

"24 Strings"



Purcell, now and then

Works by Henry Purcell, Anthony Ocaña, Mario Carro & José Minguillón

*Sarah Barnes, soprano
Manuel Minguillón Nieto, archlute
Anthony Ocaña, 10 strings guitar*

24 Strings

Purcell, now and then

350 years ago, in 1659, London gave birth the most important composer England has ever delivered to the world. One year after, the group "24 violins" was founded with a clear goal, to maintain alive modern music of its time, allowing living composers to premier their works, quite similar to what contemporary ensembles do nowadays. Either coincidence or predetermination made this one of the most successful societies at the end of the XVII century. Time has passed but this flame must stay alive, more in these days in which modern music, as well as ancient, needs to be delivered to the modern audiences.

24 Strings, presented today, captures the spirit of "24 violins" combining performers and composers (both of classical and contemporary music). *24 Strings* takes his name from the English baroque ensemble "24 Violins" and represents the union between past and present. The past personified by the 14 strings of the Archlute and the music of Purcell, the present by the 10 string guitar and the modern compositions inspired by Purcell's music. These 24 strings are putted together with ancient and modern knowledge. The composer of the great "Dido and Aeneas" stays alive and is an inspiration to a newer generation: Purcell, yesterday and today.

The current program brings a historical representation of the music of the English master, and three new visions of such works. The Tradition as a way to move forward: we cannot forget that Purcell and the "24 Violins" were innovation to become tradition nowadays.

24 Strings

Purcell, now and then

PROGRAMME

- Let us dance.....H. Purcell
Fairest Isle.....H. Purcell
If love's a sweet passion.....H. Purcell
Voice & archlute
Passacaglia.....A. Ocaña*
Voice & 10 Strings Guitar
- O solitude.....H. Purcell
Voice & archlute
- Ground in Gamut.....H. Purcell
Archilaúd
Variations for 24 Strings.....M. Carro*
Archlute & 10 Strings Guitar
- When I am laid in earth (Dido's Lament).....H. Purcell
Voice & archlute
- If music be the food of love.....H. Purcell
Voice & archlute
The food of love.....J. Minguillón*
Voice, archlute & 10 Strings Guitar

* World premiere.

Sarah Barnes, *soprano*
Manuel Minguillón Nieto, *archlute*
Anthony Ocaña, *10 strings guitar*

24 Strings

Purcell, now and then

PROGRAMME NOTES

No record of Henry Purcell's baptism survives; the date of his birth, September 10 of 1659, is established by the ages given on his memorial tablet in Westminster Abbey and the frontispiece of his *Sonnata's of III Parts* (London, 1683). As a boy Purcell was a chorister in the Chapel Royal. After his voice broke in 1673 he was appointed assistant 'without fee' to John Hingeston, keeper of the king's wind and keyboard instruments. After leaving the choir he probably studied with the musicians named as his teachers in his early sources, John Blow and Christopher Gibbons. Matthew Locke was also an important influence.

On 10 September 1677 Purcell replaced Locke as composer for *The 24 Violins* at court. Afterwards, around Michaelmas in 1679 he succeeded John Blow as organist of the Westminster Abbey, a post he retained for the rest of his life.

In 1680 Purcell married Frances Peters and in 1682 he was admitted as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal to serve in the place of Edward Lowe as one of the three organists. Between 1680 and Charles II's death in 1685 Purcell was primarily a court composer. The accession of James II led to a reorganization of the court musical establishment. Purcell's position in the court's secular music was probably unaltered, although his title was changed from composer to 'harpsicall'. He retained his post as organist of the Anglican Chapel Royal, but the status of the chapel was diminished under the new Catholic monarch. The exile of James II in 1688 finally ended Purcell's career as a composer working mainly for the court, though he was to remain on the royal payroll under William and Mary. This period of political and professional uncertainty also coincided with the birth of his only two children to survive to adulthood, Frances and Edward, born in 1688 and 1689 respectively.

The court now ceased to be the important musical centre it had been under the Stuarts, and Purcell sought further employment. In 1689 he

produced the first of his odes for Queen Mary's birthday, but he also edited and contributed to Playford's *The Second Part of Musick's Hand-Maid* and presented the all-sung masque *Dido and Aeneas* at Josias Priest's boarding-school for girls in Chelsea. From 1690 he was heavily involved in composing for the theatre. In 1694 Purcell revised and updated the 12th edition of John Playford's *Introduction to the Skill of Musick*. Purcell provided some of the music for Queen Mary's state funeral on 5 March 1695, and *The Indian Queen* z630, without its concluding masque by Daniel Purcell, was perhaps performed in the following June.

The program presents six songs by Purcell and an instrumental piece *A Ground in Gamut*. Four of the songs belong to three of his most important theatrical works, the other two are included in the collection *Orpheus Britannicus*. Both *Let us Dance* and *Fairest Isle* belong to the semi-opera *King Arthur*, *If love's a sweet passion* is part of the semi-opera *The Fairy Queen* and *When I am Laid in Earth* belongs to *Dido and Aeneas*. *O solitude* and *If Music Be the Food of Love* are included in the extense collection *Orpheus Britannicus* with pieces only by Henry Purcell and published posthumously in 1898.

Three of the selected works for this program *When I am Laid in Earth*, *O solitude* and *A Ground in Gamut*, were composed over a ground, that is, a harmonic structure that repeats successively from the begining to the end. *When I am Laid in Earth* is without any doubt the most famous piece by Henry Purcell and is also known as "Dido's Lament". This masterwork is fully composed over a baroque Passacaglia bass, a descending chromatic bass (g-f#-f-e-e_b-d), that brings the perfect affect of Dido's tortuous end. Other pieces in the program far from being composed over a ground, or repeated harmonic structures, flow freely from an expressive adagio to a live allegro as in the vituous piece *If Music Be the Food of Love*. The rest of the pieces in the program *Let us Dance*, *Fairest Isle* and *If love's a sweet passion*, belong to a style of songs that Purcell mastered: the srophic song, where every piece is divided in various sections that are repeated with different verses.

Manuel Minguillón Nieto

Passacaglia (Anthony Ocaña)

Passacaglia is a music form used in the Baroque era. In a passacaglia a voice repeats a melody while the rest of voices vary constantly.

My piece is written for guitar and voice, based on English texts of the Baroque era. The singer will become the centre of gravity of the whole work, repeating the main melody while the guitar will be leading all the variations. I have always wanted to write a Passacaglia and I think this is a great opportunity to compose one since it commemorates the birth of one of the greatest baroque composers.

Variations for 24 Strings (Mario Carro)

The marvellous musical world of Henry Purcell is the starting point for the development of this piece. A ten-string guitar and an archlute, which provide a huge range of possibilities to make their twenty-four strings vibrate, show their musical discourse throughout seven variations based on "Ground in Gamut" by the English composer. So then, this work tries to merge the past and the present and, meanwhile, not to disregard the future.

The food of Love (José Minguillón)

Purcell is the starting point. I wanted, if possible, to be in his place taking the same text of Henry Heveningham which Purcell himself chose at that time. Besides, Purcell's song develops in a style close to a Cantata, using constantly fluctuations between sharp rhythmic pulsation of the arias and the complete loss of beat in recitatives, making a transition between beats totally unstable and very seductive, which, on the other hand, always depends on the performer's mood.

The transition between sense of pulse and loss of the same motivated me to start the piece, especially since it is not usual in my music. For the same reason, this approach to Purcell made me to give some freedom when writing and playing it, something which is rather unusual for me either but

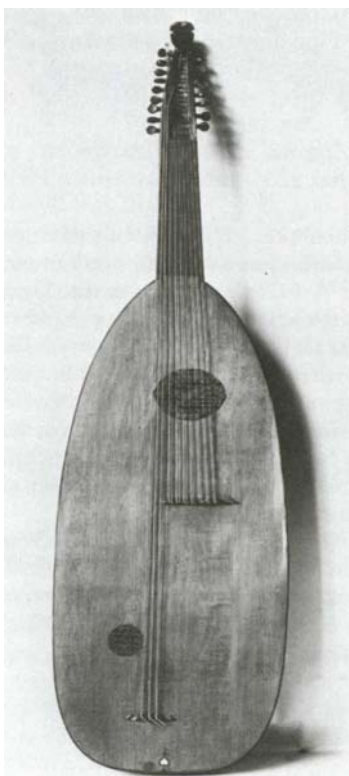
that was compensated with an excellent opportunity to work with musicians in parallel with the development of the piece which explained those freedoms in an oral way rather than written.

Coming back to the text, between the two Heveningham sung stanzas I decided to place one text from William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night, Act 1, scene 1. 1-3*, which, maybe, it was the inspiration of the former and allowed me, as in Purcell's piece, to develop a recitative, but in my case, more divided and formal in nature.

The Archlute

The term 'arciliuto' was in use in Italy before 1590; it is not known precisely what form of instrument the term then implied, but the prefix 'arci' indicates some form of enhanced lute. Alessandro Piccinini, in his *Intavolatura di liuto* of 1623, claimed to be the inventor of the *arciliuto*. A ten-course archlute of 1595, by Wendelio Venere of Padua, nowadays in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, matches the experimental instrument described by Piccinini (left). It is radically different from the regular *arciliuto* in that its diapasons were extended by lengthening the body rather than the neck, and fitting them to a second, independent bridge placed some distance back from the main bridge carrying the fingerboard strings. Finding this design unsatisfactory, Piccinini and his luthier made an instrument with a neck extension to a tenor lute. Until the 1620s archlutes usually had up to eleven double courses, six or seven of which were fretted. By the 1630s fourteen courses archlutes, with seven stopped courses plus six or seven diapasons, were usual (right). The archlute was brought to England in the late seventeenth century by the many visiting Italian virtuosi who must have done much to make the instrument very popular.

Manuel Minguillón Nieto



10 Strings Guitar

This instrument was invented in the early 1960's due to an experiment made by two great figures of the guitar, the luthier Manuel Ramirez III (1922-1995) and the guitarist Narciso Yepes (1927- 1997). The search to expand the resonance of the guitar was the driving force to create such instrument. The first attempt made a singular guitar with a harp inside of the body, the lack of control over the resonance made this attempt a failure. Yepes got involved with the experiment and recommended Manuel to get rid of the internal harp, he also recommended him to add 4 additional strings on top of the 6th string of the guitar. This new implementation allowed the guitarist to have more control over the resonance it also expanded the register of notes available in the guitar. It is a common practice to build guitars with additional strings in the XXI century.

Anthony Ocaña



[Sarah Barnes](http://www.myspace.com/sarahkathrynarnes) www.myspace.com/sarahkathrynarnes



Canadian soprano Sarah Barnes holds a Licentiate in Early Music Vocal Performance and a Bachelor of Music in Trumpet Performance from McGill University (Montreal). She has performed in Canada as a soloist with the Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montreal, the Banff Summer Arts Festival, the Telemann Ensemble, the Kore Ensemble, the Festival Montreal Baroque, and has recorded for ATMA Classique. With her award-winning quartet Ensemble La Rota, Sarah has performed throughout North America at the National Arts Centre, Boston Early Music Festival, Indian River Festival, Festival Montreal Baroque, Bloomington Early Music Festival, Early Music Now and for CBC Radio.

Upcoming performances include Seattle Early Music Guild, San Francisco Early Music Society, Lameque International Baroque Festival, and Tage für alte Musik Regensburg. Sarah is currently pursuing postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Music in London where she learns with Russell Smythe. She is supported by the Josephine Baker Trust.

[Manuel Minguillón](http://www.manuelminguillon.com) www.manuelminguillon.com



Manuel Minguillón was born and raised in Madrid, Spain. He obtained his bachelor degree in guitar performance from the Conservatorio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial where he studied with Gerardo Arriaga. Captivated by the music of the Renaissance, he continued his studies in Early Plucked Instruments at the Conservatorio de Arturo Soria, in Madrid, with Jesús Sanchez. Subsequently, Minguillón studied in Seville with Juan Carlos Rivera at the Conservatory

Manuel Castillo, and thereafter perfected his skills under the guidance of master lutenist Hopkinson Smith in Basel, Switzerland. Afterwards he studied a Master's and a Doctorate Degree in Lute and Early Plucked Instruments with the world renowned lutenist Paul O'Dette at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Since 2004 he has served as Professor O'Dette's primary teaching assistant for lute at the Eastman School.

Manuel Minguillón has performed as both soloist and ensemble player in many countries (including Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Poland, Canada, Mexico, USA and United Kingdom), having appeared in, among other venues, the Auditorio Nacional de España and the Juan March Foundation, Madrid, Spain; the VII International Clavichord and Lute Symposium, Magnano, Italy; the Early Music Festival of Rochester, New York; the Ann Arbor Early Music Festival, Michigan; in the III International Conference on the transatlantic Baroque and in the London Early Music Festival, in London, Canada. He is a founder member of the Baroque Ensemble Tarantella and the Vihuela duo Delitiae Musicae which he has recently collaborated with the Spanish Embassy in Canada, performing various recitals in Montreal, Quebec, Toronto and Ottawa. He is member of the multidisciplinary research group The Hispanic Baroque which he will be researching about Spanish Tonos Humanos of the Spanish Baroque until 2013. He currently lives and works in London, United Kingdom.

[Anthony Ocaña](http://www.anthonycana.com) www.anthonycana.com



Composer and guitarist, born in Dominican Republic ("D.R.") on march 7th 1980. From an early age Anthony discovered his love for music. At the age of 5 he started taking piano and violin lessons and at 12 he began playing what it is today his main instrument, the guitar. He studied at the National Conservatory of Music of the D.R. with the recognized guitarist Ruben Gonzalez. In 1998 he receives a

scholarship to study guitar and composition at Manhattanville College NY. He studied guitar with Benjamin Verdery and composition with Ingram Marshall and Mary Ann Joyce. In NY he worked with important musical figures such as Elliot Magaziner (for many years he conducted the Frank Sinatra Orchestra). Anthony was awarded the "Sr. Josephine Morgan Award" by the music department of Manhattanville College for his professional and academics achievements. In 2002, after finishing his studies in NY, he decides to live in Madrid where he studied composition with Jesus Torres and guitar with Jose Luis Merlín.

In 1999 and 2001 he opened concerts for Gonzalo Rubalcaba at the National Theater of D.R. In 2001 he recorded his first album entitled "A Paso de Cebra" (Zebra's Pace) along with the pianist Sebastian Lerner. In 2003 he opened a concert for Egberto Gismonti at the National Theater of D.R. for this event Anthony integrated the percussion in his music having the pleasure to perform with Guarionex Aquino. In 2004 he received two important awards for his guitar works, the "Francisco Tárrega Award" in Spain and the "Casa de Teatro Award" in D.R.

Anthony is constantly performing his music at important concert halls in Spain: Casa de América, El Círculo de Bellas Artes, La Casa de La Moneda, La Fídula, Rincón del Arte Nuevo and Clamores. Between 2005 and 2006 he presented over 50 concerts in the geography of Spain.

In the summer of 2006 he published his second album entitled "Anthony Ocaña" based on compositions he wrote between 2003 and 2006. Several Dominican artists were invited to perform at this album: Guarionex Aquino, Esar Simó, Sebastián Lerner, Isidro Bobadilla and Maridalia Hernandez.

On February 2007 he performs at the prestigious "Palacio Foz" in Lisbon, Portugal, this concert was retransmitted throughout Portugal's National Radio. On March 2007 Anthony presents an important tour in D. R. In November 2007 he participates at the Festival de Jazz de Madrid.



Born in Madrid in 1979. Began his musical studies at Tres Cantos Municipal School of Music, then joining the Superior Conservatoire of Music of Madrid where he is awarded with the Superior Degree on Piano and the Diploma on Musical Theory, Music Reading and Accompaniment. At the same time he studies Harmony, Counterpoint and Composition with the composer Jesús Torres.

First Prize in the "Alea III International Composition Competition 2005" at Boston University, winner of the "I Muestra de Jóvenes Compositores del CDMC 2004" (Madrid, Spain) and finalist in the "Labyrinthmaker Plattform - Pierrot Lunaire Ensemble Wien 2005 " (Viena, Austria).

Has received a commission from the Spanish CDMC ("Miedo a la Libertad", for violin, flute, accordion and piano), Regional Government of Madrid ("El Mar", for soprano and string quartet) and Residencia de Estudiantes of Madrid ("Tres Poemas de Ángel González", for voice, sax and piano).

His music has been performed in Barcelona, Madrid (Auditorio Nacional, Círculo de Bellas Artes, Museo Thyssen, Residencia de Estudiantes, Festival Internacional de Música Contemporánea de Tres Cantos), Alicante (XXII Festival de Música de Alicante), Valencia ("Hui, Hui, Música"), Italia ("Finestra sul Novecento" - Treviso), Portugal ("MúsicaAçores"), Cyprus, Malta, England (The WareHouse - London), Germany (Düsseldorfer Tonhalle) and USA (Tsai Performance Center - Boston).

He has also a degree in Psychology and currently works as a piano teacher at Tres Cantos Municipal School of Music.



He was born in Madrid in 1979. He has studied composition with Jesús Torres.

His music has been played in Spain, Germany, Russia, Austria and México by musicians such as: *Grup Instrumental de Valencia*, *Proyecto Guerrero*, *Grupo Dhamar*, Heinrich Schütz Duet, *Nure Ensemble Contemporáneo* or Mark Pekarsky Ensemble.

He has been awarded within the first Young Composers contest from (CDMC) in 2004, by *Comunidad de Madrid* in 2004, INJUVE in 2007 and he has also been awarded abroad in the Composition Contest DTKV Region Sachsen in Germany in 2005 and in the International *Jurgenson* Composition Contest in Russia in 2005.

Last year he founded his own school of music *Mingui Estudio* placed in Madrid, where he teaches currently.

TEXTS

Let us dance

Let us Dance, let us Sing,
While our Life's in its Spring,
And give all to the Great God of Love.
Let us Revel, and Play,
And rejoyce, while we may,
Since Old Time these Delights will remove.

Thomas Betterton

Fairest Isle

Fairest Isle, all isles excelling.
Seat of pleasure and of love,
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian grove.
Cupid from his fav'rite nation,
Care and energy will remove;
Jealousy that poisonous passion,
And despair that dies for love.

Gentle murmers sweet complaining,
Sighs that blow the fire of love,
Soft repulses, kind distaining,
Shall be all the pains you prove.
Ev'ry swain shall pay his duty,
Grateful ev'ry nymph shall prove;
And as these excel in beauty,
Those shall be renown'd for love.

John Dryden

If love's a sweet passion

If love's a sweet passion why does it torment?
If a bitter, oh tell me, whence comes my content?
Since I suffer with pleasure, why should I complain,
or grieve at my fate, when I know it's in vain?
Yet so pleasing the pain is so soft as the dart,
That at once it both wounds me and tickles my heart.

W. Shakespeare

O solitude

O solitude, my sweetest choice!
Places devoted to the night,
Remote from tumult and from noise,
How ye my restless thoughts delight!

O solitude, my sweetest choice!
O Heav'ns! what content is mine
To see these trees, which have appear'd
From the nativity of time,
And which all ages have rever'd,
To look today as fresh and green
As when their beauties first were seen.
O, how agreeable a sight
These hanging mountains do appear,
Which th' unhappy would invite
To finish all their sorrows here,
When their hard fate makes them endure
Such woes as only death can cure.

O, how I solitude adore!
That element of noblest wit,
Where I have learnt Apollo's lore,
Without the pains to study it.
For thy sake I in love am grown
With what thy fancy does pursue;
But when I think upon my own,
I hate it for that reason too,
Because it needs must hinder me
From seeing and from serving thee.
O solitude, O how I solitude adore!

Katherine Philips

When I am laid in earth (Dido's Lament)

When I am laid in earth,
May my wrongs create
No trouble in thy breast;
Remember me, but ah! Forget my fate

Nahum Tate

If music be the food of love

If music be the food of love,
sing on till I am fill'd with joy;
for then my list'ning soul you move
with pleasures that can never cloy,

your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare
that you are music ev'rywhere.

Pleasures invade both eye and ear,
so fierce the transports are, they wound,
and all my senses feasted are,
tho' yet the treat is only sound.
Sure I must perish by our charms,
unless you save me in your arms.

Henry Heveningham

The food of love

If music be the food of love,
sing on till I am fill'd with joy;
for then my list'ning soul you move
with pleasures that can never cloy,
your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare
that you are music ev'rywhere.

Henry Heveningham

If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! it had a dying fall:
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour! Enough; no more:
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love! how quick and fresh art thou,
That, notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute: so full of shapes is fancy
That it alone is high fantastical.

William Shakespeare

Pleasures invade both eye and ear,
so fierce the transports are, they wound,
and all my senses feasted are,
tho' yet the treat is only sound.
Sure I must perish by our charms,
unless you save me in your arms.

Henry Heveningham

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