to launch a performance or *fandango*, and they might begin by addressing the audience directly, introducing themselves or inviting everyone to join the *fandango*. Celso Duarte's version skips the introductions and dives into a love story.

### *SIQUISIRI* LYRIC (Celso Duarte version)

Lo recuerdo y no lo olvido  
que era la noche más bella,  
que era la noche más bella  
lo recuerdo y no lo olvido.

*I remember and I don't forget  
that it was the most beautiful night,  
that it was the most beautiful night  
I remember and I don't forget.  
(repeat these 4 lines)*

Hicimos los dos unidos  
con la luz de las estrellas,  
con la luz de las estrellas  
hicimos los dos unidos.

*We did, the two of us together  
with the light of the stars,  
with the light of the stars  
we did, the two of us together.  
(repeat these 4 lines)*

Ay que sí, válgame Dios,  
las estrellas en el cielo,  
ay que sí, que sí, que no,  
brillan como las espadas,  
brillan como las espadas  
yo no le temo al acero,  
yo no le temo al acero,  
ni a pistola preparada  
siendo por el que yo quiero  
y aunque muera a puñaladas.

*Oh yes, may God help me,  
the stars up in the sky,  
oh yes, oh yes, oh no,  
are shining like swords,  
are shining like swords  
but I don't fear steel,  
I don't fear steel,  
not a loaded pistol,  
if it is for whom I love,  
even if I should die stabbed.*

Cuánto gusto me da verte  
déjame darte un abrazo,  
déjame darte un abrazo,  
cuánto gusto me da verte.

*How glad I am to see you,  
let me give you a hug,  
let me give you a hug,  
how glad I am to see you.  
(repeat these 4 lines)*





SG8

Le doy gracias a mi suerte  
porque con el tiempo acaso,  
porque con el tiempo acaso  
más y más pueda quererte.

*I thank my good luck  
because with time, maybe,  
because with time, maybe,  
I will love you more and more.  
(repeat these 4 lines)*

Ay que sí, que sí que no,  
yo vi una nubería,  
que sí, que sí, válgame Dios,  
como que quería llover,  
por aquí lo vi, por aquí pasó,  
le dije a la vida mía,  
ay que sí, la del dolor,  
no nos vaya a suceder  
como los que se querían  
y ahora no se pueden ver.

*Oh yes, oh yes, oh no,  
I saw a bunch of clouds,  
oh yes, oh yes, may God help me,  
as if it were going to rain,  
I saw it here, I saw it passing by,  
and I told my beloved,  
oh yes, oh, the pain,  
may it not happen to us  
as it happened to the lovers  
that now don't want to see each other.*

Que en el cerro del vigía  
triste se quejaba un lión,  
triste se quejaba un lión  
en el cerro del vigía.

*For in the scout's hill  
a lion was sadly complaining,  
a lion was sadly complaining  
up on the scout's hill.  
(repeat these 4 lines)*

Y en su quejido decía  
yo nunca he sido llorón,  
pero por ti lloraría  
lágrimas del corazón.

*And in his whimpering, he said,  
I never was a crier,  
but for you I would cry  
tears from the heart.  
(repeat these 4 lines)*

Válgame dios, la del dolor,  
quién fuera como el cocuyo,  
quién fuera como el cocuyo,  
que alumbra para volar,  
que alumbra para volar,  
dime qué amor es el tuyo,  
dime qué amor es el tuyo  
que no lo puedo olvidar,  
y por más que disimulo,  
todo es puro suspirar.

*May God help me, oh, the pain,  
who could be like the firefly,  
who could be like the firefly,  
that lights up in order to fly,  
that lights up in order to fly,  
tell me what kind of love is yours,  
tell me what kind of love is yours  
that I just can't forget it,  
and no matter how much I pretend,  
everything is nothing but sighs.*



## ABOUT COPLAS

SG9

The opening lyric of Celso Duarte's *Siquisiri* is a verse in a poetic form called copla, which is often used in son jarocho. Coplas are written in one form and sung in another.

### WRITTEN COPLA

Each copla is based on four lines. Each line generally has eight syllables, though seven- or nine-syllable lines sometimes occur. The four lines follow an ABAB end-rhyming pattern:

1	Lo recuerdo y no lo olvido	(A)	<i>I remember and I don't forget</i>
2	Que era la noche más bella	(B)	<i>that it was the most beautiful night.</i>
3	Hicimos los dos unidos	(A)	<i>We did, the two of us together,</i>
4	Con la luz de las estrellas	(B)	<i>with the light of the stars.</i>

### SUNG COPLA

In musical performance, the simple four-line verse is usually sung in a repeated pattern, resulting in an eight-line verse. For example, the written verse 1234 is sung as 1221 + 3443 (or 1221 + 3434):

1	Lo recuerdo y no lo olvido	(A)	<i>I remember and I don't forget</i>
2	que era la noche más bella,	(B)	<i>that it was the most beautiful night,</i>
2	que era la noche más bella	(B)	<i>that it was the most beautiful night</i>
1	lo recuerdo y no lo olvido.	(A)	<i>I remember and I don't forget.</i>
3	Hicimos los dos unidos	(A)	<i>We did, the two of us together</i>
4	con la luz de las estrellas,	(B)	<i>with the light of the stars,</i>
4	con la luz de las estrellas	(B)	<i>with the light of the stars</i>
3	hicimos los dos unidos.	(A)	<i>we did, the two of us together.</i>

### WRITING YOUR OWN COPLA

To write your own copla, begin with an end-rhyming four-line verse (ABAB) with eight syllables per line. To transform your copla into the sung lyric form, apply a repetition pattern.

For example:

#### WRITTEN

If you came here to fandango  
 You'll be happy that you came here  
 If you want to dance the tango  
 Dance your heart out, there's no blame here

#### SUNG

If you came here to fandango  
 You'll be happy that you came here  
 You'll be happy that you came here  
 If you came here to fandango

If you want to dance the tango  
 Dance your heart out, there's no blame here  
 Dance your heart out, there's no blame here  
 If you want to dance the tango



## EL SIQUISIRI – OPENING VERSE LYRICS

Graciana Silva Garcia Musique du Monde version

### FIRST VERSE

Muy buenas tardes señores,  
señoras y señoritas,  
señoras y señoritas,  
muy buenas tardes señores  
de rostros cautivadores;  
va la trova más bonita,  
va la trova más bonita  
de estos pobres cantadores.

*Very good afternoon, gentlemen,  
ladies and young women,  
ladies and young women,  
very good afternoon, gentlemen,  
with your captivating faces;  
here goes the most beautiful tune,  
here goes the most beautiful tune  
of these poor singers.*

### SECOND VERSE

(not translated here)

### THIRD VERSE

Qué bonito es el guapango  
cuando el arpa le acompaña;  
cuando el arpa le acompaña  
qué bonito es el guapango;  
bajo la sombra del mango  
y el olor de flor de caña,  
hay que ponerse muy chango  
para zapatear con maña.

*How beautiful is the guapango  
when accompanied by the harp;  
when accompanied by the harp,  
how beautiful is the guapango;  
under the shade of the mango tree,  
surrounded by the smell of the sugarcane flower,  
one must become very quick  
in order to step with wisdom and wit.*



Marketplace in Mexico City



**Los Rogacianos y Los Nacionales de Jacinto Gatica version**

Buenas noches señoritas,  
muy buenas noches, señores,  
muy buenas noches, señores,  
señoras y señoritas,  
a todas las florecitas  
de rostros cautivadores  
van las trovas más bonitas  
de estos pobres cantadores.

*Good night, young ladies,  
very good night, gentlemen,  
very good night, gentlemen,  
ladies and young dames,  
to all the pretty flowers  
with captivating faces  
we sing the prettiest tunes  
of these poor singers.*

Ay que sí que no que no,  
y hubo un tiempo en que yo hacía  
(ay que sí que no que no),  
lo que me daba la gana,  
(ahora sí, mañana no),  
muchos amores tenía,  
(con la grande sí, con la chica no),  
que me pasaban la lana,  
en ese tiempo me vestía  
doce veces por semana.  
(Eso es todo? ¡Acábatela, pariente!)

*Oh yes, oh no, oh no,  
there was a time when I did  
(oh yes, oh no, oh no)  
whatever strokes my fancy,  
(now yes, tomorrow no),  
I had many loves  
(with the big one, yes, with the small one no)  
that would give me money,  
back then I would get dressed up  
twelve times a week.  
(Is that all? Finish it off, cousin!)*

**Son de Madera version**

Para cantar, he traído  
sones de la tradición  
y otros de nueva creación  
que a este mundo han venido.

*To sing, I have brought  
sones from the tradition  
and others of new creation  
that have come into this world.*

Yo me arropo en el cumplido  
del paisaje que me encierra,  
el que en mi pecho se aferra,  
y me abriga el cantar,  
para poder expresar  
los sonidos de la tierra.

*I wrap myself in the commitment  
to the countryside that surrounds me,  
that strengthens in my chest,  
and that protects me with song,  
in order to be able to express  
the sounds of the land.*