

Sylvius Leopold Weiss

# **Fantasia**

## **Three Giges**



This edition for guitar Rod Protheroe

# Fantasie and Giges by Silvius Leopold Weiss (1687 - 1750)

## Sources

Fantasie: London Manuscript page 134 (folio 67v-68r)

Sonata in D Major: Weiss Sämtliche Werke 2.7 (Dresden)

Suite in F Major: Weiss Sämtliche Werke 32.6 (Dresden and London)

Suite in A Minor: Weiss Sämtliche Werke 42.6 (Dresden)

## The London Manuscript

Has been held in the British Library since 1877 (*GB-Lbl Add. 30387 - "Dance and other music in lute notation, composed by Silvio Leopold Weis and Sigismund Weis"*). It contains 237 hand-written pieces in tablature for the lute, and is freely available in facsimile from the British Library website

Although called the London Manuscript it was actually compiled in Prague over the course of a few years, when Weiss visited the unknown editor and would add or edit pieces in his own hand. Cataloguing of works for Weiss is incomplete partly due to the uncertainty of the authenticity of many pieces (his brother Johann Sigismund's compositions are definitely in many of the collections), so I can only state the unofficial catalogue numbers (SW = "Sämtliche Werke", complete works)

## The Dresden Manuscript

About 21 suites, probably composed after 1725 are kept in the library in Dresden. The library acquired them in 1929 during the auction sale of Werner von Wolffheim's famous musical library. Several other pieces were dispersed throughout Europe after that auction.

The F Major Suite is written out in both the Dresden Manuscript and the London Manuscript. It is the last piece in that manuscript, on pages 157v-158r. Strangely it has an extra bar added at measure 74, which sort of fits, but looks like an error as the resultant phrase feels out of place.

## Favourite quote

At his 50th birthday party a guest asked "How long have you been playing the lute sir?" to which Sylvius replied "Twenty years". A friend interjected "But Sylvius, I remember you playing when we were boys, you have been playing for forty years!" "Ah yes...but twenty years were tuning!"



This portrait is from the "Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste" [New Library of Fine Sciences and the Free Arts], a monumental work of the enlightenment. The inscription reads

*Sylvius Leopold Weiss*

*Born in Breslau [Wroclaw] on October 12, 1686*

*Died in Dresden on October 18, 1750*

*None but Sylvius should play the lute!*

*v. König*

The last line is a reference to a poem by Johann Ulrich von König, known as "the Saxon Horace", who was employed at the Dresden court at about the same time (Royal Polish and Saxon Electoral Privy Secretary and Court Poet) as Weiss (Chamber lutenist). The poem was written in praise of their employer, Augustus the Strong

## Title page

Weiss had various posts until the age of 31 when he was appointed Chamber Lutenist at the court of Dresden. He settled here for the rest of his career, even turning down a lucrative offer of 2,000 thaler from the Imperial Court in Vienna (for comparison, when Goethe was a Counselor in Weimar in 1776 he was on 1,400 thaler)

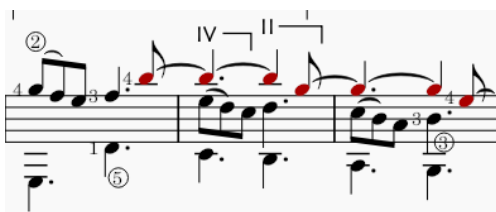
His employer, Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony, was a huge patron of the arts and sciences. The cover illustration is a room of glittering treasures in the Green Vault in Dresden, completed in 1728, which he helped design, and was the first museum in the world open to the public. It can still be seen to this day in the Zwinger, restored after the carpet bombing of 1945 and reopened in 2013.

## This arrangement

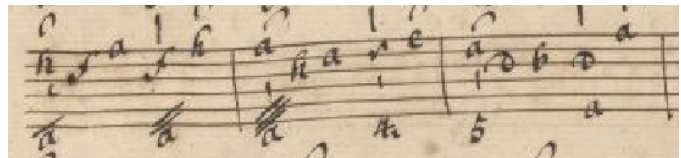
### Voices

Every time I play Weiss I hear new connections, new phrases and new ideas, so this edition might be considered a work in progress. As you play the pieces you will likely have the same experience, and perhaps disagree with my (current!) understanding of where the voices sit, how they should be played, ambiguities, resolutions, and so on. For a great discussion on this see “*Stream Segregation and Perceived Syncopation: Analyzing the Rhythmic Effects of Implied Polyphony in Bach’s Unaccompanied String Works*”, S Davis, University of Texas, 2011

Lute tablature does not have the concept of rests, and many versions of pieces transcribed into modern notation add them by default. So, for example, in bars 76-78 of SW 32.6 I have suggested the high B, G, E are a separate descending voice and should be held while the quaver figure plays as a second voice:

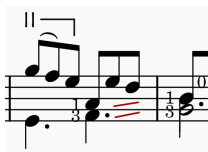


London manuscript



### Lines

Slurs are written as curved lines, guide fingers as straight lines. Bar 88 of SW 32.6 shows the 1st and 3rd LH fingers moving up the strings, but a glissando is not implied, lutes do not play glissandos! These are simply to aid with fingering



### Hammered slur

I indicate a cross-string slur, known in country music as a ‘hammer on’, with ‘H’



Enjoy!

Rod Protheroe 2023



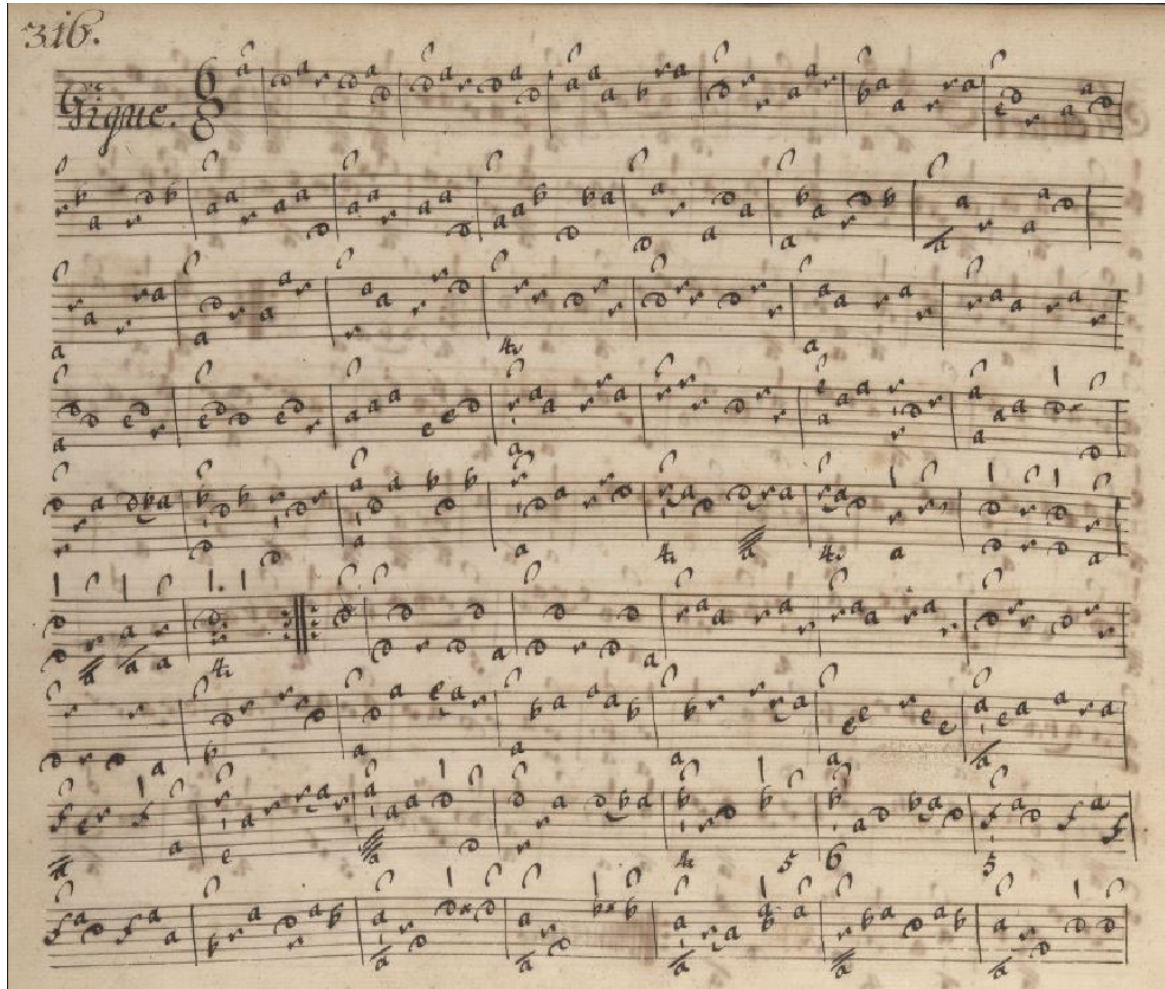
# The London Manuscript

British Library Ref: Add MS 30387

Date: 1717-1724

Title: Dance and other music in lute notation, composed by Silvio Leopold Weis and Sigismund Weis, of Prague, in 1717-1724

Pages 316 -317, Gigue from Suite in F Major, elsewhere catalogued as *Weiss Sämtliche Werke* 32.6



# Gigue from Sonata in D Major

Weiss Sämtliche Werke 2.7

London manuscript

This edition for guitar Rod Protheroe

Silvius Leopold Weiss

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Silvius Leopold Weiss  
Gigue from Sonata in D Major

33

39

45

51

57

63

69

75

81

Silvius Leopold Weiss  
Gigue from Sonata in D Major

# Suite No. One: Gigue

From the Dresden Manuscript Volume One

Original: F Major

This edition for guitar Rod Protheroe

Silvius Leopold Weiss

② ② ② ③

IV II

6 I II

12 I II IV V VI

17 II IV

23 II IV VI IV ①

29 II IV II

35 ② 1. 2.

38 ④ ④ ④ ⑤ ④ VII IV

44 IV II I

49

56

62

68

74

80

86

92

The London Manuscript has an extra bar at 74



# Gigue from Sonata in A Minor

Weiss Sämtliche Werke 42.6

Dresden manuscript

This edition for guitar Rod Protheroe

Silvius Leopold Weiss

1  
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19  
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24  
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28  
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31  
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36  
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44

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57

62

67

72

76

Silvius Leopold Weiss  
Gigue from Sonata in A Minor

# Fantasia

Original in C minor, 1719

Sylvius Leopold Weiss 1687 - 1750

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Fantasia" by Sylvius Leopold Weiss. The score is written in C minor and consists of eight staves of music. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 and 2-3. Dynamic markings like *p* and *p.* are present. The score is annotated with Roman numerals: II, 1/2 VIII, 1/2 III, 1/2 IV, 1/2 IX, VII, and IX. There are also circled numbers 2 and 3, and some circled numbers 4. The piece begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (C minor), and a common time signature. The first staff starts with a forte dynamic marking. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

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Chord symbols: V, IV, VII, VI, 1/2VII, 1/2V, 1/2XII

Dynamics: p, m

Fingering: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5