

My name is Amalia Bandy, and I am a sophomore double majoring in Double Bass Performance and Music History at the Shepherd School of Music. When I was choosing a topic for my final paper in Renaissance Music History last year, my instructor suggested that I research Renaissance works for solo voice and *vihuela de mano*, a sixteenth century Spanish ancestor of the modern guitar. This was research that he himself had wanted to do for some time, but he thought that I might be up to the task. Given my longstanding passion for plucked instruments, not to mention my ambitions of someday having a career in ancient music, I accepted the challenge with no prior knowledge of the subject. Luckily, the Brown Fine Arts Library had been like a second home to me during my first semester, and I was already exceptionally adroit at navigating Fondren's stacks. Those stacks became my sole informational source throughout my entire research process, from my learning what a vihuela was to my eventual hunt for the most intricate details about its music and context.

Because the topic was entirely new to me, I began my research about the vihuela tradition very generally. With the wide range of resources that Fondren has to offer in mind, I decided first to educate myself with primary sources, with the intention of establishing a context in which to fit my later research of secondary sources. Before long, I found myself at one of my favorite shelves in the M142 section of the music library, with facsimiles of original vihuela manuscripts in my hand. From these and their various modern reprints, including translations into modern Spanish of a few of the composers' text introductions, I began to piece together bits and pieces of information about the vihuela and its world. After carefully compiling a list of composers whose music and

playing manuals interested me most, I searched for relevant Theses/Dissertations through Fondren's online database, went to the Music Literature shelves to locate anthologies of various musicological essays about Renaissance Spain, and took out as many CDs and LPs of vihuela and Spanish Guitar music as I could carry from the Reserves Desk. To supplement my findings, I also made good use of the Library's foreign language resources in creating my own translations of Spanish, German, French, and Italian sources. Likewise, Fondren's selection of old Spanish poetry proved useful, not for my understanding of specific texts that my vihuela composers set to music, but in my quest for saturation in the kind of humanist thought in which the composers themselves were immersed. In short, I used Fondren's resources to create for myself a broader cultural lens through which to more thoroughly examine the music in question.

This intense preliminary investigation, though painstaking and lengthy, was immensely important: it allowed me to methodically and intelligently find a meaningful focus for my research based on my own ever-broadening knowledge base. Armed with my collection of far-reaching historical, musical, and literary texts in four different languages and from all corners of Fondren, I narrowed my scope of study to the works for solo voice and vihuela by Alonso Mudarra, one of the lesser known and researched of the Spanish vihuelistas. While I picked through and considered every single song in his extensive manual on vihuela playing, I began to make some truly remarkable discoveries about text painting in his music. As a musical term, "text painting" refers to the technique of reflecting the meaning of a vocal song's lyrics through its accompanying musical writing. This can range from more obvious cases, like an ascending musical scale accompanying the word "climb" for example, to more nuanced musical hints in harmony

that might in some way comment on the text. The wide spectrum of examples that I discovered in Mudarra's works were so striking that my findings surprised even the musicology professor who had suggested the topic. I, too, was amazed by my breakthroughs, and realized that my now extremely focused thesis required a new, similarly focused approach to further research.

Newly invigorated, I scoured the Fondren Digital Collection and JSTOR for articles about the performance practice of Mudarra's songs or text painting in Renaissance Spain. It was when I could not find a single essay that suggested any previous musicological acknowledgement of my Mudarra discoveries that I understood that my research was entirely new. I knew that if I wanted to delve further into the topic, I would have to put an even more personal touch on my research, and rely much more heavily on my own musicological intuition. I began to mix fact from disparate sources, new and old, with my own musical analysis and skills as a musical performer. For instance, instead of just reading about vihuela technique in my modern sources and listening to CDs, I actually taught myself Mudarra's tablature system from the original source and other plucked-string guides in the Library. I even modified a ukulele of mine to make it suitable for vihuela practice. This creative fieldwork turned out to be a pivotal part of my research: putting myself in the position of vihuela performer gave me firsthand insight into which parts of the music were idiomatic coincidences, and which were probably concrete musical decisions on Mudarra's part. Intoxicated by the clarity of my musical realizations, I immediately knew that I had to do the same with written word. I translated the poetic texts from the Mudarra songs that I had analyzed musically with my "vihuela," and with access to different modern reprints of Mudarra's vihuela manual, I

could easily compare editors' renderings to my own. In the same way, I knew that analyzing the music aurally would add even more variety to my exploration of the subject, so I bombarded myself with the different recordings available to me of his songs. As is always the case with music, an abstract art, *listening* instead of *looking* allowed me to approach the music from a completely different standpoint, and I was delighted to find that my visual discoveries in the score were readily audible. Throughout the entire arc of my project, it was of paramount importance to me that I exhaust all available methods of holistic harmonic and textual analysis.

By the end, my musicological work in doing this project had become much more substantial than was required for a first music history research paper in college. I had found meaningful, thorough evidence of a deep text-music relationship in Alonso Mudarra's sixteenth century compositions, and the wide range of resources that the Fondren Library made available to me strongly informed every step of my process. My learning to use so many different library tools has already served me well in my subsequent Music History study, most recently in a project about Georg Frideric Händel's operas—a likely topic for my senior Music History thesis, and one that I would not have considered had I not been so comfortable with Fondren's catalogue. When I first came to Rice as a prospective student, Fondren was at the top of my list of places to visit, because I knew that my school's library would be an important part of my college experience. Now, halfway through my time at Rice, I am only more convinced that it will remain a pivotal part of not just my study here, but of my lifelong work as a music performer and historian.