

# LUTE MUSIC OF ALFONSO FERRABOSCO THE ELDER (1543-1588) PART 1: FANTASIAS

This tablature supplement is the first of two parts of the complete lute music of Alfonso Ferrabosco the Elder, and includes all the lute fantasias as well as lute transcriptions of the bandora fantasias.

## Worklist<sup>1</sup>

- 1a. GB-Cu Dd.5.78.3, ff. 58v-59r untitled [6-course] [AllisonR 17a]  
GB-Lam 603, f. 29v *A phantazia* [N-L2; C2a]; Mertel *Hortus Musicalis* 1615, pp. 219-220 *Phantasia et Fuga* 77; Mylius *Thesaurus Gratiarum* 1622, pp. 38-39 *Fantasia*; cf. motet by Clemens non Papa [RISM 1553<sup>8</sup>], cf. Bakfark *Liber Primus* 1565, f. 6v *Erravi sicut ovis quae periiit*; Phalèse & Bellère *Theatrum Musicum* 1571, f. 80v *Erravi sicut ovis*
- 1b. GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 40v-41r, *Alfonso his fantasie* [6-c bandora - transcribed for lute] [N-B2; C2b]; GB-Cu Dd.2.11, f. 28v, *Fantaz. Ri: Ali:* [6-c bandora] [AllisonR 17b]
2. GB-Lbl Hirsch M.1353, f. 64v *ut re mi fa sol*; GB-Cu Dd.2.11, f. 54v untitled [6-c] [N-L6; C21b]; cf. viol consort: RM.24.d.2, f. 118v [C21a]; GB-Lbl Add.41156-8, f. 9r; GB-Lcm 2036, f. 26v
- Appendix. GB-Eu Dc.5.125, f. 86r untitled
- 3a. GB-Cfm Mus.689, f. 44v *Fantasia Alfonso Ferabosco* [6-c]; GB-Cu Dd.2.11, f. 21v *fantasia Alonso ferrabosco* [N-L3a; C3]; GB-Lbl Hirsch M.1353, ff. 8v-9r untitled; GB-Cu Add.8844, f. 29v untitled<sup>2</sup>
- 3b. Dowland 1610, sigs. G1r-G1v *Fantasia 5 Composed by the most Artificiall and famous Alfonso Ferrabosco of Bologna* [7-c]
- 3c. Besard *Thesaurus Harmonicus* 1603, f. 32r *Fantasia Alphonsi Ferrabosci* [7-c] [N-L3b]  
D-KNh R 242 (Romers), ff. 26r-26v *Fantasia*
4. GB-WPforester welde, ff. 12v-13r *Fantazia Alphonso Ferrabosco* [6-c]; GB-Cu Dd.2.11, ff. 16v-17r *fantasia Alphon: ferab* [N-L5; C5]; GB-Lbl Hirsch M.1353, ff. 13v-14r untitled
- 5a. GB-Lbl Hirsch M.1353, f. 14r untitled [6-c] [C4]
- 5b. Besard 1603, f. 32v *Fantasia Alf: Ferrab* [6-c] [N-L4]
6. GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 39v-40r *fantasia of Alfonso* [6-c bandora - transcribed for lute]  
GB-Cu Dd.2.11, ff. 27v-28r untitled [7-c bandora] [N-B1; C15]
7. GB-Cu Dd.2.11, ff. 18v-19r *fantazia Alfonso ferabosc* [6-c] [N-L1; C1]
- 8a. GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 43v-44r *a fantasia of mr. Alfonso* [7-c bandora - transcribed for lute] [N-B4; C17]
- 8b. GB-Cu Dd.2.11, f. 85v *Ban: / Fantazia* [7-c bandora, major second higher - transcribed for lute]
9. GB-Omc 265, f. 62r *Alphonso Fantas* [6-c]
10. GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 42v-43r *fantasia of maister Alfonso* [7-c bandora - transcribed for lute] [N-B3; C16]

The employment of Italian musicians in England began in the 1540s, when Henry VIII recruited wind and string groups from Venice, including members of the Bassano and Lupo families.<sup>3</sup> But none had more influence on English lute and other music<sup>4</sup> than Alfonso Ferrabosco, the eldest son of the composer Domenico Maria Ferrabosco (1513-1574) in

Bologna.<sup>5</sup> Alfonso the Elder was in England by 1562, and although not recorded as a court lutenist, was employed as a Gentleman of Elizabeth I's Privy Chamber until 1578, also travelling intermittently to the continent, and returning to Italy in 1578 for the rest of his life. His son, Alfonso Ferrabosco the Younger (1575-1628), became an influential composer of mask and viol consort music during the reign of James I.<sup>6</sup>

Versions not used in previous editions of Alfonso's music have been edited here, and the surviving bandora fantasias (one ascribed to Richard Allison in one source) have been transcribed for renaissance lute.<sup>7</sup> Only one item (n° 2) is known from his consort music, suggesting these solos were composed for the lute or bandora, and then only one survives in both lute and bandora versions (no 1a & b), the remainder set for one instrument or the other. His fantasias are intabulated across the entire tessitura of the instruments, some of those for lute predominantly in a lower register (n° 4 and 5a & b) exploiting the sonority of the lower courses, whilst others, notably the bandora solos, are set in a high register reaching the 12th fret and above on the first string (n° 10, and 6 - the latter transposed down a minor third here to avoid use of a 14th fret). N° 1, 5 and 8 survive in different keys, both versions included here. It is possible that the versions in higher keys were either originals or transcriptions for bandora and those in lower keys for lute, leaving one wondering which instrument each was composed for and which is the transcription? The versions of n° 1 in foreign prints of Mertel and Mylius are closely concordant with the English sources, and the multiple versions of n° 4 are closely concordant, as are those of n° 3, although the later printed version adds a 7th course and has some significant variants largely simplifying the fingering. The quite different versions of n° 3 and 5 in Besard *Thesaurus Harmonicus* of 1603 are the only other Alfonso fantasias known from continental sources. Additions to previous editions are the incomplete fantasia [n° 9] with one or more bars missing at the right hand end of each stave indicated as |:| and at the end, but not reconstructed here,<sup>8</sup> and a lute solo which John Ward thought 'Resembles Ferrabosco's fantasia *Vt re mi fa sol*' [see n° 2] - although the similarity seems obscure.<sup>9</sup>

John H. Robinson - Newcastle University March 2009

<sup>1</sup> AllisonR – *The Solo Lute Music of Richard Allison with Bandora and Cittern Arrangements* (The Lute Society, 1995); N-L for lute and N-B for bandora numbering from Nigel North, *Alfonso Ferrabosco of Bologna. Collected Works for Lute and Bandora* (Oxford: OUP, 1974); C numbering from Richard Charteris, *Alfonso Ferrabosco the Elder: Collected Works IX: Instrumental Music*, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 96 (American Institute of Musicology, Hänssler-Verlag, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> Fragments of bars 11, 19, 30, 40, 48, 57 or 58, 61 and 70 at the left hand end of staves on the stub of a torn out page of the Trumbull lute book were identified as belonging to this Ferrabosco fantasia by Jan Burgers in 2001.

<sup>3</sup> See the tablature supplements to *Lute News* 50 (June 1999) 'Lute solos by Italian musicians at the English Court: Augustine Bassano, Lodwick, Ambrose, Anthony, Mark Anthony, Petro and Renaldo Paradiso'; and to *Lute News* 60 (December 2001) 'Music ascribed to A. F. in Basel F.IX.70'.

<sup>4</sup> A few compositions by Alfonso for viol consort and solo keyboard survive in manuscripts, listed in Marco Mangani, 'Ferrabosco, Ferrabosco / 2. Alfonso (I oder d.Ä.)' *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart - Personenteil* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2001) 6: 1006-1014. He also composed over a hundred motets, lamentations, anthems, madrigals and chansons mostly published in Antwerp and Germany after 1583. All his music is listed in Richard

Charteris *Alfonso Ferrabosco the Elder: Collected Works I-IX*, see footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> His book of madrigals was published by Gardano in Venice in 1542, the best known of which is *Io mi son giovinetta*, see intabulations in the lute books of Galilei 1563, 1568 & 1584, Melchior Neusidler 1566, Phalèse & Bellère 1571, Jobin 1572, Fallamero 1584 and Adriaensen 1584.

Domenico's second cousins were also composers, Matthia Ferrabosco (1550-1616), eight madrigals intabulated for lute in Denss *Florilegium* 1594, and Constantino Ferrabosco (b1550), three madrigals intabulated for lute in Rude *Flores Musicae* books I/II 1600.

<sup>6</sup> 'Ferrabosco, Alphonso [II]' in Andrew Ashbee and David Lasocki, *Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians* (Aldershot: Asghate, 1998), pp. 407-9; John V. Cockshoot 'Ferrabosco' *New Grove II* 8: 691-705.

<sup>7</sup> The fantasia in GB-Lbl Hirsch 1353, ff. 68v-69r untitled is based on Ferrabosco's GB-Och 78-82, f. 15v *Quam magnificata sunt* from *Benedict anima mea*.

<sup>8</sup> Julia Craig-McFeely 'Fragments of English Lute Music II: Oxford Libraries' *The Lute* 33: 34-54 (1993).

<sup>9</sup> John M. Ward, *Music for Elizabethan Lutes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 64.

## 1a. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

GB-Cu Dd.5.78.3, ff. 58v-59r

1

7

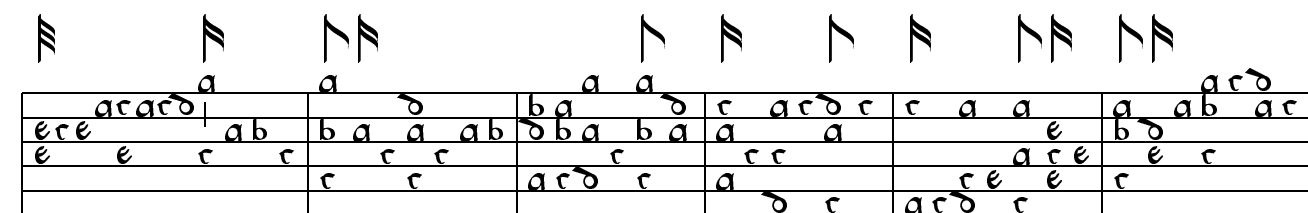
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32



37

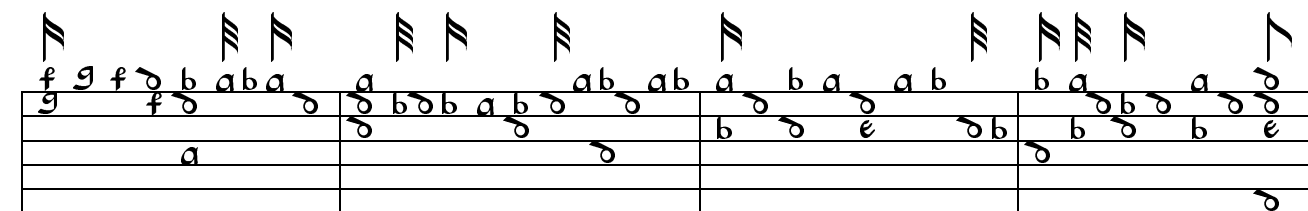


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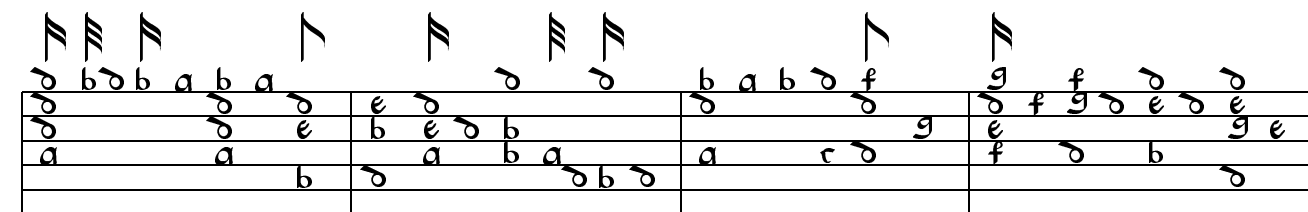
1b. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco - transcribed from bandora GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 40v-41r



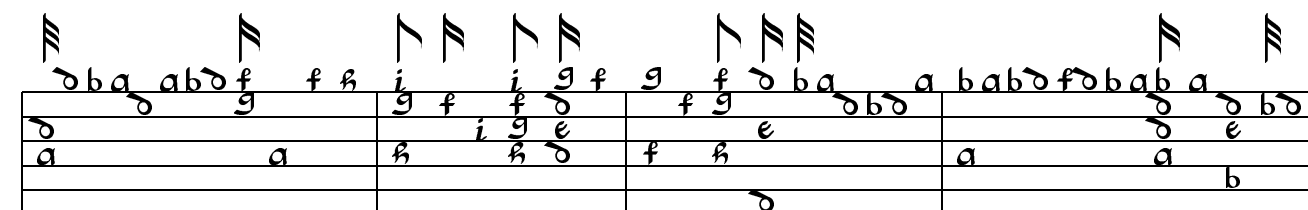
1



6



10



14

15 16 17

18

18 19 20 21

22

22 23 24 25

27

27 28 29 30

31

31 32 33 34

35

35 36 37 38

39

39 40 41 42 43

44

## 2. Ut Re Mi Fa Sol Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

GB-Lbl Hirsch M.1353, f. 64v

Measures 1-7 of the piece. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: 1. C4, 2. D4, 3. E4, 4. F4, 5. G4, 6. A4, 7. B4. The notes are written in a stylized, handwritten style.

1

Measures 8-13 of the piece. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: 8. C4, 9. D4, 10. E4, 11. F4, 12. G4, 13. A4. The notes are written in a stylized, handwritten style.

8

Measures 14-19 of the piece. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: 14. B4, 15. A4, 16. G4, 17. F4, 18. E4, 19. D4. The notes are written in a stylized, handwritten style.

14

Measures 20-25 of the piece. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: 20. C4, 21. D4, 22. E4, 23. F4, 24. G4, 25. A4. The notes are written in a stylized, handwritten style.

20

Measures 26-31 of the piece. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: 26. B4, 27. A4, 28. G4, 29. F4, 30. E4, 31. D4. The notes are written in a stylized, handwritten style.

Measures 32-37 of the piece. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: 32. C4, 33. D4, 34. E4, 35. F4, 36. G4, 37. A4. The notes are written in a stylized, handwritten style.

29

### 3a. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

GB-Cfm Mus.689, f. 44v

[illegible]

1

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" in G major, 2/4 time. The score is written for voice and piano. The piano part includes a prelude with a treble and bass staff. The vocal part is a single line. The score is divided into measures by bar lines. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 2/4. The score includes a prelude and a main melody. The prelude starts with a treble staff and a bass staff. The main melody is written on a single staff. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. The tempo is marked "Allegretto". The score is for "The Rose Tree".

7

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". It is written in G major (one sharp, F#) and 3/4 time. The score is for voice and piano. The piano part includes a prelude with a treble and bass staff. The vocal part is a single line. The score is divided into measures by bar lines. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The score includes a prelude, a vocal melody, and a piano accompaniment.

12

[illegible]

17

[illegible]

21

28

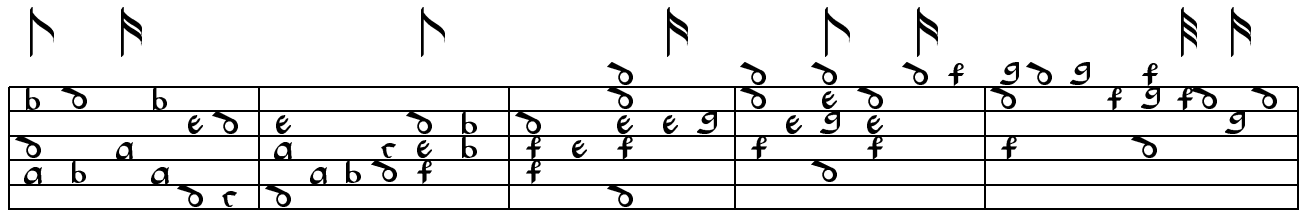


## 3b. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

Dowland 1610, sigs. G1r-G1v



1



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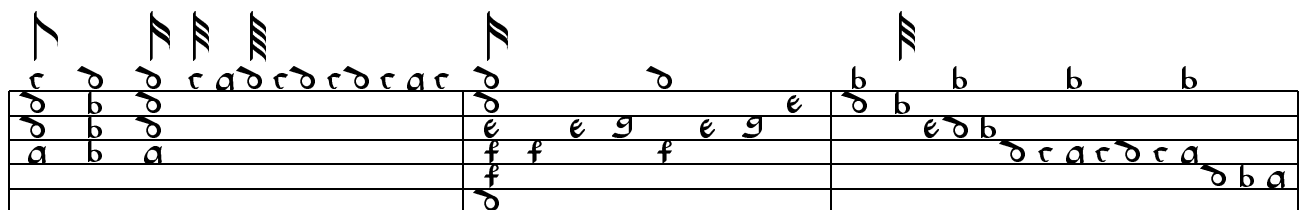
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a

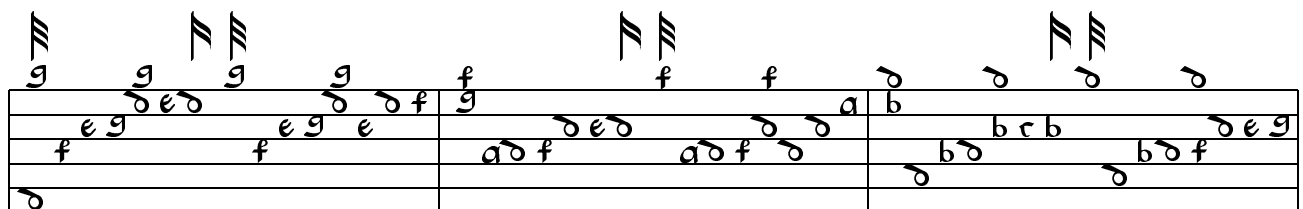


18

a



22



25



28



[illegible]

31

34

36

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. The score is written on a grand staff with five systems. The first system includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody is written on the top staff, and the accompaniment is written on the bottom staff. The lyrics are written below the bottom staff. The score is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure contains the lyrics 'The rose tree', the second 'grew so tall', the third 'that the birds', and the fourth 'could sing in it'. The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in a four-staff format. The first staff contains the melody, which begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style, featuring a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff contains the lyrics, which are written in a simple, sans-serif font. The third and fourth staves contain the accompaniment, which is written in a simple, folk-like style, featuring a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is divided into two systems, with a double bar line separating the two. The first system contains the first two staves, and the second system contains the last two staves. The score is written in a simple, folk-like style, with a key signature of one flat and a time signature of 4/4.

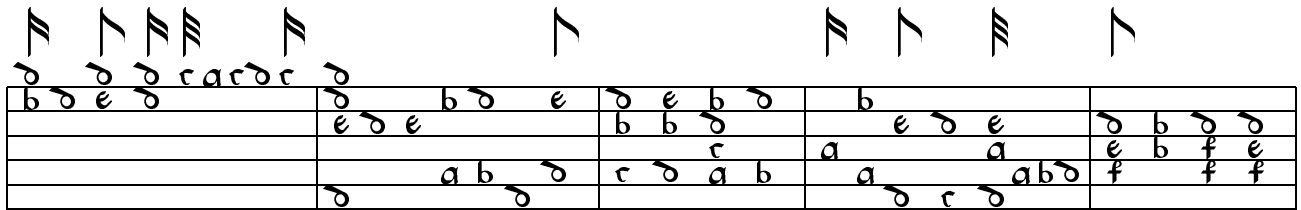
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## 3c. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

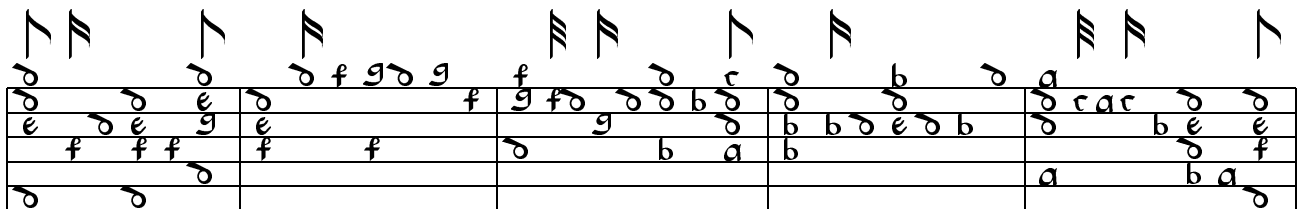
Besard 1603, f. 32r



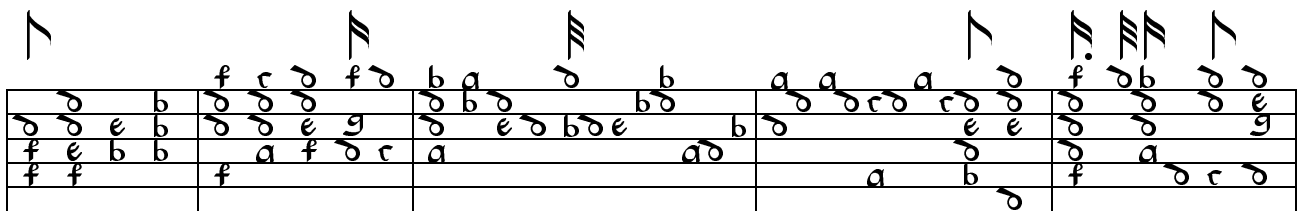
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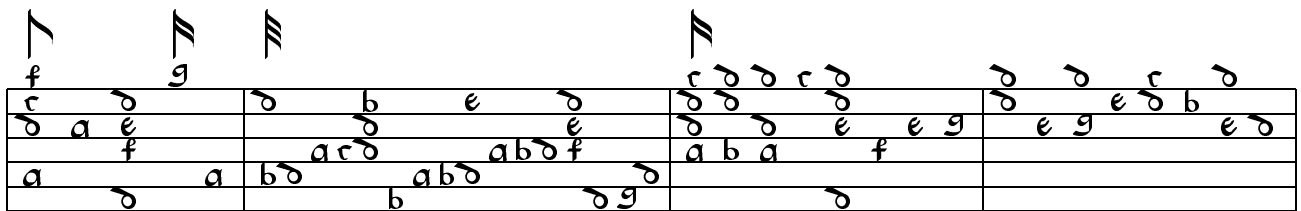
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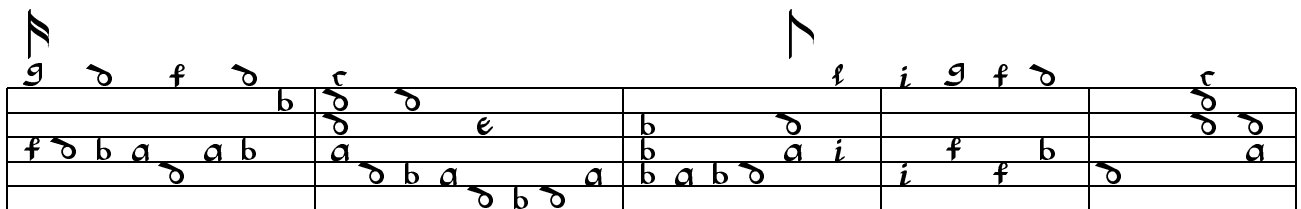
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16



21



25



30

## 4. Fantasia Alphonso Ferrabosco

GB-WPforester welde, ff. 12v-13r

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55

59

64

68

Appendix. Untitled

GB-Eu Dc.5.125, f. 86r

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17

23

29

5a. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

GB-Lbl Hirsch M 1353, f. 14r

The first system of the musical score for 'The Rose Tree' consists of five measures. The first measure contains a treble clef, a common time signature 'C', and two eighth notes: 'c' and 'c'. The second measure contains a half note 'a', a half note 'a', and a bar line. The third measure contains a half note 'a', a half note 'a', a half note 'b', and a half note 'c'. The fourth measure contains a half note 'a', a half note 'b', a half note 'a', and a half note 'c'. The fifth measure contains a half note 'a', a half note 'b', a half note 'a', and a half note 'c'. The notes are written on a five-line staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature.

1

	a b d		f f		e f	d f	b a b d		f f f d f e
c			e f					c c	f f e r e e
	c				a	c	e	c	a c
					a	r d a d		c	a r

6

12

[illegible]

18

[illegible]

24

$\text{f f}$	$\text{f f f}$	$\text{f}$	$\text{f}$
a	a	d r d f	r r d r
a	a	f f f	a a a
			b d abd e re a
r	e		a e a a a a
d r a d r d	a r		b a f r r
		b r a c e	d r r
		d a c e	a d r
			r r a a
			a a

29

## 5b. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

Besard 1603, f. 32v

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16

21

26

## 6. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco - transcribed from bandora GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 39v-40r

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56

64

70

75

## 7. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco

GB-Cu Dd.2.11, ff. 18v-19r


1


[illegible]

6

[illegible]

11





b d d b a b a	a a b	b d a b d d c a	f e r f e f e f e r e
r r r a	r r r b r r a	r a c   r   r	e
d a d r	f d r a r d a	r d a	r

15

[illegible]

f	e	r	f	e	f	e	r	e	a	a	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	a	a	r	c	a	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	b	a	f	e	r	f	e	f	e	r	e
f									a	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	a	r	c	a	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	b	a	f	e	r	f	e	f	e	r	e
e																		a	a	r	c	a	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	b	a									
r									r																								e								
																																	r								

24

a	a b d	b	a	a a a	b	b	a	a	a a c	d	a r d	c	c
c	a r e	e	b	c r b c r c	a	r d a d	a	c r e	e	f	a	b	c
c	e				a	r d a d	a	c r e	e	f	a	b	c

28

[illegible]

33

38

46

50

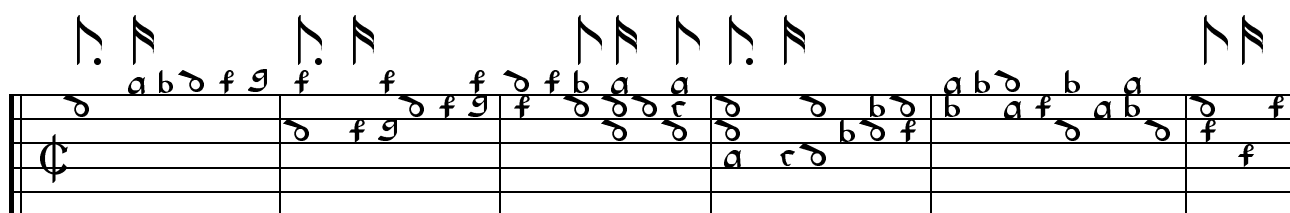
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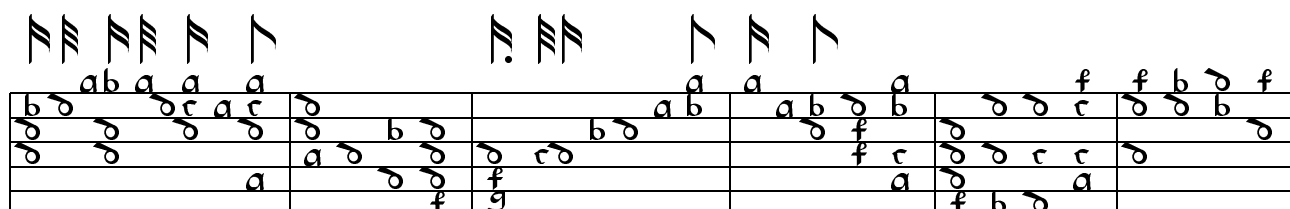
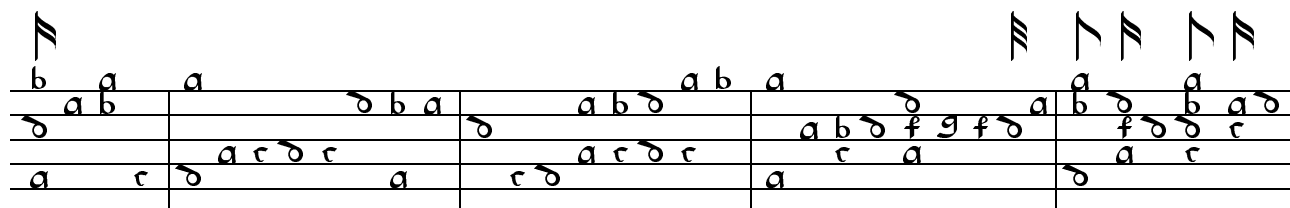
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63

## 8a. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco - transcribed from bandora GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 43v-44r



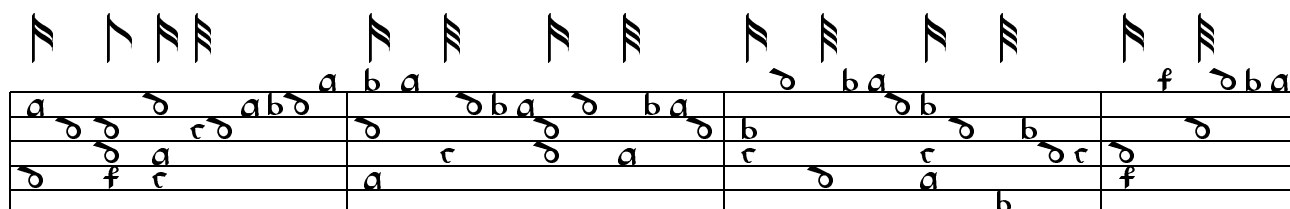
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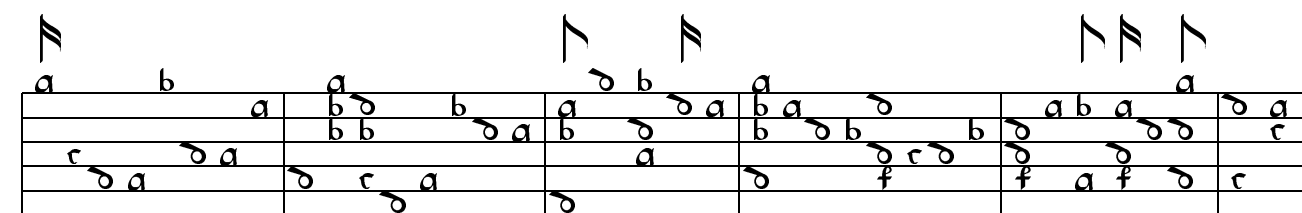


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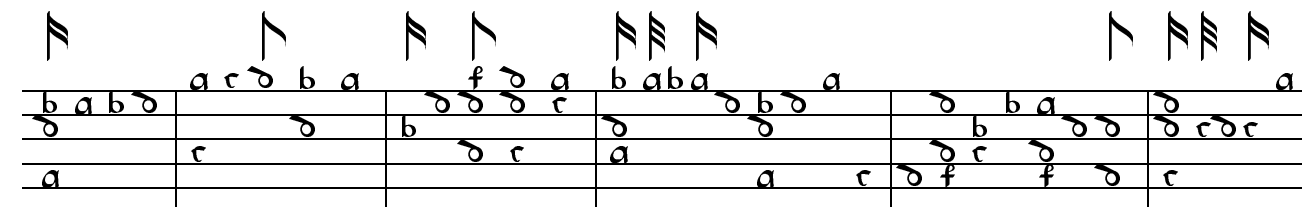


27





34



49

a a a a

8b. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco - transcribed from bandora

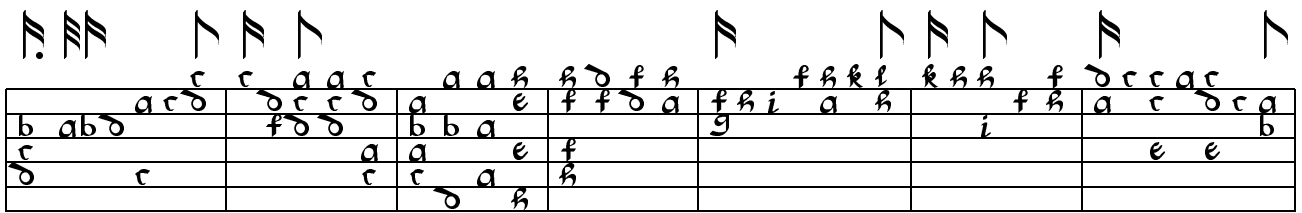
GB-Cu Dd.2.11, f. 85v



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7



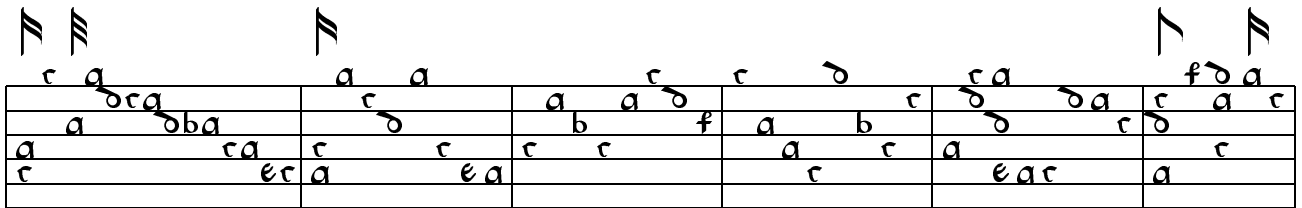
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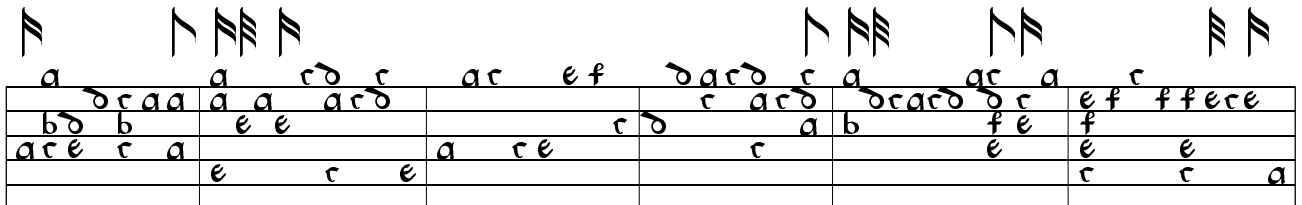
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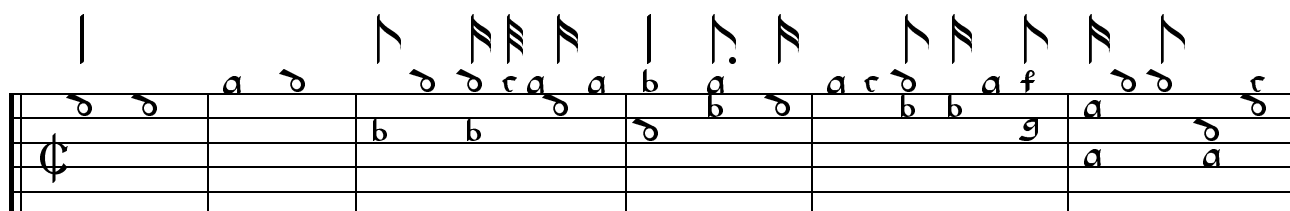
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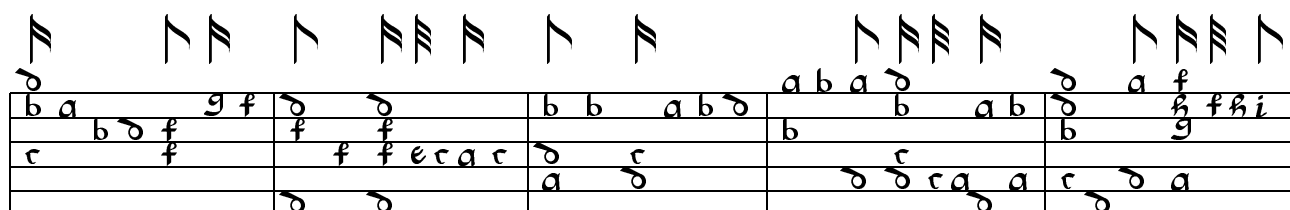
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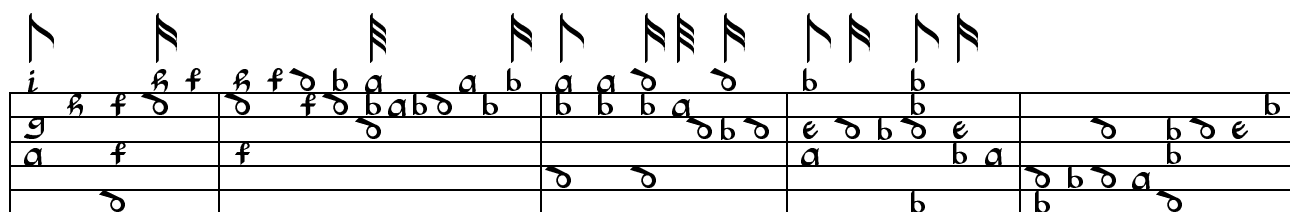
## 10. Fantasia Alfonso Ferrabosco - transcribed from bandora GB-Lbl Add.31392, ff. 42v-43r



1



7



12



17



22



27



[illegible]

32

38

[illegible]

44

B f d i B	B f f B	B a c	D b a	A G F	D C B
i f g	i g i		a b	b d	d f
f B	k g i	f c	e	c a	f c
				a	d a

51

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written on three systems of a five-line staff. The notation is in a simplified, handwritten style, likely for a children's songbook or a personal collection. The notes are written on the staff lines, and there are various musical symbols above and below the notes, including a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The first system contains the first line of the melody, the second system contains the second line, and the third system contains the third line. The notes are written in a way that suggests a simple, catchy melody. The overall style is that of a handwritten musical manuscript.

58