## Timmy Barnett

# ODE TO CREATIVE COMMONS A PROTECTOR OF FREE INFORMATION

for 7-string Kite guitar 8'

Tucson, Arizona

## **EDITION ZALZAL**

series editor - Robert Lopez-Hanshaw

2021 - Z0019

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Edition Zalzal is published by UnTwelve, Tucson, Arizona.
Dation Zulzu is published by Christie, rueson, ruizona.

2021 Timmy Barnett; Stephen Weigel, Robert Lopez-Hanshaw, eds.

Editing and engraving: Stephen Weigel

Additional editing and engraving: Robert Lopez-Hanshaw

ISBN: 978-1-956927-18-4

### Ode to Creative Commons Timmy Barnett

#### Preface

The composer was inspired by exploring chord possibilities on the Kite guitar. Open strings are used extensively. This piece uses major, minor, augmented, and diminished triads, major and minor 7 and 9 chords, dominant 7, 9, 69, 7#11, and 9#11 chords, and fully diminished 7 chords. These chords are tuned with 7-limit Just Intonation ratios. The ratios for these chords are as simple as possible. The major triad is 4:5:6, the minor triad is 10:12:15, and the dominant 7 is 4:5:6:7. The more complex Pythagorean 3rds and 6ths are avoided. There are a few sections of natural harmonics. Square waves are approximated by plucking in the middle of the string where the octave harmonic lies.

This piece has been scored for 6-, 7- and 8-string Kite guitar. It has been notated in both up/down and pure HEJI. These alternate scores can be found at https://timmybarnett.com/Ode\_to\_Creative\_Commons. Adaptations are encouraged. The composer has performed this piece many times with differences from this score. The performer should feel free to make adaptations for their instrument and to simplify or expand parts for their own playing style. Though metronome markings are provided, these are only suggestions. The piece may be transposed. Distortion may also be used at any point. The performer is free to publish alternate versions of this piece under CC-BY-SA.

The composer believes musicians, artists, and researchers should have more control over the content they create. But they are too often forced to give away their rights to their works. In extreme cases such as John Fogerty's self-plagiarism suit, a composer may not even feel free to continue composing. If given a choice, not all content creators would agree that their works should be as restricted as the publishing and recording industries desire in order to maximize profits. Much of the composer's knowledge of the world comes from countless hours spent on Wikipedia. Creative Commons licenses such as CC-BY-SA allow sites like Wikipedia to exist. This starkly contrasts with JSTOR, a database that can't be freely shared with others. Creative Commons puts freedom in the hands of the composer, performer, and audience, and seeks to restrict only restrictions themselves.

This piece is dedicated to Aaron Swartz, and his dream of Open Access.

"Information is power. But like all power, there are those who want to keep it for themselves. The world's entire scientific and cultural heritage, published over centuries in books and journals, is increasingly being digitized and locked up by a handful of private corporations."

— Aaron Swartz, Guerrilla Open Access Manifesto (2008)

#### BIOGRAPHY

Timmy Barnett is a musician, teacher, and FLO (Free/Libre/Open) software/hardware developer. He studied violin with Anna Vayman at Ball State University, where he received his BM and MM. He has played violin and viola for many orchestras including the Danville Symphony Orchestra, Muncie Symphony Orchestra, Kokomo Symphony Orchestra, and has served as concertmaster for the Hendricks Symphony Orchestra and Fishers Chamber Orchestra. He performs on many instruments and in many genres. He teaches and performs on string instruments bowed and plucked, fretted and unfretted, as well as piano and organ. His fascination with composition and improvisation has led him to baroque figured bass realization, jazz, Irish (Indianapolis Ceili Band), and rock (!mindparade).

Timmy has always been curious about non-Western tunings. Stephen Weigel introduced him to microtonality while they were both students at Ball State University. Soon after moving to Portland, OR, he met Kite Giedraitis who introduced him to the Kite guitar. He has been playing Kite guitar and helping promote it since late 2019. This instrument has lead him to play 41-edo and 19-limit Just Intonation on violin.

Timmy's projects can be found on his website https://timmybarnett.com.

—Т. В.

#### THE KITE GUITAR

The Kite guitar, named for its inventor Kite Giedraitis (https://tallkite.com), is a new solution to a problem that musicians and instrument builders have grappled with for centuries: How do you balance accurate tuning, ergonomic playing, and the ability to modulate between keys?

If all harmonic intervals are tuned to pure Just Intonation, the instrument must favor a single key (or only a few), or else the number of pitches rapidly proliferates. If there is a large number of pitches, physical navigation of the instrument becomes more difficult. And if absolute freedom of modulation is desired, an equal division of the octave (edo) must be used—yet the most accurate edos are quite large, with many pitches, and the smaller and more ergonomic edos are much less accurate.

The Kite guitar solves this conundrum by using 41-edo, a large and accurate edo, combined with the idea of "skip-fretting" as developed by Matthew Autry. In this scheme, only every *other* fret is used, so adjacent frets are *two* steps of 41-edo apart. This makes the fretboard much more playable than a full 41-edo board, because the fret spacing is not as narrow. Only half of the intervals of 41-edo are available on a single string; however, the strings are tuned an odd number of edo-steps apart, and thus all pitches are available on each *pair* of strings. In addition, because the strings are all tuned the same interval apart, interval shapes and chord shapes are consistent everywhere on the fingerboard: the system is "isomorphic," unlike a standard guitar.

The following diagram graphically demonstrates the utility of the Kite system. In this diagram, the strings are tuned 13 steps of 41-edo (13\41) apart, representing a "downmajor" third in Kite parlance, very close to the Just Intonation ratio 5/4 (386c). This is the most common tuning for Kite guitar, though others are possible. With this tuning, 25 different intervals, all commonly of interest to microtonal musicians, are available across 4 strings and a compass of 8 frets, equivalent to roughly 4-5 frets on a standard guitar. Thus, they all lie easily under the hand without shifting position.

← towards the nut					towards the bridge $\rightarrow$		
vm7	^m7	vM7	^M7	P8			
966¢	1024¢	1083¢	1141¢	(1200¢			
7/4	9/5	15/8	27/14	2/1			
d5	~5	<b>P5</b> \	vm6	^m6	vM6	^M6	m7
585¢	644¢	(702¢	761¢	820¢	878¢	937¢	995¢
7/5	16/11	3/2	14/9	8/5	5/3	12/7	16/9
M2	vm3	^m3	vM3	^M3	P4\	~4	A4
205¢	263¢	322¢	380¢	439¢	498¢	556¢	615¢
9/8	7/6	6/5	5/4	9/7	4/3	11/8	10/7
			P1\	vm2	^m2	vM2	^M2
			0¢	59¢	117¢	176¢	234¢
			1/1	28/27	16/15	10/9	8/7
-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4

Further resources are available at https://kiteguitar.com.

#### Notation

#### 41-EDO ACCIDENTALS



pitches and equivalent spellings in a whole step

pitches and equivalent spellings in a half step

Note that all pitch information necessary for performance is contained in the tablature—the staff notation is primarily for understanding what sounds to expect.

This piece is in 41-edo. In this edo, the perfect 5th is close to harmonically pure, only very slightly sharp. Translated into notation, this means that all *standard* accidentals represent pitches derived from a spiral of these near-pure 5ths. Pitches in the direction of rising 5ths (C-G-D-A-E...) become increasingly sharper than their 12-edo equivalents, while pitches in the descending direction (C-F-Bb-Eb...) become increasingly flatter. As shown in the diagram above, the result is that flats are lower in pitch than their usual enharmonic sharps.

An alteration by one step of 41-edo (half of the interval between adjacent frets) is typically notated by an arrow attached to a standard accidental. Two steps (a full fret) are typically notated by a quarter-tone accidental, as shown.

#### KEY SIGNATURES

Because this piece is very diatonic, key signatures are used. This gives the visual impression of consonance, more so than a proliferation of accidentals would.

Key signatures reflect a Just Intonation approach. In this piece, in major keys, the 3rd, 6th, and 7th are lowered by a single step of 41-edo (1\41). In minor keys, the 3rd, 6th, and 7th are *raised* by 1\41. These alterations are shown in the key signatures.

In addition, sometimes this raised minor 7th interval is lowered by 2\41 to approximate a natural 7th harmonic, and occasionally other overtly microtonal intervals appear; but these are always alterations, never a part of the key signature.

#### Nonstandard Conventions

Because open strings are used frequently, the open strings will often have up stems, as Bach would write for pieces such as the Prelude from the E major *Violin Partita*. The exceptions are longer passages that do not use open strings, as well as measures 118-172. In those cases, stem direction follows modern convention.

Because of the complexity and unfamiliarity of interpreting microtonal key signatures, the names of key signatures are also written in text form each time they appear.

#### **TABLATURE**

The tablature uses the fret numbers of the Kite system. String bending is shown on the tablature staff (measures 91-92). For ease of reading the numbers, all rhythmic, articulation and expressive information is shown on the standard notation staff.

#### Harmonic Notation

Natural harmonics are shown in staff notation by an open diamond notehead representing the location on the string that is touched. When this touch point differs from the sounding pitch, the sounding pitch is included above it as a parenthesized, stemless notehead.

Natural harmonics are shown in tablature by a diamond surrounding the fret number. Because several natural harmonics fall directly in between the frets, arrows are added to clarify the necessary position. An up-arrow denotes moving closer to the bridge.

Artificial harmonics are notated with a standard notehead at the *fretted* pitch, and a diamond notehead at the *touched* point.

For a comprehensive discussion of Edition Zalzal's approach to notation, please see <a href="https://untwelve.org/zalzal/notation">https://untwelve.org/zalzal/notation</a>.

## Fretboard and Tuning

#### **OPEN STRING TUNING**



This piece uses the most common Kite guitar tuning, "downmajor" thirds. This is shown above, and cent deviations from 12-edo are included in order to facilitate the use of an electronic tuner.

The open strings of a standard Kite guitar are tuned 1\41 (29c) flatter than the pitches given above. However, this creates much greater complexity in the key signatures. So, for this edition, the pitches on the staff are notated one step higher. The tablature is unaffected, and the piece can be played in standard Kite tuning as originally intended.



#### Fretboard

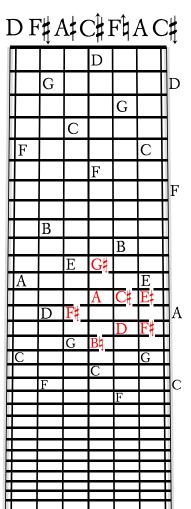
The fretboard according to this edition is shown below. (Note that on a guitar with standard Kite tuning, all pitches would be 1\41 lower than those pictured.) To the left of the fretboard, 12-edo is provided for visual reference. All of the "plain" diatonic notes are marked in black—note that each individual string contains only half of them in the first octave. Finally, one octave of a characteristic scale in this piece is shown in red (F \mu minor, with a raised 7th). Comparing this with the interval diagram on page 4 is highly recommended.

The Kite guitar community is very welcoming and supportive, and their website https://kiteguitar.com gives several ways to make or acquire a Kite-fretted guitar. In addition, https://untwelve.org/zalzal/microtonal\_guitar has more resources for microtonally altering guitars in general.



(clockwise from top: 8-string, 7-string and 6-string versions of Kite-fretted guitars.

—R. L. H.



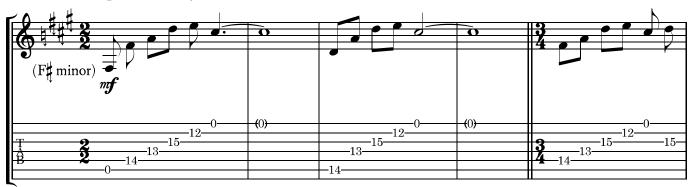


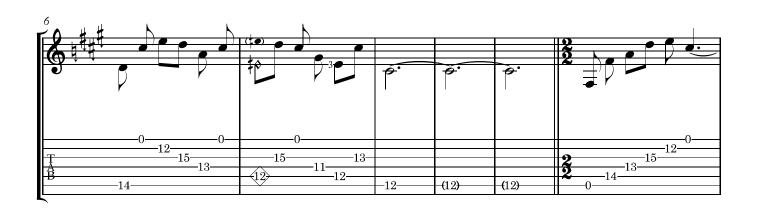
## Ode to Creative Commons

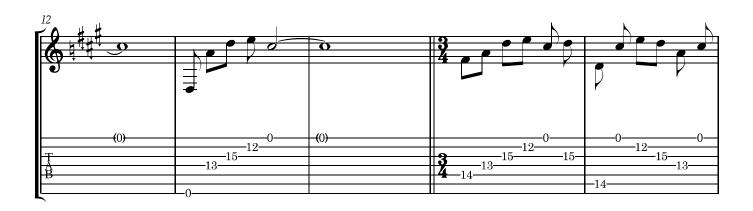
A Protector of Free Information

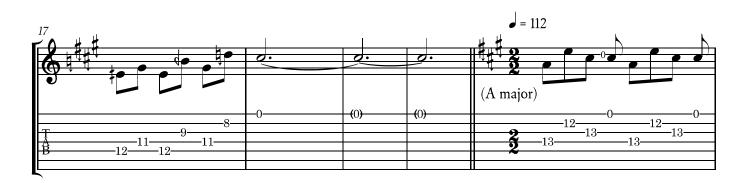
Timmy Barnett

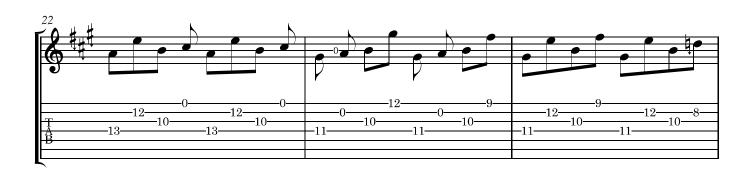
J = c. 104Tempos are freely flexible

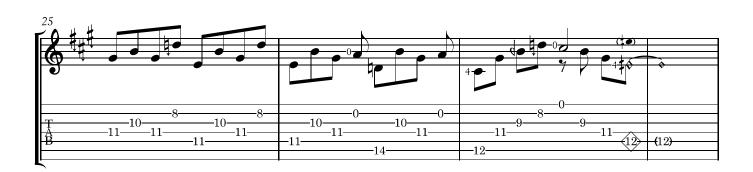


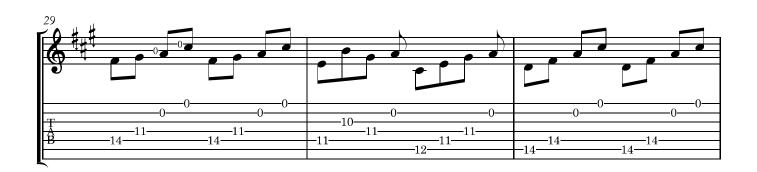


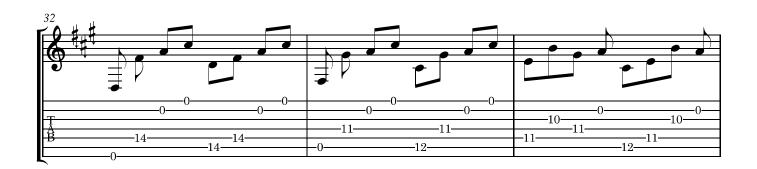


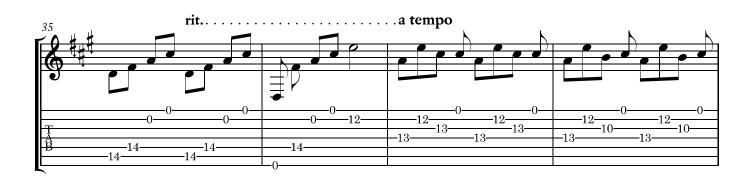


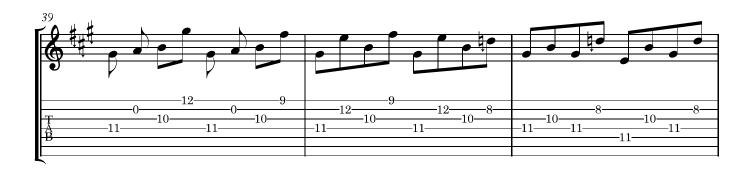


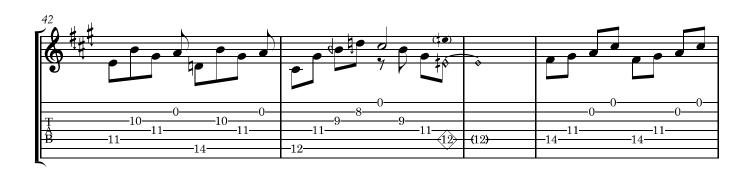


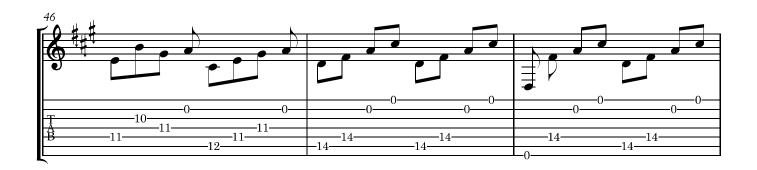


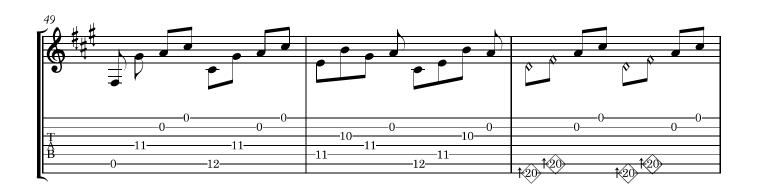


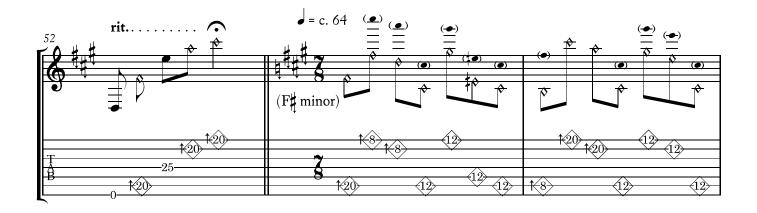


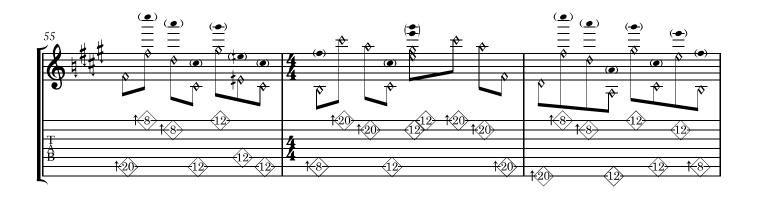


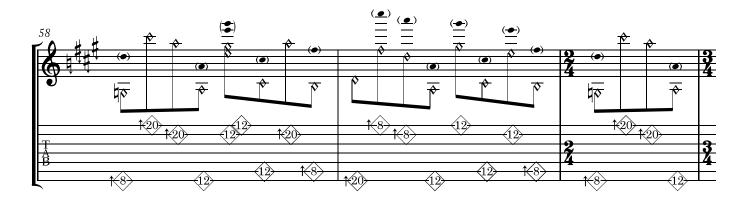


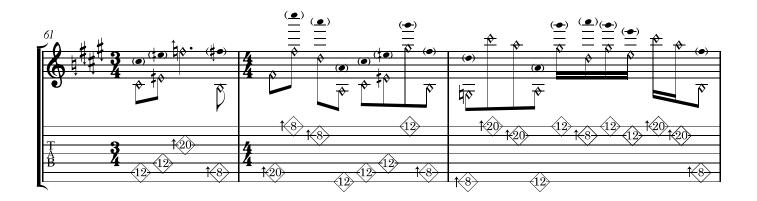


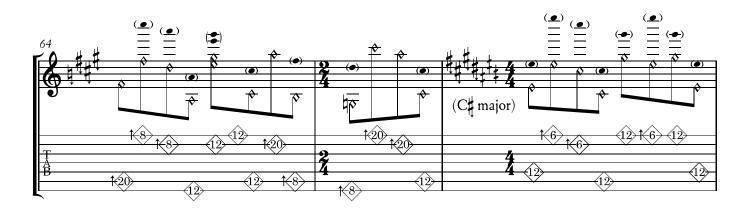


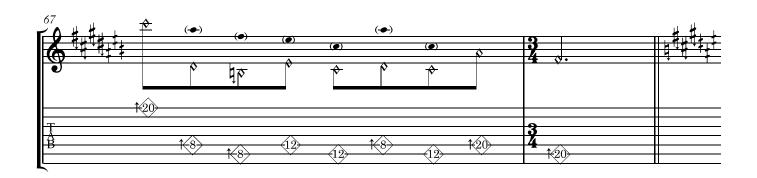




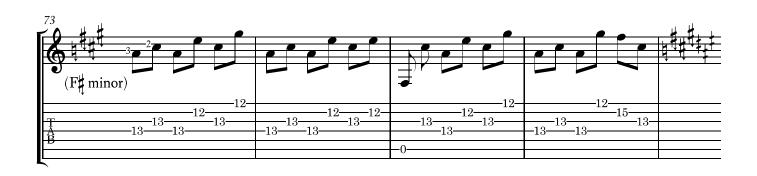


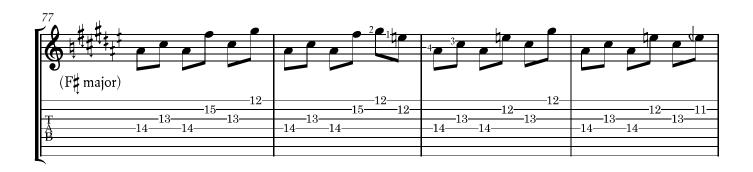


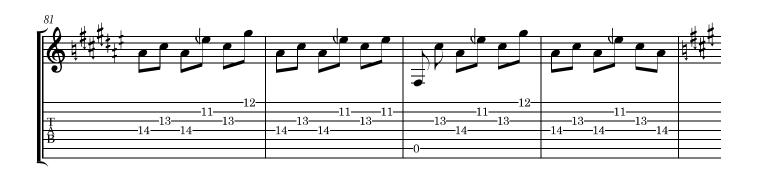


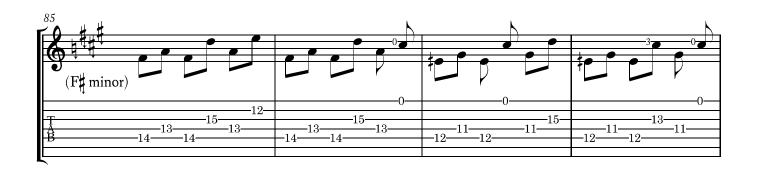


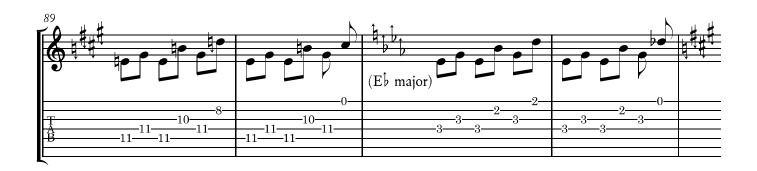


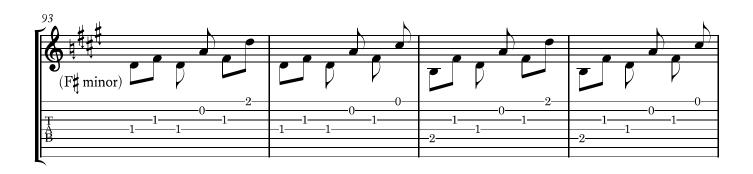


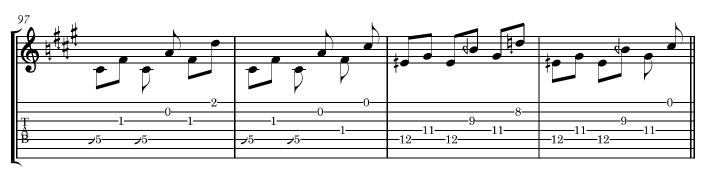




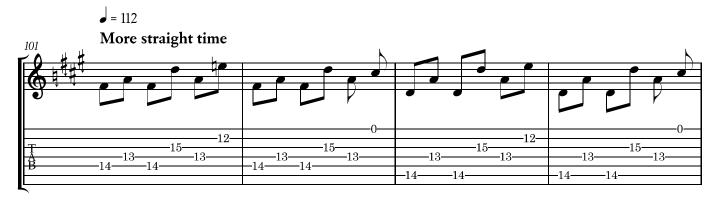


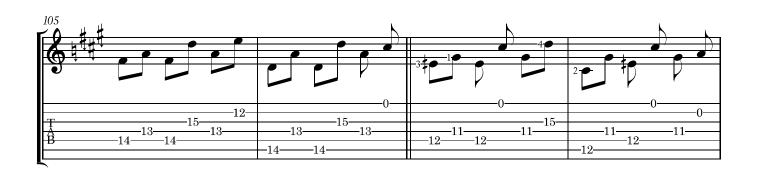


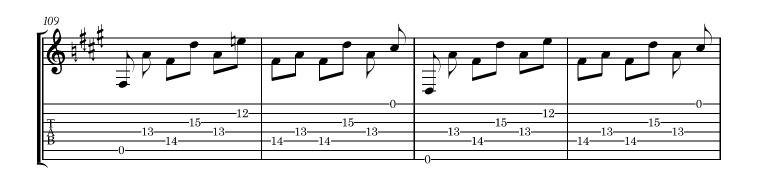


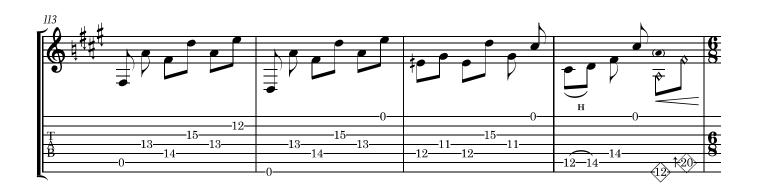


(bend fret 5 sharper by half of a fret, or about 29c, to achieve correct intonation)





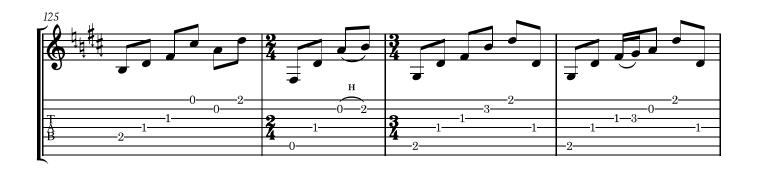






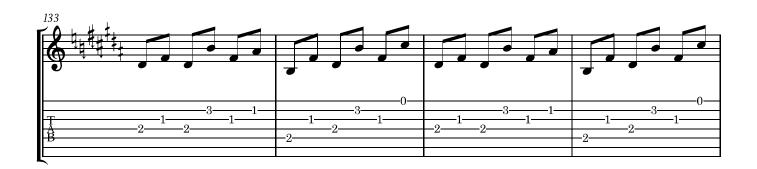


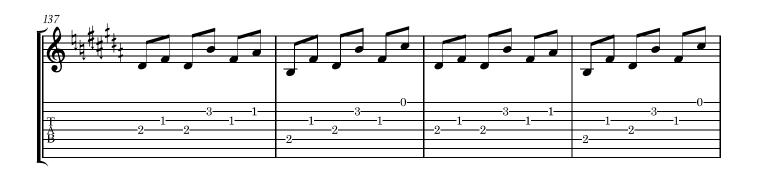


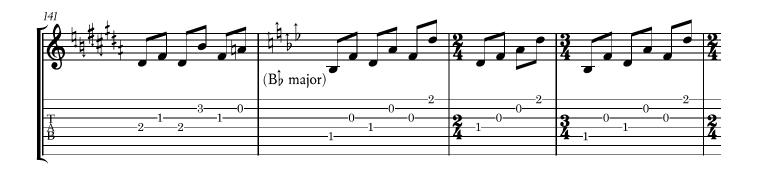




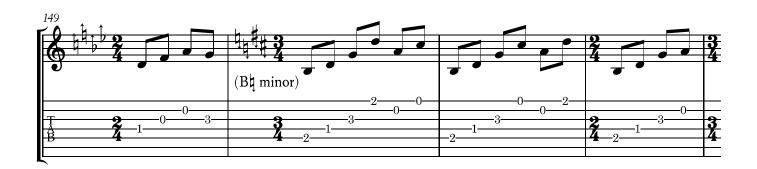
<sup>\*</sup> Stem direction follows standard conventions until measure 172.

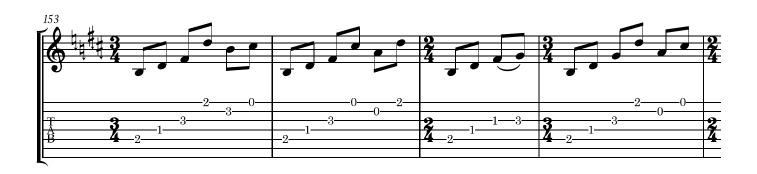




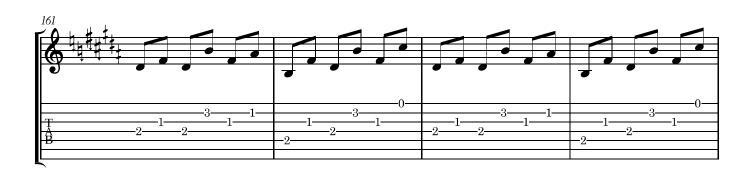


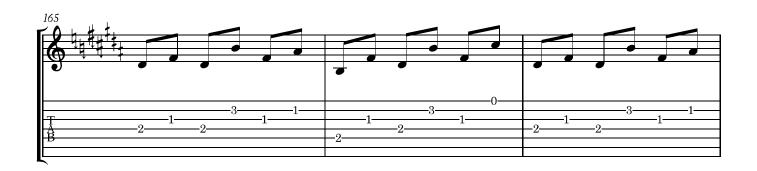




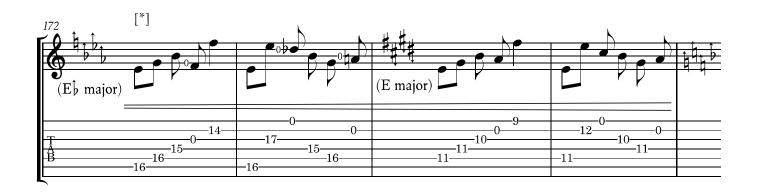


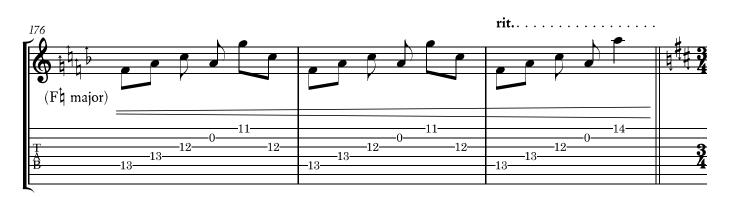




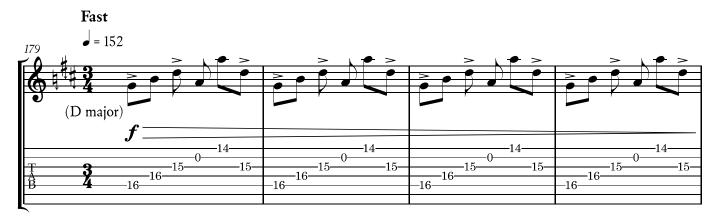


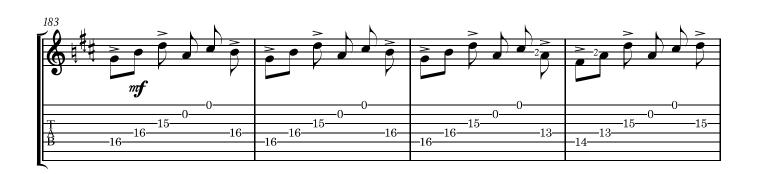


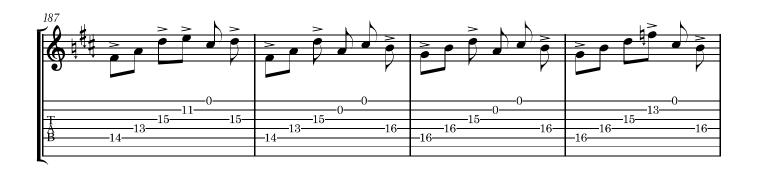


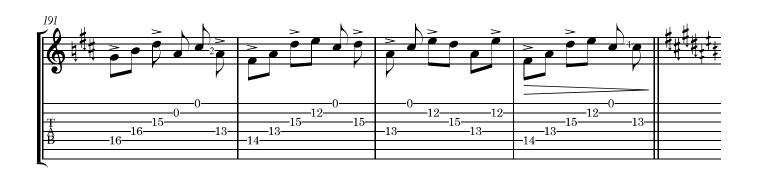


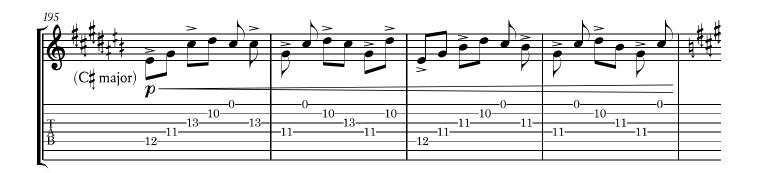
<sup>\*</sup> Stem direction reflects open strings versus fretted strings through end of piece.

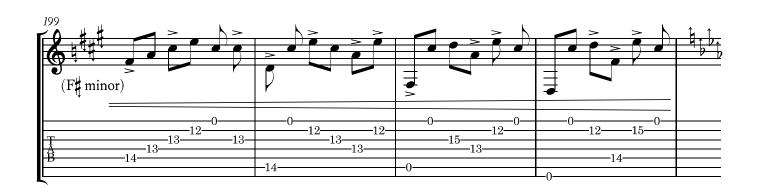


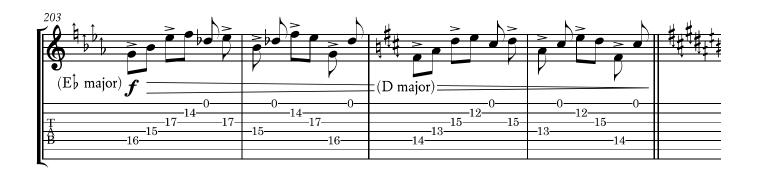


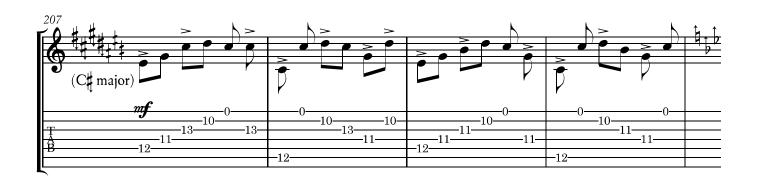


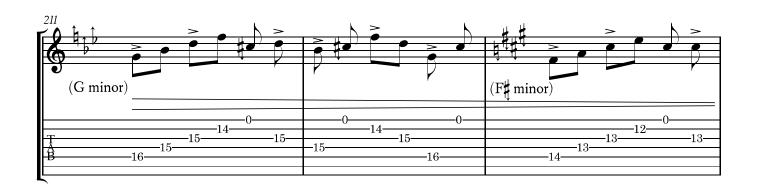




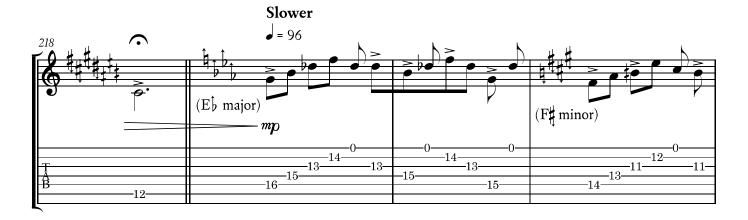


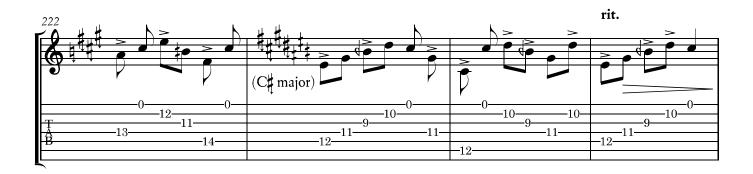


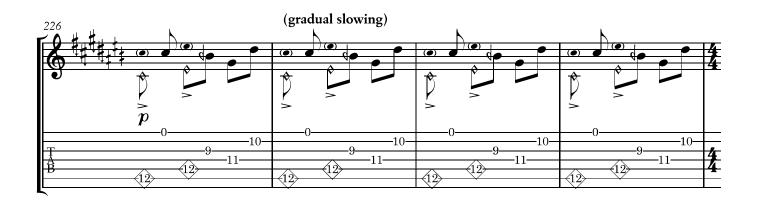


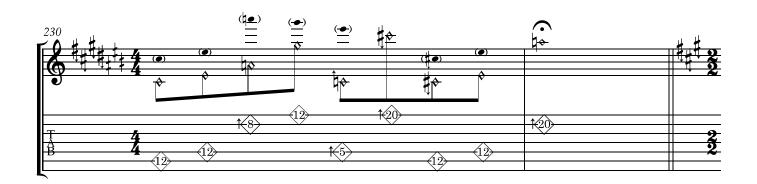


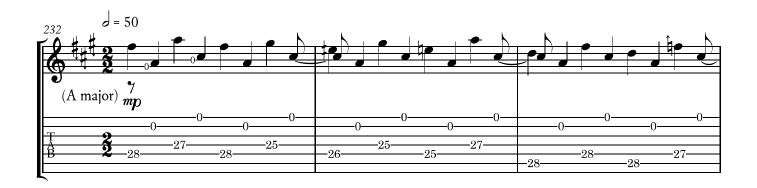


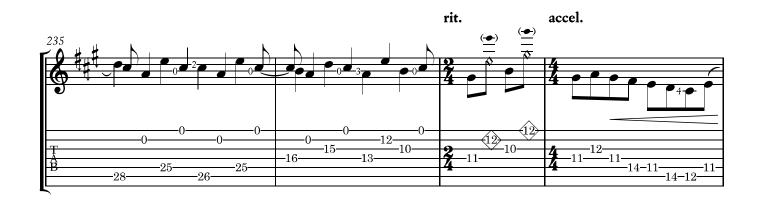


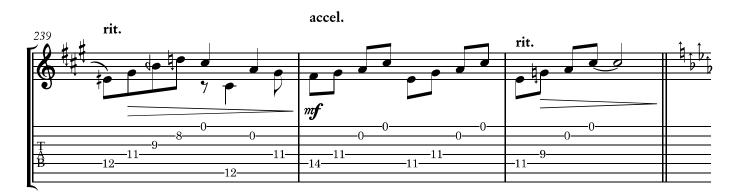


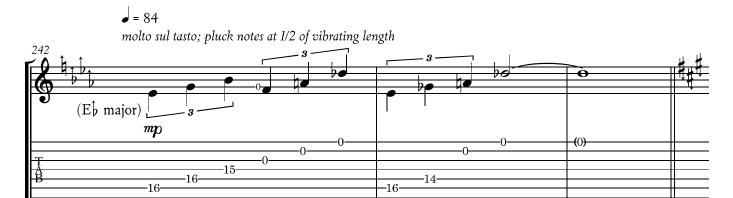


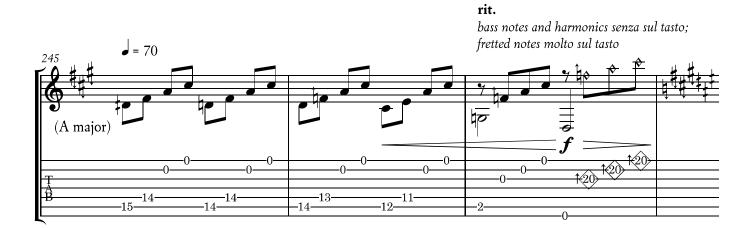


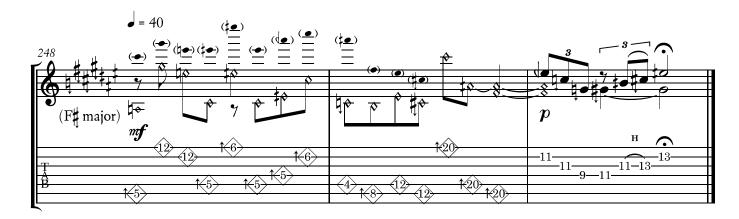












EDITION ZALZAL is named in honor of the medieval oud player Mansur Zalzal. His talents were legendary, and his contribution extends to music theory: The interval with a size between that of a minor and major third—an interval which we now consider "microtonal"—has long been known as the "third of Zalzal." This series aims to make microtonal guitar music available to the general public in clear, readable, and beautiful editions. We strive to bring to light important unpublished works of the past, as well as the vibrant and vital music of today. We celebrate the radical diversity and creativity of microtonal music. And—for maximum clarity—we use a single standard notation, adapted to the many idiosyncratic

tuning systems in our catalogue.