

SELECTED HARPSICHORD SONATAS BY ANTONIO SOLER: ANALYSIS AND  
TRANSCRIPTION FOR CLASSICAL GUITAR DUO

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Due to the limited repertoire for the guitar from the Baroque period, classical guitarists who wish to perform music from this era have to work primarily with transcriptions. Guitarists draw from various sources from this period such as vocal and instrumental music for the five-course guitar, lute and the harpsichord. Of these sources, the repertoire for the harpsichord is perhaps the most frequently arranged for various guitar formations because its textures are greatly similar to those of the guitar repertoire. As a result, harpsichord music tends to transfer well to the guitar. Baroque harpsichord composers such as Domenico Scarlatti, Johann Sebastian Bach, François Couperin, and Jean-Philippe Rameau—to name a few—have a permanent home in the classical guitar canon and represent the musical tastes and styles of Italy, Germany, and France. These composers exemplify the various stylistic differences between the above-mentioned countries; yet, the harpsichord music of Spain is largely underrepresented in guitar collections. One of the most noteworthy Spanish harpsichordists was Padre Antonio Soler (1729-1783), who composed 120 sonatas for the instrument. When considering the ease with which some of his works transfer to the guitar, and specifically guitar duo, much can be gained by expanding the repertoire and exploring the Spanish Baroque style. The purpose of this study is three-fold: first, to present transcriptions of Antonio Soler's Sonata No. 85 and *Fandango* for guitar duo; second, to provide analysis of Sonata No. 85 with an emphasis on the intervallic features of the motives; third, to give an overview of the transcription process of *Fandango* for guitar duo while including a study of Spanish Baroque guitar and the appropriate stylistic effects drawn from its repertoire that can be incorporated in the arrangement.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background and Significance

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Baroque harpsichord composers such as Domenico Scarlatti, Johann Sebastian Bach, François Couperin, and Jean-Philippe Rameau—to name a few—have a permanent home in the classical guitar canon and represent the musical tastes and styles of Italy, Germany, and France. These composers exemplify the various stylistic differences between the above-mentioned countries; yet, the harpsichord music of Spain is largely underrepresented in guitar collections. One of the most noteworthy Spanish harpsichordists was Padre Antonio Soler (1729-1783), who composed 120 sonatas for the instrument. When considering the ease with which some of his works transfer to the guitar, and specifically guitar duo, much can be gained by expanding the repertoire and exploring the Spanish Baroque style.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study is three-fold: first, to present transcriptions of Antonio Soler's Sonata No. 85 and *Fandango* for guitar duo; second, to provide analysis of Sonata No. 85 with an emphasis on the intervallic features of the motives; third, to give an overview of the transcription process of *Fandango* for guitar duo while including a study of Spanish Baroque guitar and the appropriate stylistic effects drawn from its repertoire that can be incorporated in the arrangement.

## State of Research

Most of the research pertaining to Antonio Soler began around the mid-1950's when the pianist/scholar Frederick Marvin discovered Soler's music and popularized it. Prior to this, little was known about Antonio Soler's life, and only a handful of sonatas were published. Frederick Marvin was the impetus behind all of the subsequent study and research on Soler. Found in books, dissertations, and articles, research on Antonio Soler currently covers a wide array of topics such as his life, style, writings, connection with Domenico Scarlatti, and treatise on harmony. An overview of a number of these texts will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Ralph Kirkpatrick's 1953 book *Domenico Scarlatti* presents the initial glimpse into Antonio Soler. The earliest studies solely devoted to Soler can be found in Frank Morris Carroll's *An Introduction to Antonio Soler* (1960) and Sister Teresita's *Selected Unpublished Villancicos of Padre Fray Antonio Soler with Reference to the Cultural History of Eighteenth-Century Spain* (1969). Both authors have included chapters on Soler's life, but Carroll's work is of considerable interest because of the inclusion of a thematic index of Soler's keyboard sonatas. Among the dissertations on Soler's keyboard styles, both Almarie Dieckow's *A Stylistic Analysis of the Solo Keyboard Sonatas of Padre Antonio Soler* (1971) and Graciela Marestaing's *Antonio Soler: A*

*Biographical Inquiry and Analysis of a Keyboard Sonata* (1976) are excellent sources. Two dissertations from 1978 deal with Soler's treatise on harmony: both Margaret Long Crouch and Linda Patricia Shipley translated Soler's two-part treatise entitled *Llave de La Modulacion y Antiguedades de La Musica* from Spanish to English; however, only book one of the treatise is translated in Shipley's dissertation. Crouch, on the other hand, not only translates the treatise in its entirety, but also supplies the reader with a commentary that elucidates the subject in question.

In the late 1970's, several articles were published on Soler. Reah Sadowsky 1978 article "Antonio Soler: Creator of Spain's Fifth Century of Musical Genius" presents a concise version of what can be found in Ralph Kirkpatrick's 1953 book *Domenico Scarlatti*. In addition, the author supplies an overview of *Fandango*, sonatas, editions, and the current state of research. In the article, Sadowsky entertains the idea that the only two Spanish eighteenth-century artists who can be credited for maintaining the Spanish cultural tradition are Francisco Goya, in art, and Antonio Soler, in music. She claims that, with the dominance of Italian aesthetic in Spain, Spanish artists and musicians had difficulty winning popular favor. Because of the efforts of the above-mentioned figures, however, Spanish Baroque history can mark a division between Spanish tradition and Italian influences.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Murrell Stevenson's 1979 "Antonio Soler: A 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Review Article" is very detailed and discusses primarily biographical aspects. This article is most notable for the author's corrections to some of the current research pertaining to Soler's life. In addition, the article discusses whom Soler likely studied with, his life as a monk and his monastic duties, and

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<sup>1</sup> Reah Sadowsky, "Antonio Soler: Creator of Spain's Fifth Century of Musical Genius," *American Music Teacher* xxviii/1 (1978), 10.

the rules of modulation from his treatise. Stevenson also supplies a lengthy annotated bibliography on Soler from 1964 to 1979.

Existing analytical studies of Antonio Soler's sonatas are found mostly in two dissertations and a few articles. Of the dissertations, both Dieckow and Marestaing supply numerous informative details on his keyboard works. Dieckow provides an inventory of the musical and compositional techniques found in Soler's sonatas. The author outlines key features such as the sonata form (Chapters 1 and 2), melody, tempo, rhythm (Chapter 5), harmony (Chapter 6), and includes many musical examples. In addition, Dieckow classifies each sonata according to its thematic materials and gives a summary of the characteristic thematic types found in Soler's music. Marestaing, unlike Dieckow, only supplies a thorough analysis of a single work, Sonata No. 67 in D major (Chapter 7). The author provides diagrams of the thematic ideas for each of the three movements, while including a study in form.

In the 1980 July and August issue of *Clavier*, Frederick Marvin gives a short analysis of the Sonata in d minor, M.V. 28. Although brief, this article addresses Soler's themes, use of repetition, sequences, modulation, and supplies a harmonic analysis.<sup>2</sup> The 1984 article written by Eliot Fisk in *Guitar Review* is similar in that regard. A transcription and notes on the Sonata M. 28 are supplied at the end of the article. However, the author's main focus in these notes is a discussion of the transcription process, and not necessarily the study of themes and harmonic material.

Research on the transcription process of Antonio Soler's harpsichord sonatas for guitar solo or guitar duo is very limited. Information on this topic can only be gathered through the study of currently available transcriptions, articles, and dissertations. Richard Long, editor of *Soundboard* magazine, has published four Soler transcriptions for guitar duo. Likewise, the

guitar virtuoso Eliot Fisk has contributed by transcribing a handful of Soler's sonatas for solo guitar. Moreover, the famous twentieth century classical guitar duo of Evangelos Assimakopoulos and Lisa Zoe transcribed Soler's *Fandango*. Guitar scholars and performers such as Nicholas Goluses, Eliot Fisk, Michael Quantz, and Stanley Yates have contributed to the discussion of the transcription process in general in their books, articles, and dissertations. The study of transcriptions and familiarity with the above-mentioned authors' texts can supply many clues and suggestions for the arranging process.

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<sup>2</sup> Frederick Marvin, "Discovered Treasure: The Music of Antonio Soler," *Clavier*, XIX/6 (1980) p. 24.

## BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF PADRE ANTONIO SOLER<sup>3</sup>

Antonio Soler y Ramos was born in the town of Olot de Porrera in the Spanish province of Gerona in Catalonia in December 1729, and baptized on December 3<sup>rd</sup> of that year.<sup>4</sup> He was a priest, monk, theorist, and composer, and spent the majority of his adult life as *maestro de capilla* in the Royal Monastery of El Escorial near Madrid, the renowned palace-monastery-church complex built by Phillip II.<sup>5</sup>

As a young boy of six, he was enrolled by his father, Marcos Mateo Soler, in the famous singing school named Escolania de Montserrat, near Barcelona. There he was housed, clothed, and educated in music skills such as singing, solfege, harmony, composition, harpsichord, organ, as well as general subjects.<sup>6</sup> He received much of his basic musical instruction from the well-known organist and composer Jose Elias, pupil of Juan de Cabanilles. Shortly after graduating from Escolania, at the age of 15, he took the position of *maestro de capilla* in Lerida. There he, in addition to his duties as *maestro*, received minor orders from Sebastian de Victoria, the Bishop of Urgel.<sup>7</sup> In 1752, the 23-year old Soler was appointed as *maestro de capilla* in El Escorial, where he remained until his death on December 20, 1783.<sup>8</sup>

In El Escorial, Soler composed numerous instrumental and vocal works. His keyboard sonata style and Sonata No. 85 will be studied below.

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<sup>3</sup> For a more complete biographical look into Soler's life, see: Frank Morris Carroll, "An Introduction to Antonio Soler," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1960.), Graciela Monica Marestaing, "Antonio Soler: A Biographical Inquiry and Analysis of a Keyboard Sonata" (Ph.D. dissertation, California State University, 1976), Sister Teresita Espinosa, "Selected Unpublished Villancicos of Padre Fray Antonio Soler with Reference to the Cultural History of Eighteenth-Century Spain," (University of Southern California, 1969) and Robert Stevenson Murrell, "Antonio Soler: A 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Review Article," *Inter-American Music Review*, II/1 Fall 1979, 45-57.

<sup>4</sup> Frederick Marvin, "Antonio Soler," *Consort*, no. 39 (1983), 479.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 479.

<sup>6</sup> Graciela Monica Marestaing, "Antonio Soler: A Biographical Inquiry and Analysis of a Keyboard Sonata" (Ph.D. dissertation, California State University, 1976), 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

## SONATA No. 85<sup>9</sup>

### Overview of Soler's Sonata Style

An overview of Antonio Soler's keyboard sonatas suggests that he integrated both the styles of late Baroque and Classical periods. Evidence of this is given by Marestaing who states that "as a transitional composer Soler's musical styles, while exhibiting many of the new musical mannerisms of his contemporaries, continues to use some elements of the late Baroque...[sic]"<sup>10</sup> The fact that Soler wrote one-movement binary form sonatas modeled after the harpsichord works of Scarlatti and multi-movement sonatas incorporating the Sonata-Allegro form similar to those by Haydn and Mozart, further supports Marestaing's observation. Influence of the Classical style on Soler's music is pointed out by William Newman who states that the Spanish sonata "...kept pace with the times at least in regards to the nature of the styles and forms."<sup>11</sup>

### General Observations about Sonata No. 85

Soler's Sonata No. 85 is a good example of such mixture of late Baroque and Classical periods. This piece uses elements of Sonata-Allegro form (i.e. Exposition, Development, and Recapitulation) and is cast in an expanded rounded binary form typical of the Baroque sonata. The work contains an introduction of twenty-three measures, an exposition of twenty-six measures, a development of twenty measures, and a recapitulation of twenty-six measures.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>9</sup> The catalogue number of this sonata is based on Father Samuel Rubio's editions. This sonata is originally in F-sharp minor. This transcription transposed the work to d minor.

<sup>10</sup> Graciela Monica Marestaing, "Antonio Soler: A Biographical Inquiry and Analysis of a Keyboard Sonata" (Ph.D. dissertation, California State University, 1976), 60.

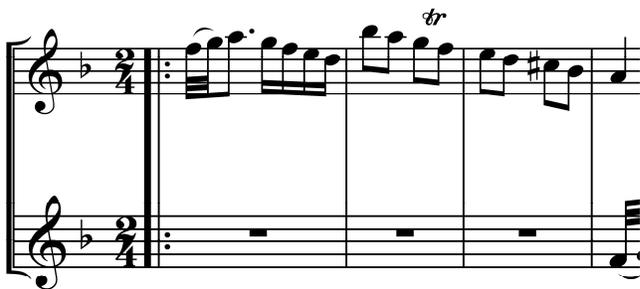
<sup>11</sup> William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Classic Era* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc, 1972), p. 259., quoted in *ibid*, 59.

## Motivic Analysis of Sonata No. 85

Soler uses a prelude-like opening motive in d minor that does not reappear later in the work, but the intervallic and rhythmic materials found in this gesture are, in a sense, the “seeds” from which all subsequent motives are derived. Moreover, as will be discussed later in the section on Tonal Schemes, this material also gives clues to the harmonic areas that are to be explored.

This introductory figure seems reminiscent of openings to many fugal works found in the Baroque period (Ex. 1). Yet, the manner in which it is treated appears to be more in the style of the early imitative writing of the fugue’s precursor, *ricercare/fantasia* from the Renaissance period. It seems as if Soler is using these opening measures to “seek out” a tonal center—a common feature of the *ricercare*. This style of writing would not have been foreign to Soler, since, judging by his treatise on harmony (*Llave de La Modulacion y Antiguedades de La Musica*), he was a strong proponent of learning the older styles. Indeed, this gesture may have been a homage to the Spanish musical heritage found in the art music of the *vihuela de mano* from the previous century.

Ex. 1. Introduction: motive 1 in Sonata 85, mm. 1-4.



This opening musical gesture consists of four main intervallic elements (Ex. 2). The first musical gesture is an ascending melodic figure built upon the interval of the third. Linked to this interval is the rhythmic feature of two thirty-second notes followed by the dotted eighth. As will be demonstrated in this sonata, these two features are often employed together. The next musical gesture, found in the second beat of measure one, is a descending figure built upon the interval of the fourth with a sixteenth note rhythm. The third gesture consists of an ascending figure of the sixth, found on the last sixteenth of measure one until the downbeat of measure two. Lastly, encompassing three measures, an expansion of the interval of the second is seen in measure two to the downbeat of measure four.

Ex. 2. Introduction: motive 1 in Sonata 85 with intervallic gestures identified, mm. 1-4.

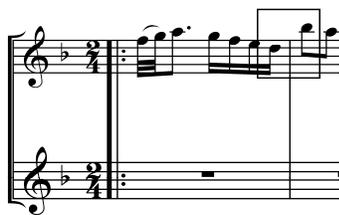
1) Interval of the third



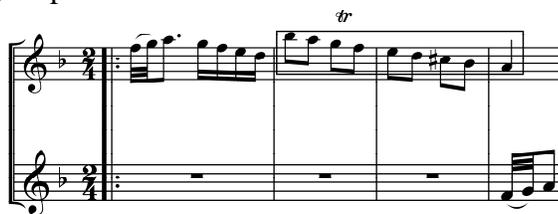
2) Interval of the fourth



3) Interval of the sixth



4) Expansion of the interval of the second



Answering this figure at measure 4, the opening gesture then appears in the bass voice an octave lower. Instead of treating this material in a soloistic manner, Soler adds a new line in the upper voice in the second measure of the gesture, measure five, which features a descending step-wise figure spanning the interval of the diminished fourth (a third in sound), followed by an ascending syncopated gesture of the same interval (Ex. 3). In measure 7, the bass voice

introduces a half-step, eighth note octave figure on the pitches A and Bb. Derived from the opening gesture as the interval of the second, this half-step motion is a characteristic of the A Phrygian mode (in which it forms the first interval of the scale). The Phrygian mode is commonly associated with the Spanish style, and, as Carroll mentions in his dissertation, the frequent use of this mode might suggest a national characteristic.<sup>12</sup>

Functioning as an extension of the dominant, this half-step idea is repeated three times until the half cadence at measure 10 in d minor. Simultaneously in the upper voice, each repeated measure consists of a triadic melodic structure based on the interval of the third and a mordent figure derived from the interval of the second. The interval of the fourth can also be noticed between the last note of the mordent figure and the downbeat of measure 8. By the last beat of measure 10, the repetition comes to a close with the arrival of the interval of the third.

Ex. 3. Introduction: motive 1 in Sonata 85, mm. 1-10.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Frank Morris Carroll, “An Introduction to Antonio Soler,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1960), pp. 33ff., quoted in Almarie Dieckow, “A Stylistic Analysis of The Solo Keyboard Sonatas of Antonio Soler,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University, 1971), 229.

<sup>13</sup> The intervals of a third and second are identified with brackets, and the boxes indicate the interval of a fourth and the Phrygian gesture.

The musical effect used in these measures (i.e. 4- 10) is seen again in measures 11-18, although with some adjustments. Just like in measure 4, Motive 1 begins the gesture; yet, this time, the upper voice imitates it exactly one beat later, producing a canonic effect. In measure 13, a key adjustment in two pitches of the original motive enables Soler to move into the next tonal area. In the upper voice, the pitch F replaces the original D, and in the lower voice, Bb is replaced with D. By measure 14, the half-step, eighth note octave figure found in measures 7-9 is used again, but this time up a third from its original appearance; once more, the Phrygian gestures can be observed with the flat sixth scale degree a half-step above the dominant fifth degree, as it would be in the modal mixture of F major and F minor. While maintaining the same rhythmic scheme as before, the repeated gesture used in the top voice in measures 14-16 consists of a step-wise figure as opposed to the triadic one. This change can be viewed as a descending form of the intervallic gesture of the third. This material ends in a half cadence in the key of F (Ex. 4).

Ex. 4. Introduction: motive 1 in Sonata 85, mm. 11-18.<sup>14</sup>

[F]    V    VI (modal mixture)                    V

In the transitional section, the intervallic material is mostly derived from the interval of the third and the second. In the following example, notice how the ascending figure in the upper voice moves by a third and then by a second and then by a third again. In measure 22 of the

upper voice, also take note of how Soler disguises the same interval from measures 2-4 (the expansion of the interval of the second) by ornamenting the gesture (Ex. 5).

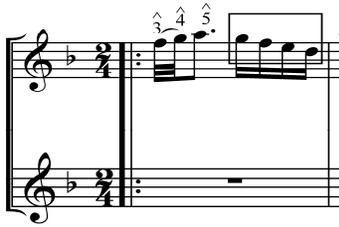
Ex. 5. Introduction: transitional section in Sonata 85, mm. 19-24.<sup>15</sup>

The exposition section is primarily based on a single idea that is then repeated in the key of F major. The material is seven and a half measures in length and will be divided and studied in two parts, part one and part two. In this section, Soler not only uses the intervals, but also the scale degrees from Motive 1 to derive the main melodic idea of Motive 2. In part one of Motive 2, the material is based on scale degrees 3, 4, and 5 and the interval of the fourth (Ex. 6a and Ex. 6b).

Ex. 6a. Exposition: part one of motive 2 in Sonata 85, mm. 24-26.

<sup>14</sup> The open-face notes identify the adjusted pitches of Motive 1. The intervals of the third and second are indicated by brackets, and the box identifies the Phrygian gesture.

Ex. 6b. Introduction: scale degrees and intervals derived from motive 1 in Sonata 85, m.1



Part two of Motive 2 is based on the intervals of the third and fourth. Also in measures 29 and 30, Soler uses a variation of the opening rhythmic feature used in combination with the same three-note ascending gesture seen in the introductory statement of Motive 1 (Ex. 6c and Ex. 6d).

Ex. 6c. Exposition: part two of motive 2 in Sonata 85, mm. 27-31.<sup>15</sup>



Ex. 6d. Introduction: variation on rhythmic feature of Motive 1, mm. 1

Original, m.1



Usage, mm.29 and 30

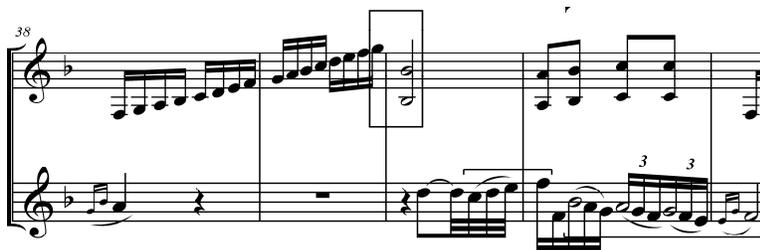


<sup>15</sup> The boxes indicate the thirds and the brackets identify the seconds.

<sup>16</sup> The boxed pitches identify the interval of the third and the bracketed pitches show the interval of the fourth.

The closing section of the exposition consists of an ascending scale, and a decorative cadential idea based on the interval of the fourth. One of the most characteristic features of this passage is the downward leap of the sixth (i.e. G to Bb) found between the last note of the ascending scale and the downbeat of measure 40. Again, this interval is taken from the opening gesture. In measures 40-42, the interval of the fourth is used in the cadential figure seen in the second guitar part (Ex.7a and Ex. 7b).

Ex. 7a. Exposition: closing section in Sonata 85, mm. 38-42.<sup>17</sup>



Ex. 7b. Introduction: motive 1, mm. 1 and 2.



A two-bar arpeggiated figure introduces the development section. The first melodic idea is derived from the opening three pitches of Motive 1. The rhythmic elements are a variation of part two of Motive 2 and the intervals of the second, third, and fourth can be frequently observed (Ex. 8a and Ex 8b).

<sup>17</sup> The brackets and the open-face notes identify the interval of the fourth.

Ex. 8a. Development: pitches, rhythmic elements, and the intervals of the second, third, and fourth from motive 1 and 2 in Sonata 85, mm. 50-57.<sup>18</sup>



Ex. 8b Materials used in the development section in Sonata 85

1) Pitches from motive 1 and the interval of the fourth.



2) Variation of rhythmic features taken from part two of motive 2.



The same types of materials are used again in the remaining measures of the development section, measures 58-69. Although Soler remains generally true to this opening cell of ideas, he deviates from it slightly at the closing of the development section in measures 68 and 69. Instead of writing a strict descending scale which would have ended on the fifth scale degree (like in the original usage of Motive 1, measures 2-4), Soler changes the direction of the line and ends this

<sup>18</sup> The open-face notes identify the pitches from Motive 1. The brackets indicate the interval of the fourth and the boxes designate the interval of the third.



measures 19-24 in the transitional section and is affirmed in Motive 2 of the exposition section, measure 24 (Ex. 11). The next key area occurs in measures 55-63 in the key of Bb (Ex. 12.)

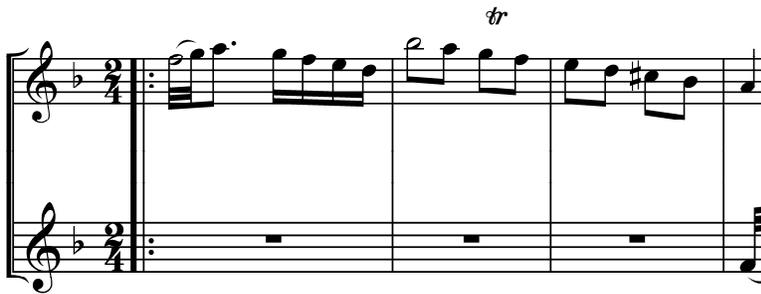
Ex.10a. Tonal schemes in Sonata 85.

Pitch Appearance

Usage

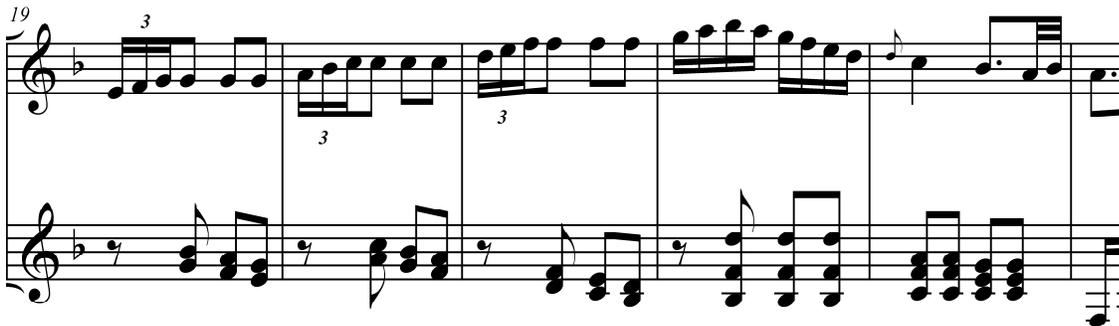
F	First note of Motive 1	F major (Motive 2) ms. 24
Bb	First note of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> measure of Motive 1	Bb major; mm. 55-63

Ex.10b. Tonal schemes in Sonata 85, mm. 1-4.



[d]

Ex.11. Tonal schemes in the transitional section of Sonata 85, mm. 19-24.



[F]

IV

V7

I

Ex.12. Tonal schemes in Sonata 85, mm. 55-61.

52

58

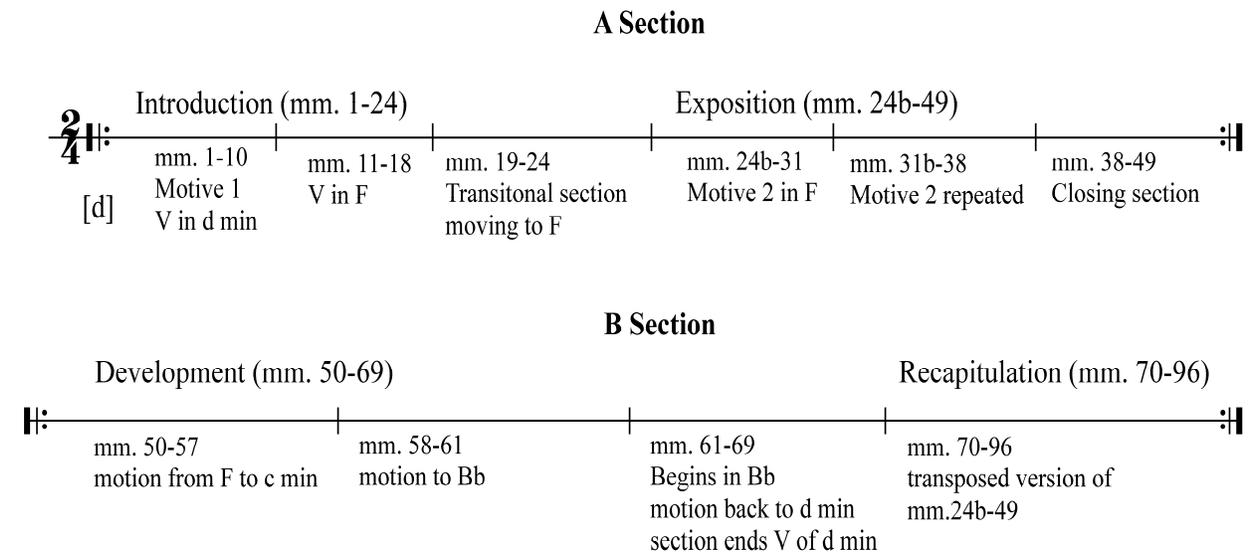
V7

[Bb] ii

[Bb] V7

I

To provide a clearer look at the piece as a whole, a linear diagram of Sonata No. 85 is as follows:<sup>19</sup>



<sup>19</sup> The letter “b” after a measure number indicates that the material begins on the second half of the measure.

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE FANDANGO

During the first half of the eighteenth century in Spain, the *fandango* was a popular dance, known for its sensuous and suggestive moves.<sup>20</sup> In fact, this dance was so provocative that many people believed that it should be banned by the church. Even Giacomo Casanova, the well-known womanizer who was the inspiration behind Da Ponte's libretto of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, wrote in his memoirs of his trip to Spain that:

“...each couple, man and woman, never move more than three steps as they click their castanets with the music of the orchestra. They take a thousand attitudes, make a thousand gestures so lascivious that nothing can compare with them. This dance is the expression of love beginning to end, from the sigh of the desire to the ecstasy of (pure) enjoyment...”<sup>21</sup>

The *fandango* was an improvisatory, triple-meter dance; the music for it was primarily in the Phrygian mode, and the orchestra accompanying the dance would have featured fiddles, singing, dancers' footwork and, most importantly, the guitar. The guitar was commonly associated with this dance even after it was imported into the New World. Scholars James Tyler and Paul Sparks mention that the *fandango* was popular throughout South America and, in particular, the lowly shops that sold rum and tobacco called *pulperias*.<sup>22</sup> Even when imported into the New World, the dance still carried all the negative undertones associated with it. To this point, Richard Pinnell, an expert on the early guitar's reception in Argentina and Uruguay, states that the dance was considered inappropriate because it was believed to “lead to drunkenness, brawling, indiscriminate fornication, and even manslaughter.”<sup>23</sup> Fearing social unrest, the

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<sup>20</sup> Curt Sachs, *The World of the Dance*, p. 99., quoted in Reah Sadowsky, “Antonio Soler: Creator of Spain's Fifth Century of Musical Genius,” *American Music Teacher* xxviii/1 (1978), 12.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>22</sup> James Tyler and Paul Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music from the Renaissance to the Classical Era* (Oxford, 2002), 193.

<sup>23</sup> Richard T. Pinnell, “*The Rioplatense Guitar: The Early Guitar and Its Context in Argentina and Uruguay*,” i. Westport: The Bold Strummer, Ltd. quoted in *Ibid.*, 198.

church in Buenos Aires made attempts to suppress the dancing of the *fandango* and other dances with guitar accompaniment.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 198.

## FANDANGO FOR HARPSICHORD AND THE TRANSCRIPTION PROCESS<sup>25</sup>

### General Observations

At first look, Soler's writing of a *fandango* seems unusual for a man of his religious occupation. Marestaing states that "...Soler's life as a monk was one of great devotion, both to the religious life and to his ever-continuing studies and writing."<sup>26</sup> But this did not prevent him from creating some of his works which were, as Marvin mentions, "derived purely from Spanish elements such as popular songs and dances, guitar strumming, and other typical Spanish musical expressions."<sup>27</sup> A study of his life also shows that he was exposed to much secular and contemporary music at La Granja, the summer royal palace by El Escorial; consequently, it would only seem natural for Soler to gather inspiration from his surroundings.

Soler's *Fandango* obviously imitates the sounds of the guitar, and since the guitar was an integral part of this dance, it can be argued that a transcription for guitars would bring the work back to its original sounds and colors. Spanning 461 measures, his *Fandango* is a lively, capricious work that explores the spirit of this lascivious dance. The work displays a large array of gestures, most of which transfer well to the idiom of guitar duo. Nonetheless, several issues must be considered when making an effective transcription of this work.

### Tessitura

When transcribing a work for guitar duo, tessitura is essential. The work has to fit on the instrument comfortably and give the impression that it was originally written for this instrument. Also, because of the tuning of the guitar (i.e. E, A, d, g, b, e'), sharp keys are favored in

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<sup>25</sup> Frederick Marvin Edition, 1957

<sup>26</sup> Graciela Monica Marestaing, "Antonio Soler: A Biographical Inquiry and Analysis of a Keyboard Sonata" (Ph.D. dissertation, California State University, 1976), 13.

<sup>27</sup> Frederick Marvin, "Antonio Soler," *Consort*, no. 39 (1983), 481.

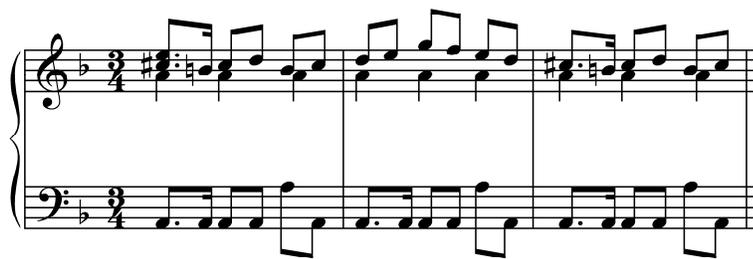
comparison with flat ones. As for the *Fandango*, the transcription is suited for the original key, A Phrygian.

### Adding to or Reducing the Texture

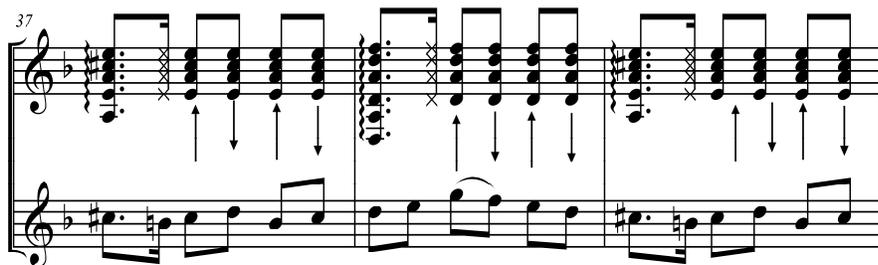
Sometimes the original texture is either too thin—leaving the guitar sounding weak and without sufficient fullness—or too thick, making it unplayable. When this occurs, it becomes even more necessary to interpret the *affect* of the gesture so as to arrange the music properly. The following passages are solutions to some of the textural issues in this work.

Ex.13. Adding to the texture in *Fandango*, mm. 37-39.

13a. Original



13b. Transcription<sup>28</sup>



In the above example, notice how the implied harmonies have been filled in.

<sup>28</sup> The x's and the arrows will be explained in the section on Spanish Baroque Guitar Effects, pp. 27.

Ex.14. Reducing the texture in *Fandango*, mm.176-181.

14a. Original



14a. Transcription



In this example, I have reduced the texture by using only the upper pitches of the original octave passage.

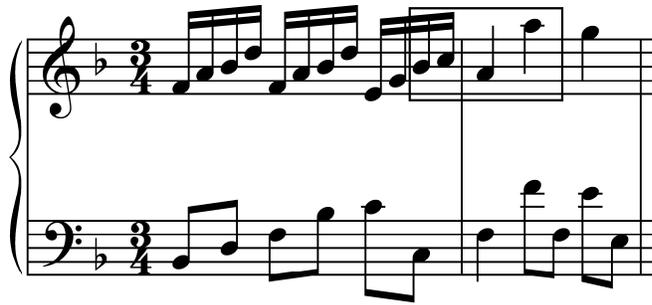
#### Adjustments in the Line to Create Idiomatic Writing for the Guitar

In comparison with the guitar, keyboard instruments are able to execute complex arpeggiations and figurations with great ease. Even though some of the original lines are possible on the guitar, they often do not have the same effect because the register is too low and lacks sufficient resonance. Since the guitar sounds an octave lower than written, octave changes that move the material up simply place the material at pitch. In general, most of the material is down an octave and is only placed at pitch when the material fits in a playable fashion on the

guitar. In order to create idiomatic writing that exploits the most sonorous qualities of the guitar, adjustments in the original line are also necessary.

Ex. 15. Adjustment in arpeggiation with octave transposition in *Fandango*, mm.65 and 66.

15a. Original



Ex.16. Adjustments in the line for a more sonorous quality in *Fandango*, mm.51-54.

16a. Original

16b. Transcription

In the above excerpt, I have created a more guitaristic voicing resulting in a more sonorous effect.

Ex.17. Adjustments in arpeggiation in *Fandango*, mm.169 and 171.

17a. Original

m.169

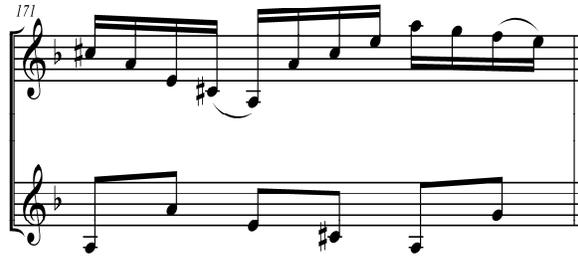
m. 171

17b. Transcription

m. 169



m.171



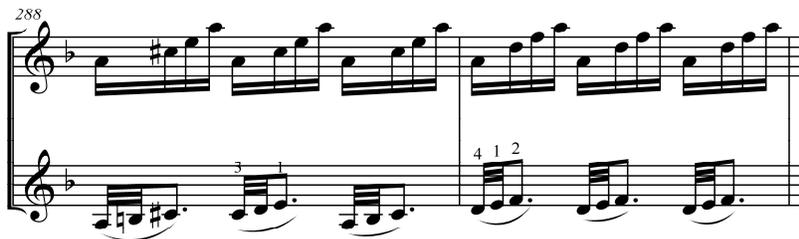
In the above passages, I have arranged the original figurations in a more guitaristic manner.

Ex.18. Adjustments in the line to facilitate ensemble playing in *Fandango*, mm. 288 and 289.

Ex.18a. Original



Ex.18b. Transcription



In the above example, the original passage is too difficult to replicate for guitar duo; therefore, I have created a more idiomatic arpeggio in the upper voice in order to facilitate ensemble playing.

## Spanish Baroque Guitar Effects

Guitarists who wish to acquire knowledge about the stylistic techniques used in the guitar repertoire from the Spanish Baroque Era (c. 1596-1750) have an overwhelming amount of sources to draw from. During this time, numerous treatises on playing the guitar were published in Spain, as well as in Italy and France. These treatises give us a window into what techniques Baroque guitarists were writing about and using in their own compositions. Although the Baroque guitar is quite different from its modern six-string relative in terms of its size, sound, and stringing—the Baroque guitar has five courses with a single top string—there are still many points of reference which make it possible for many of the stylistic techniques from this period to be used on the modern guitar. These techniques should, therefore, be integrated into transcriptions from this period. Taken from selected treatises, the techniques used in this transcription will be discussed below, along with a brief historical background of each.

The earliest publication that discussed the new trends in playing the guitar was the 1596 guitar treatise by Juan Carlos Amat entitled *Guitarra Espanola y Vandola*. Amat's text is solely devoted to playing in the *rasqueado* style. The *rasqueado* or strummed style refers to the hitting of the strings of the guitar with one or more fingers of the right hand, instead of them being simultaneously plucked.<sup>29</sup> The direction of the *rasqueado* was not indicated by Amat, but, as the style evolved, guitarists began using signs to signify direction of the strum. This manner of playing was originally devised to accompany popular songs and dances because it supplied, in comparison to the plucked, or *punteado*, style, a significant increase in volume, and added rhythmic and textural variety. It was this manner of playing, and not the later lute-like contrapuntal *punteado* style, that brought the guitar its enormous popularity in the early

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<sup>29</sup> Syliva Murphy, "Seventeenth-Century Guitar Music: Notes on Rasqueado Performance," *Galpin Society Journal* 21 (March 1968), 24.

seventeenth century in France and Italy. In the following examples, notice how *rasqueado* style is utilized in this transcription (Ex.19 and Ex. 20).

Ex. 19 *Rasqueados* in *Fandango*, mm. 37-39.

19a. Original



19b. Transcription

The x's in this example signify to the performer to *golpe*, or hit this given rhythm with the right hand in a percussive manner, and the arrows indicate the direction of the strum. Inspired by the spirit of the *Fandango*, this extra-musical effect imitates the sounds of the dancers' footwork and the castanets.

Scholar on Baroque guitar ornamentation, Robert Strizich mentions that the *rasqueado* style was likely substituted for arpeggio passages and was used when “both the musical context and the fantasy of the performer permitted.”<sup>30</sup> With this in mind, the *rasqueado* style could have been likely used to substitute for keyboard figuration that is otherwise unidiomatic on the guitar. In the following example, the combination of the *rasqueado* style and the *golpe* replace the

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<sup>30</sup> Robert Strizich, “Ornamentation in Spanish Baroque Guitar Music,” *Journal of the Lute Society of America* 5 (1972), 38.

original complex figuration. These additions supply an excellent solution that not only suit the spirit of the gesture, but also add the necessary intensity.

Ex. 20. *Rasqueados* in *Fandango*, mm. 226 and 227.

20a. Original

20b. Transcription

Gaspar Sanz's 1674 treatise entitled *Instruccion de Musica Sobre la Guitarra* is also a key source because it features a combination of the *rasqueado* and *punteado* manners of playing, the novel way of fingering scale passages called *campanella*, and *extrasinos*, or slurs. Known to have been used by both lutenists and vihuelists from the previous era, *campanella* fingering is a method of playing scalar passages on adjacent strings producing a harp, or bell-like quality. In addition to their colorful sonority, passages fingered in a *campanella* way are a great technical tool to negotiate quick passage-work. The earliest source of this type of fingering on the guitar is found in a 1640 treatise called *Libro Primo de Chitarra Spagnole* by the Italian Angelo Michele Bartolotti. Though this effect was not "named" by him, Sanz, who cultivated this manner of fingering, called this effect 'campanelas'(Ex. 21). The following example shows where *campanella* fingering has been the utilized in the transcription.

Ex. 21. *Campanella* fingering in *Fandango*, mm.55 and 56.

21a. Original

21b. Transcription

*Extrasinos*, or slurs, were considered a special effect by Baroque guitarists who thought of them as an ornament.<sup>31</sup> Used to create variety in the articulation, *extrasinos* can also be utilized in facilitating otherwise laborious *punteado* passages (Ex. 22) Moreover, as was in the style of Baroque guitarists, *extrasinos* passages were grouped according to the placement of the notes in a given left-hand position, which was not necessarily in accord with the metric grouping of the piece. The resulting effects are irregular patterns which can create some unique rhythmic accents.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 29.

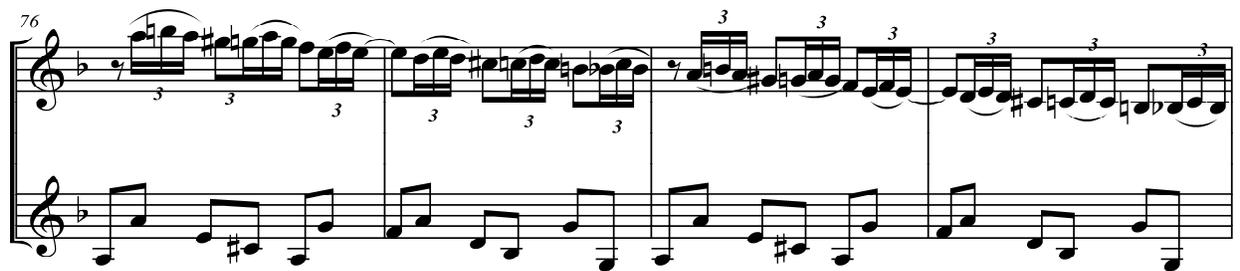
<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 30.

Ex. 22. *Extrasinos* in *Fandango*, mm.76-79.

22a. Original



22b. Transcription



Francisco Guerau's 1694 *Poema Harmonico* also gives us some clues on using the ornamental technique of *harpeado*, or arpeggios. Guerau describes a "rolling" of chords in an upward direction, possibly employed at the whim of the performer due to the fact that there is no mention of a sign that is used to indicate when this is done.<sup>33</sup> Sanz also mentions this technique in his treatise but describes the *harpeado* as ascending and descending on a fixed chord pattern. He also supplies a sign that signifies when this should be used, but, as stated by Strizich, examples of Sanz's usage of this technique are nowhere to be found in his, or other Spanish treatises. Indeed, this technique is credited to Italian guitarists and is seen in works by Bartolotti. In the following example, the original *harpeado* technique (which features the crossing of hands) is too difficult to reproduce for guitar duo. My transcription simplifies this gesture by placing

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 36.

the *harpeado* in one guitar part and adds a new supporting line to reinforce the harmonic movement (Ex. 23).<sup>34</sup>

Ex. 23 *Harpeados* in Fandango, mm. 298 and 299.

23a. Original

23b. Transcription

Lastly, Santiago De Murcia's 1714 *Resumen de Acompañar la Parte con la Guitarra*, and his 1732 *Passacalles y Obras de Guitarra* are also of considerable interest because the music in these texts is a fusion of all the above-mentioned techniques, though no explanation on the usage of the techniques is provided. His works alone supply the modern guitarist with his stylistic features. In addition to featuring Spanish characteristics, De Murcia shows his synthesis of French and Italian styles. An example of this can be seen in his arrangements of Arcangelo Corelli's works. It is arrangements such as these that give modern guitarists a great reference for transcribing music for the guitar. In terms of ornamentation, De Murcia, gives no explanation in either book, but refers to Guerau's treatise for more information on such topics.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 36.

## Imitating Harpsichord Articulation

Since Soler's *Fandango* is a harpsichord work, the transcription should also consider imitating the styles or sounds of this instrument, in so much as they are idiomatic to the modern guitar. One such effect that can be easily imitated is the articulation of the harpsichord.

Once a key on the harpsichord has been released, the sound no longer continues, creating a detached articulation. In comparison to the harpsichord, the open strings of the guitar have a much longer sustain. When playing a passage that allows the open strings of the guitar to sustain, the harmonic character is often distorted and leaves a "muddy" quality. To create a harpsichord-like effect on the guitar, notes (particularly in the bass) can be shortened (Ex. 24).

Ex.24. Harpsichord articulation effects in *Fandango*, mm. 2 and 3.

24a. Original



24b. Transcription



<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 19.

## CONCLUSION

Although Padre Antonio Soler never wrote guitar music, its sounds and effects must have inspired him. Evidence of the guitar's influence on Soler's music can be seen in his use of characteristic guitar gestures, a culmination of which is found in his *Fandango*. Since many of his gestures and ideas appear to be drawn from guitaristic models, transcribing Soler's music for the guitar would only seem natural. This study presented a small fraction of Soler's treasures and many more still wait to be transcribed for guitar duo.

APPENDIX

TWO REPRESENTATIVE PIECES





77

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

82

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

87

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

92

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

# Fandango

Antonio Soler  
arranged by Fernand Vera

The musical score is written for two guitars, labeled "Guitar 1" and "Guitar 2". It is in 3/4 time and features a variety of musical notations and techniques:

- Measures 1-7:** Guitar 1 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 6=D V chord. It includes a trill, a triplet of eighth notes, and a double bar line with a second ending (II) marked with a circled 2. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-4. Guitar 2 starts with a bass clef and a 6=D chord, playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment.
- Measures 8-14:** Guitar 1 has a trill and a circled 1. Guitar 2 has a circled 1 and a circled 2. The word "simile" is written below the staff. Fingerings like 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4 are shown.
- Measures 15-20:** Guitar 1 has a circled 1 and a circled 2. A V chord is marked. Guitar 2 has a circled 1 and a circled 2. Fingerings like 4, 1, 0, 0, 3, 2, 0 are shown.
- Measures 21-26:** Both guitars have Ras. (Rasgueado) markings. A V chord is marked in measure 25. The word "tr" (trill) is written above the staff in measure 26.
- Measures 27-31:** The score continues with eighth-note patterns in both staves.
- Measures 32-36:** Guitar 1 has a circled 1. A second ending (II) is marked with a circled 4 and a circled 2. Fingerings like 0, 2, 4, 3, 1, 0 are shown.

37 Ras.

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

42

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

simile

47

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

V

Ras.

simile

52 Ras.

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

55

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

V

IV

59

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

V

64

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Ras.

69

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

74

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

79

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

83

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

87

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

92

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

95

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

100

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

104

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

109

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

114

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

118

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

122

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

IX

125

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

X

130

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

V

III

135

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

I

III

140

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

I

III



177

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

182

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

187

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

191

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

193

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

V e a m i e a m i

195

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

202

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

VII

209

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

215

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

221

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

226

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

230

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

simile

232

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

238

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

243

V

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

249

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

255

V III I

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

260

V

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

266 V VII

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

273

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

281 V

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

288 V

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

291

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

295

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

298

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

302

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

308

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

315

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

320

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

324

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

330 IX X

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

334

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

339

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

345

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

351

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

356

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

359 X

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

364 V

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

371

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

379

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

387

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

395

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

401

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

V

406

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

411

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

I

V

I

416

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

421

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

I

0 (4)

V

V

428

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

436

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

441

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

445

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

451

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

457

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

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