

# **Tuning in Patience**

*A Modern Musical Offering*



September 25th, 2024 Ramo Recital Hall  
5pm



# Introduction

*Self-Portrait as a Lute Player*, was painted between 1637 and 1638 soon after Molenaeer's first marriage. The image is a self-portrait which oddly doesn't show the painter *in flagrante delicto*, but tuning a lute. As the National Art Gallery notes, tuning the lute

... was symbolically linked in 17th-century literature to conducting one's life in a balanced and harmonious manner. Because the dulcet tones of the instrument were difficult to maintain, tuning was a careful and time-intensive act, requiring a patient and steady hand.

When I first saw the painting, it encapsulated a lesson that my journey in pursuit of antiquity through music had taught me: To be patient. All endeavors of great value demand their due time, a fact that feels anathema to the exponential pressures and pace we live today. Indeed, tuning the dozen or more strings of a lute is a challenge in equal measure to its playing. Much of the music heard today unfolds gradually and it demands our patience; both to experience it but also to tap into what it means to lose oneself amidst the sounds of the past.



# **Tuning in Patience**

## **A Modern Musical Offering**

*Joseph Douglass - Lute and Guitar*

### **8-Course Lute**

*c. 1500 Hans Frey, copy by Daniel Larson 2024  
Duluth, Minnesota*

*Fantasia No. 81*

*Fantasia (Ricercare) No. 33.*

**Francesco da Milano**

*(1497 - 1543)*

*Passacaglia*

**Alessandro Piccinini**

*(1566 - 1638)*

*Frog Galliard*

*Farewell (An "In Nomine")*

**John Dowland**

*(1563 - 1626)*

### **Baroque Guitar**

*1688 Jean-Baptiste Voboam, copy by Jack Sanders 2023  
Los Angeles, California*

*Marionas*

**Santiago de Murcia**

*(1673 - 1739)*

*Autre Chacone*

**Francesco Corbetta**

*(1615 - 1681)*

*Fandango*

**Santiago de Murcia**

*(1673 - 1739)*

*Canarios*

**Gaspar Sanz**

*(1640 - 1710)*

*This concert is performed in fulfillment of the Doctor of  
Musical Arts in Classical Guitar Performance program at  
the Thornton School of Music.*

## *8-Course Lute*

### **Francesco da Milano**

An Italian lutenist, Francesco da Milano was born near Milan and spent most of his career working for the papal court. Widely regarded across Europe as one of the foremost lute composers of his time, his music was extensively published and influenced his contemporaries and composers for a century after his death. Over 100 of his fantasias and ricercars have survived to the modern era.

**Fantasia No. 33** and **Fantasia No. 81** represent a transition from the more improvisational style of da Milano's predecessors to the greater complexity of polyphony that would follow. Both pieces start with a short melody, or motif, that recurs at different pitch levels. This form of imitative counterpoint is a precursor to the complex fugues of Baroque composers, like Johann Sebastian Bach. However, in these early works, the counterpoint doesn't reach the mechanical precision of later fugues. No. 81 serves as a simplified prelude, priming the ear for the denser textures of No. 33. While No. 81 features imitation in two voices, No. 33 frequently layers three or more.

### **Alessandro Piccinini**

Alessandro Piccinini, born in Bologna to a family of musicians, entered the service of Duke Alfonso II of Ferrara in 1594. During his time at court, he became acquainted with the infamous composer Carlo Gesualdo and met the prominent lutenist Giulio Caccini. Piccinini is best known for his contributions to dance music, with the Passacaglia being one of the many styles he explored. His lute compositions from the early 1700s mark a distinct body of solo music,

separate from the more common figured bass realizations of the era.

The **Passacaglia** features a repeated chord progression over which variations unfold, typically emphasizing the second beat of a triple meter. The piece presents a delicate balance between serious and weighty elements, creating a contrast of somber textures while maintaining forward momentum. Piccinini emphasized that music should be as delightful and enjoyable as possible, a sentiment carefully reflected in his **Passacaglia**, where the blend of intricate variations and graceful rhythm makes it both engaging and profound.

## **John Dowland**

**The Frog Galliard** – One of Dowland's most popular tunes, both in his own time and today, this **Galliard** is a lively dance in triple meter. The title is speculated to reference Queen Elizabeth I's suitor, the Duke d'Alençon, whom the Queen affectionately called her "frog." The Duke was the last serious suitor for the Queen, who was in her forties at the time. Due to political considerations (he was French), the engagement was called off, though Elizabeth regretted the decision, as they were quite close and exchanged numerous letters. Dowland later reused this melody for his song "*Now, Oh Now I Needs Must Part*," published in his *First Book of Songs* in 1597.

**Farewell (An "In Nomine")** – This fantasia comes a generation after those of Francesco da Milano. The subtitle refers to the upper voice, which is sustained throughout the piece in augmentation. This style, most often seen in consort music of Dowland's contemporaries, is adapted here for the lute. The source melody, *Gloria tibi Trinitas*, provides the backbone for extensive imitation. Midway through the piece, the meditative mood shifts into a lively dance in compound triple meter.

## *Baroque Guitar*

### **Santiago de Murcia**

Not much is known about Santiago de Murcia beyond his presence in Madrid up to 1717, where he worked as a performer, teacher, and musical attendant to Doña Maria Luisa Gabriela, wife of Charles V of Spain. Both **Marionas** and **Fandango** are drawn from his *Saldívar Codex No. 4*, a collection discovered in the 20th century by a Mexican musicologist. While it contains no direct attribution, it is full of dances and forms specifically linked to colonial Spain and was only recently tied to Murcia in the 1980s. Marionas combines dance forms from Peru and Spain, while the Fandango is a lively partner dance from Iberia.

### **Francesco Corbetta**

**Autre Chaconne** is one of many pieces from Corbetta's larger collection dedicated to Louis XIV, the "Sun King." Corbetta arrived in Paris in 1656, performing under Jean-Baptiste Lully and even tutoring the king himself. By the 1660s, he had moved to England, where he attended the court of Charles II, also an avid guitarist. His work *La Guitarre Royale* was first engraved in London around 1671 and later reprinted in Paris in 1674. It represents a cosmopolitan blend of the many courts and countries Corbetta visited. Autre Chaconne is distinctly French in affect, particularly in its opening passages, though its rhythmic strumming and Campanella passages hint at influences from Spain, Italy, and England.



## Gaspar Sanz

**Canarios** is a popular tune among modern guitarists and even reached pop music status when Emerson, Lake & Palmer covered it in their 1978 track *Canario*. Based on a dance from the Canary Islands, it was first published as part of Sanz's pedagogical text *Instrucción de música sobre la guitarra española* in 1674. Sanz was heavily influenced by Italian Baroque guitarists, including Francesco Corbetta, whose **Autre Chaconne** is also featured in this concert. The lively and rhythmic nature of **Canarios** shares similarities with **Autre Chaconne**, as both are dance-based works with simple yet intoxicating chord progressions and contrasting plucked variations.

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