

Frank Wallace

vihuela de mano, baritone

Fantasías #1-6, Libro Segundo

Luys de Narváez, 1490-1547

Isabel

Alonso de Mudarra, 1546

Por Asperos Caminos

Mudarra

Las Tristes Lágrimas Mías

Anríquez de Valderrábano, 1500-c.1557

Tres Moricas

anónimo, Cancionero de Palacio

¿Cómo Puedo yo Bivir?

Valderrábano

De los Alamos Vengo Madre

Juan Vásquez/Fuenllana

Fantasia 33

Francesco da Milano, 1497-1543

Riceercar 69

Francesco

Ricercar 11

Francesco

Fantasia 34

Francesco

intermission

Fantasia 17

Francesco

Madonna Qual Certezza

Philippe Verdelot, 1475-1552

La Vita Fugge

Mudarra

Recercar 8

Francesco

Benche'l Misero Cor

Verdelot

Duo de Morales

Miguel de Fuenllana, 1500-1579

Fantasías #1-3, 8, Libro Segundo

Narváez

Duo de Josquin

Fuenllana

A Donde Tienes las Mientes

anon., Cancionero de Palacio, c. 1500

Tan Buen Ganadico

Juan del Encina, Cancionero de Palacio

Como está sola

Juan Ponce, Cancionero de Palacio

Si d' Amor Pena Sentís

anónimo, Cancionero de Palacio

Diferencias Sobre Conde Claros

Narváez

Teresica Hermana

Flecha/Fuenllana

NOTES

While the Spanish *vihuela de mano* has been somewhat of an enigma in the historical instrument revival due to the lack of extant examples, its music for the most part is very straightforward. Many performers have felt they have too few historical references on which to base a stylistic performance. What exactly is *dedillo*? [a right hand technique mentioned but not explained in detail] How were ornaments used? What was the vihuela's place in society? What exactly is the difference between a *vihuela* and a *guitarra*? To be honest, these questions have never held much interest for me. The music speaks for itself. The bulk of the repertoire is vocally based and its models were clearly Josquin des Prez and his successors. This program attempts to reveal the vocal nature and beauty of the *vihuela* repertoire by focusing on the *fantasías* of Luys de Narváez and his Italian contemporary Francesco da Milano, who played the *viola da mano*, an Italian equivalent of the more popular Spanish model, as well as lute.

Also included are some of the earliest examples of the “art song” by Alonso Mudarra and Philippe Verdelot as well as intabulations (arrangements) of even earlier songs from the magnificent *Cancionero de Palacio*, a collection of late 15th and early 16th century *villancicos* and *canciones*, essentially folk songs and art songs.

The skill of the *vihuelista* was most certainly judged on his/her ability to control the expression of multi-voiced textures. To this end, I believe the acoustic of the performance hall greatly enhances the sustaining quality of light plucked instruments and is essential to the character of the music. I am most certain that every *vihuelista* of his or her day, amateur or professional, sang fluently. The professionals undoubtedly sang in choirs from early childhood in the church and any worthy courtier would have been given lessons in singing as well as plucking in order to be well-rounded. Each of the seven existing books are roughly half songs and frequently the notation for voice is included in the tablature itself, indicating the player would accompany oneself. To make a modern comparison, what self-respecting singer-songwriter does not sing and accompany oneself. The public expects that and would generally find it odd if they did not.

While scholars have pointed to the importance of the *diferencia* as the major contribution of the *vihuelistas*, I don't think they themselves must have seen it that way. Fuenllana speaks with disdain of the popular styles and clearly believes the high art of the vihuela is achieved by imitating the polyphony of the masters. Nevertheless, I have included one example of the genre, the popular *Conde Claros* by Narváez, a simple set of variations on a three chord progression not unlike the blues progression of today – a sort of beginner's way of learning to jam. Dances are virtually non-existent in the core repertoire.

BIOGRAPHY

“It is extremely unusual to listen to a self-accompanying singer...Mr. Wallace seems equally adroit at both skills...I cannot but congratulate [him] for infusing new life into this neglected art.” – Antonio Corona-Alcalde, Lute Society of America Quarterly

Frank Wallace is known for his “*elegant virtuosity*” (Classics Today) on the classical guitar, lute and *vihuela de mano* and is also a master of self-accompanied song. He tours internationally, performing music of the 16th - 21st century both as a soloist and with mezzo-soprano Nancy Knowles as Duo LiveOak. He has performed at the Holland Festival, Regensburg Festival, Música en Com-

postela, Boston Early Music Festival, Barcelona Festival, International Guitar Festival of Arequipa, the Festival of Spanish Song of Granada, Echi Lontani in Sardinia and more.

Wallace is a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in guitar performance and is self-taught as a composer. He moved to Boston immediately after graduation in 1974, studied early music performance with Marleen Montgomery and took one lute lesson from Paul O'Dette in 1980 which transformed him into a full-time vihuelist and lutenist. Since 1986 he has received inspiration from his residence in a 1789 farmhouse in rural New Hampshire, where he has composed hundreds of works for lute, guitar, voice and chamber instruments and has recorded many highly praised CDs for the Gyre label in a local church. **American Record Guide** calls Wallace's compositions "*exciting, unpredictable, and fresh*". **Fanfare** magazine has dubbed him a composer with "*an authentic expressive voice*" and a "*high standard of musical interest*" who performs with "*flawless technical proficiency*." His compositional style has many influences, from Medieval and Renaissance to blues, jazz and modern atonalism. Great passion and a sense of humor infuse both his compositions and his performances.

Frank Wallace has taught at the New England Conservatory, Plymouth State College, Emmanuel College, Keene State College and Franklin Pierce University and has a B.M. from San Francisco Conservatory. He has recorded for Gyre, Titanic, Centaur and Musical Heritage Society has re-released a number of LiveOak and Frank Wallace recordings. His compositions are published by Gyre Music and have been featured in Guitar Review, Fingerstyle Magazine, The LSA Quarterly and Soundboard magazine. Wallace's complete recordings and compositions are available at www.gyremusic.com, a site rich with information and samples of sheet music and audio.

REVIEWS

"I have listened to the CD "Delphin" numerous of times and I have to say it is astonishing, both technically and musically. Frank Wallace is a mature musician and his interpretation of the vihuela music is really splendid! The sound on this recording is warm and bright and the instrument sounds beautiful. A must for music lovers!" – Per Kjetil Farstad, Professor, Ph.D, Norway

"If you are an aficionado of the vihuela, this is a must-have recording. Not only is it one of the most virtuosic recordings in my library, it provides significant representation of the vihuela fantasia: a portion of the literature from which most recordings pick and choose a few of the better known examples. It is gratifying to have a recording that explores such important, yet rarely heard repertoire." – Kemer Thomson

"Your solo vihuela CD confirms the feeling i had when i first heard you (ages ago, come to think of it), that you probably are the most sensitive vihuelist I know, maybe because you can also sing that stuff, I don't know, while technically you sound second to none." – Ivo Magherini, luthier

On the Gyre recording Piva: *"In this well-chosen program Nancy Knowles and Frank Wallace give the listener a pleasing privacy of expression that is touching and eloquent. Knowles and Wallace, who have performed together since 1976, use a subtle range of attack, decay, and articulation that is immediately attractive and yields depth on repeated hearings... The program is extremely well sequenced, beginning with the Spanish pieces and ending with a very beautiful group of five Verdelot settings interweaved with lute pieces by Francesca da Milano..."* – Catherine Moore, American Record Guide