

## Drawing inspiration from Bach's lute tablatures

*(Originally, this was meant as a supplement to the CD booklet that would go a bit more into the technical details of the Bach lute tablatures; how they differ from the manuscripts in normal notation, which interpretative clues they contain, the interpretative choices those clues led me to on the CD, and how they informed my decisions when making my own tablatures of the Fugue and Double BWV 997, and of the Prelude BWV 999. It still is meant as a supplement (and not as an academic paper), but due to the rather large amount of time on my hands these weeks it is now in two parts. The second of these deals with the above, the first attempts to show the background for why I thought it more interesting to not follow Bach's own autograph manuscripts. It may slightly overlap with the CD booklet in a couple of places, but if you prefer, just jump to the second part.)*

That the execution of a piece of music includes countless details not written within the score is hardly a controversial opinion. Yet there is a commonly held belief today in classical music that an interpretation will automatically be beautiful and effective if it is based on a thorough analysis of the score and renders the notes as faithfully as possible. The more complicated the music, the easier it is to apply this view and more satisfactory the result. By extension, the less complicated the music seems on the page, the less valued it often is. Bach's works firmly belong in the first category of course, and so the approach above is particularly appealing when playing his pieces - unfortunately for the pieces themselves, I believe.

To me, an approach like this seems to confuse the role of the interpreter with that of the composer. Although unlike for the composer, this way conveniently excuses the interpreter from all creative responsibility while they painstakingly reinvent the wheel. What is physically written on the page is the only element of a performance that the interpreter has absolutely no control over so if one agrees with the claim in the first sentence (which almost everybody does), how can this approach be sufficient?

However complex his compositions compared many others from the baroque, Bach's manuscripts seem increasingly vague when contrasted against progressively later repertoire, and the difference is particularly striking when you see the incredibly detailed music of some late 20<sup>th</sup> century composers. We barely ever find dynamic markings and those he uses are the most basic. There are very few dynamic markings, no descriptive words for tone colour, no crescendo markings, often no articulation markings, no metronome marks, often no other tempo markings - the list goes on and on. Those who trust nothing but the composer's (or approved publisher's) score, illogically and wrongly conclude that these details therefore were not important to the music and proceed to ignore them. The Historical Performance movement instead accepts that the score does not contain all the answers and looks for them in other sources and the clues the instruments themselves provide. For example: One can gain an accurate idea about how fast court dances were played from various 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century sources that give pendulum markings for each dance<sup>1</sup>; or one can read descriptions of how small details such as specific intervals, melodic extracts and patterns, dynamic shapes, progressions, articulation, rhythm, agogics, and even key signatures could emote and provoke various emotions or *affects* in the listener, and how they might be played to achieve this. This fascinating study of the different devices composers and performers could employ in music was

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<sup>1</sup> Pendulum lengths gave an accurate tempo indication

called *Affektenlehre*<sup>2</sup> (Doctrine of affections) and was very influential in the Baroque and *Empfindsamer* styles. Movements did not necessarily contain one character or mood but could switch from one to another even within short movements.

Music was intricately linked to speech and oration throughout the Baroque: Joachim Quantz, a composer/flutist/theoretician from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, likened the performer to an orator (as did many others). Both of them have the common aim “to master the hearts of their listeners, and arouse or quell their passions”. Long sequences of notes were viewed the same way as speech; successive notes of equal values were not supposed to be played the same way or have the same length - just like the syllables when we talk all have slightly varied durations. The more you want to exclaim or dramatise something, the more pronounced these differences become.

Without any doubt, musicians at the time did care about minute details and variations – they just did not write them in their scores. Whether a musician today should care about these is a subjective opinion, but if they choose not to, it would be incongruent if they at the same time should worry so much about exactly observing the score.

I think the wonderful thing about most classical music is that there can be (I have argued there should be, but again it is subjective) so many different variables and parameters within an interpretation and these are all interlinked. Every one of them influences and is influenced by others. The impact of a pause, a soft passage, or a loud exclamation is strongly affected by what came before and affects what is to come. A certain way of playing a phrase will change how you can play the next, but your tone-colour and articulation even on individual notes will also change the phrase. Your instrument, the strings, tremors in your fingers, the acoustic, your mood - everything will influence how you play even the tiniest details, and these all add up and change each other. Therefore, as you play, you have to constantly listen to, analyse, and adapt what you are doing. The score is a lot like an actor’s script; all the elements of the interpretation should be rooted there, but the branches and leaves of each performance will fork and grow slightly differently every time - even if the full-grown trees look similar.

All these possible variables and unknowns might well seem daunting – using them in an interpretation certainly add many extra layers of risk and difficulty as it is then impossible to plan and prepare every detail of the performance. I can understand the temptation to remove them with spurious arguments citing “faithfulness to the score”, the piece’s “architecture”, artistic modesty, pixelating the music into enormous building blocks and reducing it to “long lines” and “structure”. It is comforting to believe that you have an instruction manual that, if you follow all the steps, will guarantee the right outcome!

Yet the risk with overly relying on historical sources is that one merely breaks the music down into smaller building blocks – or more pixels; a longer and more detailed instruction manual that requires more groundwork (knowledge of the score AND historical sources), but an instruction manual, nevertheless. You could read about *Affektenlehre* and create a key that tells you what every interval, chord change etc. means in a piece and how to play them. However, a key by its nature de-contextualises, and every one of these details belong in a context. Blindly implementing the key will likely mean a performance that makes no sense at all. Regarding the pendulum markings, one could apply Quantz’s gavotte tempo of *minim* = 160 to a Bach gavotte, but in the context of the *Gavotte en Rondeau* from BWV 1006, or indeed the gavottes in BWV 995, the result is ridiculous. In the frame of a far simpler court dance (with actual dancers) these tempi make sense. Dancers work with gravity which forces certain speeds and timings on the music. Instrumental music is not constrained by

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<sup>2</sup> Nowadays, the difference is that we are studying these details to help us interpret the music from that time, while they were trying to analyse why and how elements in the music they were already playing and composing moved the listeners and how to use them more effectively.

these forces of nature. Thankfully, there was not an incessant clicking machine forcing its tempo on the musician in those times. Indeed, speeding up and slowing down with the intensity of the music was another expressive device as tempo was associated with the heartbeat. The more excited you are, the faster it beats!

So, after all this criticism of over-reliance on “instruction manuals”, why on earth have I decided to base my interpretation on something that might be likened to one, and write about it in more detail here?

Firstly (and of course I am nothing like alone in thinking or writing this), I am not arguing against analysing scores or using historical sources; only against using them as an excuse to remove risk and uncertainty. I was told during my lute studies that you ought to establish the parameters of the interpretation early, and that once you have, you cannot add or remove too many in the same piece or movement. If there is no hint of rubato, agogics, varied articulation, colours, ornamentation etc. at the start, they will likely sound out-of-place and mannered if you introduce them. Likewise, an interpretation full them will sound particularly boring the moment it runs out of ideas. I believe that the second option is more rewarding for both listener and performer - I am adamant in any case that it is much more difficult for the latter! These tablatures show that whoever made them also embraced an array of musical parameters at the expense of long lines and consistency, though I cannot comment on their motivation for doing so. I tried to follow their example in my recording and tablatures. Whether it was successful is up to you.

Secondly (again, I am not a pioneering thinker), neither an interpretation nor its preparation relies only on musical intuition - it is funny how those that claim otherwise are often the most dogmatic teachers. There is constant interplay between intuition, knowledge, and reason - both when one performs and when one practises. Each of these adapts to and drives the other. You react to what you hear or play intuitively, while your reason tries to understand what makes you react, why, and how to use it and improve on it. Your knowledge may tell you that sequences of consecutive semi-quavers were usually not played the same, but your intuition and reason will together discover how to incorporate it into your interpretation in a way that will affect you and hopefully the listener by extension. Knowledge gained from sources primarily raises questions as to how and where we can use it. If we buy into the enormous complexity of the different, interlocking parameters contained within both a composition and its interpretation, we must accept that we will rarely find concrete answers and solutions. However, posing the questions and finding clues constantly develops us as musicians. These lute tablatures certainly provide both clues and question marks.

## The Bach lute tablatures

A lute tablature is an instruction manual. While traditional musical notation shows pitches and note lengths that could in theory be played on any instrument, a lute tablature shows how to realise them on the specific lute used by whoever made the tablature (in this case, the 13-course baroque lute). This physical connection with the instrument is what sets tablature apart. While both normal notation and tablature use symbols to add interpretative indications, the specific solution chosen in a tablature gives many even without any specific symbols – and in some cases with far more precision. The closest comparison that I know of is the 20<sup>th</sup> century classical guitar score which arguably goes into even more detail. For example, Julian Bream’s editions of Britten, Tippett and Walton’s guitar music are incredibly comprehensive, specifying strings, fingerings and by extension tone colour and articulation. Whilst we cannot know if the tablatures’ authors worked as closely

with the composer as Bream did, both the tablatures and Bream's editions fascinatingly hint at the musicians' process and priorities when adapting these composers' manuscripts to suit their instrument and musical ideas. The two are not independent as musical ideas are often born from the instrument.

The sheer number of strings on a baroque lute and the complexity of their tuning make countless different ways of playing the same passage possible. The extra open basses (diapasons) on later baroque lutes provide even more possibilities. They free the left hand from having to always play the bass line (the right thumb can play it on an open string), meaning that it can stay higher up the fingerboard. These basses are tuned in octaves and as a result, one also hears the octave above the fundament when they are plucked.<sup>3</sup> Lute composers took advantage of this characteristic frequently: They got round the diatonic tuning of the basses by regularly switching octaves in chromatic bass passages and made full use of the freed left hand in accompanied melodies in the higher register, utilising otherwise impossible fingerings for variation in articulation and colour. The authors of these tablatures use these diapasons a great deal – even in sections where Bach wrote the music an octave higher and where there was no technical reason to do so. In doing so, they often make Bach's already challenging music much harder to play.

### **Suite in g minor BWV 995**

Of the pieces on this recording, this is the only one where an autograph by Bach has survived; a rather messy copy from probably the late 1720s. It is one of two Bach autographs of solo music that explicitly mention the lute – the other being the *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro* BWV 998. Curiously, the piece goes down to a low G' which is one note below the lowest string of the typical baroque lute in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Germany. Baroque lutes with an extra string did exist but were rare. It has been posited that the intended instrument was an archlute, but this seems unlikely given the overwhelming dominance of the baroque lute and its tuning in the region at the time.

#### *Octave transposition of basses*

The anonymous tablature version from Leipzig is for a regular, d-minor tuned, 13-course baroque lute, in any case. Therefore, the first thing one notices is the transposition of that low G' up an octave throughout the piece. Even so, it is only really missed in the opening section of the prelude for the drama and dark colour it creates. The tablature tackles this problem through added ornamentation and thickened-out chords that use all the strings. The added notes logically make the chords fuller, but they also make them 'spicier' as the octave stringing of the lute's basses create narrow dissonant intervals. Apart from this, they also make it possible to play each string with more power and to employ a variety of different spreads using raking thumbs and forefingers. In the few other places in the suite where Bach uses the low G', the lack of it in the tablature is more than made up for with the fluent and liberal use of these diapasons that would not be possible with 14 strings. It is also hidden by the colours achieved through typical lute appoggiaturas and mordents that clash with the octave of the 'G' fundament in the chord.

My instrument by Tony Johnson is based on a 13-course baroque lute by Unverdorben/Buchstetter stored in Fenton House, London. I requested a 14<sup>th</sup> course for my lute with this piece in mind but have never used it in performance, preferring to trade the resounding low G' for the advantages the traditional tuning gives and which the tablature exploits in full. Of

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<sup>3</sup> Lutes, unlike some theorboes, were always tuned with double strings. Unfortunately, some lutenists pretend otherwise, and in doing so, combine the disadvantages of the guitar with those of the lute while gaining none of the benefits particular to either of them.

course, in a recording one can choose the best of both worlds and so I kept a G' for the first section before tuning the string back to A' for the rest of the suite. Reasoning that more definitely means more here, I also keep the changes in the manuscript which I think purely serve to render the music in a more beautiful, dramatic, and powerful way.

The octave transposition of the basses is used throughout the suite by the intabulator and usually the motive is not solving technical problems. In the *fugato* of the opening movement, whole runs are transposed down an octave for no obvious reason. One of these even jumps up an octave for the last two notes as it otherwise ventures too deep for the lute. Because the basses are open and can only be played by the thumb, these sections become much harder in the tablature than in the original. The jumping dotted rhythm of the *Gigue* is consistently played down the octave too, making it probably the hardest movement of the suite.

Why did the lutenist choose to do make Bach's music even harder? The *Gigue's* basses open the resonance of the instrument because they use the full tessitura of the lute, but also because they allow more varied and resonant fingerings in the upper voice. In the *fugato*, the dialogue between the short runs in the higher and lower register is more pronounced and more dramatic when the basses are played an octave lower (keep in mind that the original octave still sounds!). Even the transposition of the final two notes in the bass provide a short breath<sup>4</sup> and help change the colour as the dramatic mood shifts and the music leaps up into an extended passage in the top register. This virtuosic use of the basses is why I choose to perform this piece with thirteen strings. One could keep fourteen strings for the whole suite and still read from the tablature, but those diapason basses in the tablature would go from difficult to impossible.

### *Ornaments*

An appoggiatura where the auxiliary note clashes against the ringing principal note is an idiomatic baroque lute ornament that uses the octave stringing of the lute and the small intervals between the open strings.<sup>5</sup> A kind of lute '*port de voix*', it is just one of a variety of characteristic lute ornaments that this tablature employs and adds throughout the piece, setting it apart from the far more scarcely ornamented Bach manuscript. The variety of ornaments also sets it apart from the two tablatures by Weyrauch of BWV 997 & 1000. Although far from bare, the ornaments there are more like those of the great lutenist/composer Sylvius Weiss (1687-1750) and the earlier baroque lute composers. Whoever intabulated BWV 995 – an obviously brilliant lutenist – combines these earlier ornaments with extravagant and unprepared appoggiaturas typical of later lute music, often ignoring the few ornaments Bach himself wrote in the process. Therefore, the tablature is assumed to be from late in Bach's life. However, given that lutenists like Johann Kropfgans and Adam Falckenhagen with more 'modern' writing styles than Weiss's were professionally active already in the 30s, that is not certain.

An oft-used symbol is the diagonal line between voices in a chord. This was another particularly common ornament in the *style brisé* or 'broken style' pioneered by the French 17<sup>th</sup> century lutenists. These lines mean that the notes should not be played simultaneously. It is not the same as a simple spread chord for which there also is a symbol, but an indication for a freer and longer arpeggiation. Weiss interestingly does not use it often, preferring to spell out how a chord is arpeggiated. This also happens in the Bach on several occasions: For example, in the second bar of the *Prelude*, and in several places in the *Courante* and *Gigue*. Other times the performer is left to work this out themselves. As I have mentioned, there are many options. A typical technique is the use of the 'rake'

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<sup>4</sup> The thumb has to jump four strings!

<sup>5</sup> One can easily play the same note on different strings

where the right hand's pointer rakes down towards the thumb. This is often used in together with the other fingers resulting in a chord that can break up and down simultaneously, but another solution could be a simple arpeggiation towards the top or towards the bass, or another combination!

Sometimes the context points to what might be intended: For example, the tablature in the *Allemande* consistently ignores Bach's ties between the notes in the melody. Instead, it repeats the note with an added appoggiatura. This seems to completely change the character of the piece as there is almost never any emphasis or movement on the second crotchet of the bar in the original. (After all, that is why the *Allemande's* time signature is the 'cut C' and not 'C' in both the tablature and the Bach manuscript: Each bar should feel in two even if the beats are quite far apart.) However, the addition of the 'broken chord' symbol seems to indicate that the second note in the tie is at the end of the arpeggiated chord (which then lasts a whole crotchet). This both tricks the listener into hearing a more sustained note while also providing direction. A different way of lengthening the note used in the tablature is the harpsichord-like, extended trill on the primary note. We see this in the opening of the *Prelude* and in the first section of the *Allemande* where it very effectively increases the tension and provides impetus to what could easily become static long notes.

The tablature of the *Gavotte en Rondeau* (Gavotte II) also consistently does away with tied notes, but unlike in the *Allemande*, the ornament – an appoggiatura - is placed on the first note and not the second. This appoggiatura marks the typical accentuated third beat of the opening of a gavotte dance. It also highlights the end of the one-bar phrase, turning it into a question before the flowing answer begins in the second half of the second bar. This solution is repeated every time this phrasing pattern appears in the movement.

The many appoggiaturas and the *ports de voix* over two strings (mentioned earlier) are typical of the French baroque lute repertoire. Especially the latter is an ornament directly derived from the lute's characteristics that would not have been in Bach's vocabulary when composing the piece.<sup>6</sup> Combined with the *brisé* style spreads, I think they perfectly complement his music - particularly in this suite which is the most overtly French of Bach's 'lute suites' and heavily influenced by the French lutenists 'broken style'. The beautifully elegant *Courante* and *Gigue* are nevertheless clumsily written for lute, but the intabulator's use of all these different ornaments turn them into movements one could almost imagine were written in France a hundred years before. These idiomatic lute ornaments really claim the music for the instrument.

Nevertheless, I was surprised *where* I found some ornaments when I first played the tablature. For example, the opening theme of the *fugato* is immediately embellished. Ornamenting fugal themes does not chime well with their almost 'untouchable' status today nor with the common-held idea that we ought to play them the same way each time. Particularly difficult appoggiaturas are also added onto alternating semi-quavers in a run in the same movement. I have interpreted these as playful as they are introduced just once at the beginning of a lighter section in B-flat major. The ornaments also indicate a slower tempo than the fast ones we often hear, and the gigue is also heavily embellished with turns and trills that are impossible at great speeds. (Of course, one does not need to look at the tablature to see the primary indication of the slower tempo in these movements; the time-signature of 3/8 (not 6/8) implies three beats in a bar.<sup>7</sup> Playing these movements faster doubles the length of the bars and slows the beat down in reality; a much quicker rendition of the *fugato*, counterintuitively perhaps, goes against the *tres viste* indication.)

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<sup>6</sup> I have argued in the CD booklet that he was not acquainted with the intricacies of the instrument. I believe this is evident from several features in his lute music.

<sup>7</sup> Time signatures were the most important and very clear way of showing tempi throughout the baroque.

Although less common, the completely unprepared appoggiaturas certainly stand out – sometimes even jumping up a diminished fifth to a totally foreign note. They are a typical feature of the music by the lutenists from the generation after Weiss, but they do chafe with Bach's otherwise immaculate voice leading and the ornaments he writes in his other music. On the one hand, you could argue that both Bach and to a lesser extent Weiss were old-fashioned for their time and that, given that Bach himself could not play the instrument, these tablatures are perfect examples of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century performance practice of his lute music. On the other, the tablatures by Johann Christian Weyrauch who certainly knew Bach well are more sober in their application of these *galant* ornaments. I have tended to embrace them for their charm and inherent 'lute-ness' in this recording.

Many of the embellishments I have described above are added liberally throughout the tablature following a tradition where such ornaments were often left to the discretion of the lutenist playing. That of course applies today too. It would be silly to turn this performance copy of Bach's suite into a new '*urtext*'. It is also very probably only the last of several tablatures of this suite that were made. Based on its clarity and elaborate script, it was possibly meant for publication.<sup>8</sup>

I have not played or followed every ornament exactly as prescribed, but I do find most of them beautiful and would never have thought of or dared to do many of them by myself. This eye-opening factor to us 21<sup>st</sup>-century musicians - educated in a world where the masters' music should be handled with gloves - is one of the most fascinating aspects of the tablature to me. We can scoff at what we perceive as bad taste, but I think it is important to remember that this is obviously a thought-through adaptation by a very skilled lutenist from Bach's time. It is interesting to try to understand the intention even if we may later choose to do things differently. Who knows Bach's musical language better after all; the 18<sup>th</sup> century lutenist, or us?

### *Slurring*

The consistent use of asymmetrical and inconsistent slurring in the tablature is another eye-opener. In fact, we do not have to look further than Anna Magdalena Bach's manuscript of the same cello suite, any other lute music, or historical keyboard fingerings to see that this way of playing was the norm, but because we strive to preserve the perfection and symmetry in Bach's music, so often even historically informed interpretations shy away from this. This way of playing was not only typical of the baroque; if we look at Mauro Giuliani's guitar music from the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century, we can see exactly same use of slurring. Not every passage has to be split into equal parts.

There are so many beautiful examples here! It is the exception rather than the rule to pluck consecutive notes a step apart with the right hand, which of course fits perfectly with the idea that consecutive notes of the same length were not meant to be played the same way. The result is that the music speaks!

There are many places where the slurring is self-consciously used to achieve particular effects, or to create variation – especially in sequences and repeated melodic patterns. However, a lot of the time, the slurring naturally follows the tuning system of the lute. Where adjacent notes can be played on the same string in the same position, the slur will often be used. If not, we can suspect an ulterior motive. String crossings – often but not always to or from open strings – also achieve a slurring effect. This naturally results in asymmetric articulation, micro-phrasing and agogics, given that the lute's open strings are tuned in minor thirds, major thirds, and fourths.

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<sup>8</sup> The Breitkopf & Härtel catalogue from 1769 contained various solo pieces by Bach for lute. Possibly this was one of them.

Parts where fewer or no slurs are used are often louder and more dramatic parts of the phrase, or mark beginnings of new phrases. Phrasing lines are the only expressive marks that appear once or twice in Bach's manuscript. A tablature has no way of marking these, but it does show how the lutenist realised them on the instrument. Notes under these lines are often slurred three or four at a time, but we can see how where one of these longer lines leads to a 'question' (or gets louder), the slurs become shorter and more frequent.

It is also interesting to see the right-hand fingering when it appears. For example, in the final passage under the long phrasing line at the end of the opening section of the *Prelude*, the thumb is consciously used to split a slur into two which would otherwise be in four. Indeed, as it is more powerful, the thumb is often used to bring out lines, even on the higher string.

### **Prelude in c minor BWV 999**

An autograph manuscript of the *Prelude in c minor* has not survived but there are several copies from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Even though it is playable in its entirety on the lute as written, I have taken the tablatures' lead and chosen to transpose some basses down the octave to use the diapasons basses. I think it makes a nice organ pedal effect.

I have also tried to play with different fingerings for the various chords, sometimes using a string for each note, other times not, and attempted to adapt the fingering to bring out and let the notes that I think create a special colour ring.

Given the prelude's short length and open ending, it may be that it used to form part of a suite, but in the absence of the other movements, I chose to pair it with the *Fugue in g minor* BWV 1000.

### **Fugue in g minor BWV 1000**

The lute version of the fugue for violin in the same key only exists in a tablature by Johann Christian Weyrauch. He was a lutenist, organist and composer from Leipzig who knew Bach well, even asking the cantor to be his son's godfather and naming the child after him. As it is the only surviving source, it is hard to know what changes Weyrauch made to any original. It seems to follow neither the violin version nor the organ version (which possibly is not by Bach). In his excellent foreword to his edition of Bach's lute works (Edizioni Suivi Zerboni), Paolo Cherici argues that certain clumsy aspects point to an elaborated arrangement by Weyrauch himself. I am not so sure, but in any case, the piece in its tablature form works brilliantly whoever arranged it.

He is far less generous with his ornaments here than the anonymous lutenist of BWV 995, but still a little appoggiatura crops up in the exposition! Both the *Fugue* and the *Partita* contain magical sections of *campanella* fingerings in the high register. These fingerings take advantage of the lute's tuning that easily allows the lutenist to play adjacent notes on different strings, resulting in a harp-like, legato effect. One can then choose how one wants to curate the resonance, which is also a common theme in all baroque lute playing.

### **Partita in c minor BWV 997**

Written around 1740, the piece is noticeably more 'galant' in style than the cello/lute suite probably composed around twenty years previously. Again, this piece does not survive in a copy by Bach but there are several sources. Perhaps the three most reliable for their connection with Bach are the manuscripts by Bach's students, Johann Agricola and Johann Kirnberger, and Weyrauch. Both Agricola's and Kirnberger's manuscripts point to the keyboard as the intended instrument. Weyrauch's lute tablature makes no mention of an arrangement on the other hand. The low tessitura and use of a transposing treble clef in the Agricola and Kirnberger manuscripts do not point

to a traditional harpsichord, but they may well have been intended for the gut-strung lute-harpsichord. Possibly the piece was for either keyboard or lute like the *Prelude, Fugue & Allegro* composed around the same period.<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly, the Weyrauch tablature seems to be based on a different copy to all the other secondary sources. Not only does it omit the *Fugue* and *Double*, but it is also the only copy with dynamic indications and the *Sarabande's* final bars are also radically different.

As I have already mentioned, Weyrauch is more conservative than the lutenist of the g-minor suite even though he does freely add appoggiaturas and again exploits the lute's double, bass strings. But while the different ornaments may not be as varied, his use of asymmetric and expressive slurs throughout the piece is even more interesting and imaginative.

In the opening theme of the *Fantasia*, the idiomatic *campanella* fingering creates a colour different to the staccato idea we often have for themes like this in baroque music. But not all the fingering solutions he chooses fit the lute so easily. Rather than keeping the left hand in the same position when playing large falling intervals, he sometimes elects to make the left hand jump far up the neck on the same string, lengthening the interval and creating a slightly elongated first note. This beautifully emphasises the 'sigh' in these falling intervals. The groups of three slurred notes combined with an appoggiatura at the end of many of the movement's phrases create a wonderful fadeout effect but are also hard on the left hand in such an awkward key.

Even more so than in the anonymous tablature, Weyrauch goes out of his way to differentiate articulation in sequences. We hear this clearly in both the *Fantasia* and the *Sarabande*. The second is perhaps the most beautiful movement Bach wrote for the lute, with strong echoes of the final choral of the Matthew Passion. The 'B'-section has a particularly beautiful section with juxtaposition of slurs from strong and soft notes and evening combining notes played with the left hand with a bass plucked by the right. There is an example of this in the *Fantasia* too.

As mentioned, the dynamics in the opening movement are unique to Weyrauch's manuscript. The first inclination might be to terrace them, but this did not make sense to me as in any of the places they appear. Instead, I have interpreted *forte* and *piano* in the same way as Leopold Mozart describes dynamic markings. Here *forte* represents the loudest point of the phrase and *piano* the quietest, so rather than marking terrace dynamics, they imply crescendos and diminuendos. Incidentally, this interpretation of dynamics also works much better in the famous *Prelude* of BWV 1006a (or BWV 1006) in my opinion.

The chromatic flourish at the end of the *Sarabande* that differs from all the other surviving manuscript has been attributed to Weyrauch himself. I do not believe it. The entire partita is based on semi-tone motifs and the *Sarabande* most of all. There was also no reason at all for Weyrauch to change this passage - the other version is just easy to play. As one only gets to record these things once (with luck) I chose to play both, leaving Weyrauch's for the repeat.

The playful *Giga* again demonstrates the 'galant' influences in Bach's later music. These humorous qualities are emphasised by Weyrauch's imaginative fingerings, for example in the opening of the 'B'-section where he lets the left hand jump up and down the instrument repeatedly. Otherwise, Weyrauch treats it in much the same way as the anonymous lutenist does the other gigue. He regularly transposes the bass down an octave and thus makes the piece as difficult as the g-minor gigue. It is also the movement Weyrauch most liberally ornaments, particularly with appoggiaturas, but also with more virtuosic turns and falls.

Finally, the two movements Weyrauch did not intabulate:

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<sup>9</sup> There are quite a few examples of this from the time actually!

### *Fuga*

Weyrauch's version omits this movement for some reason, and so I have had to create my own tablature. Why the fugue is skipped is a mystery to me. Apart from the challenges associated with its extraordinary duration, it is not harder than the other movements and fits on the lute with no major problems.

I have decided to follow Agricola's version which differs slightly from Kirnberger's. Again, I try to use the musical 'tricks' the other lutenists regularly employ including *campanella* fingerings, loads of slurs, and regular use of the open basses. I have hardly added any ornaments; the piece is incredibly dense as it is – far more so the g-minor fugue which Weyrauch only very lightly ornaments. I do think there is space for more though – especially in the light touch way Weyrauch ornaments the violin fugue - and may well come to regret that choice. I did not feel confident in recording an ornamented version which I would like in the long run and so I chose to err on the side of caution, following the good advice that one should not half commit to these things. In the meantime, I will continue to experiment in concert!

### *Double*

While all the other movements use a range that fits the lute perfectly, this one mysteriously drops the transposing treble clef used in the rest of the piece. In doing so, the highest parts far exceed the lute's tessitura, but they also exceed Bach's keyboard instruments! The obvious solution is to transpose both staves down the octave. This means the range almost fits the baroque lute except for the low G' - the only place it appears in the suite which otherwise doesn't venture below the A'. While this solves a lot of problems, we encounter another one. As I have described, the lute's basses are only played by the thumb and so fast runs are incredibly difficult (not that this dissuaded the anonymous lutenist) and multiple voices in the basses are impossible. This is something that all of Bach's other music associated with the lute takes account of. Here instead we have whole unplayable passages which again require transposition, but this time up an octave. Regular transposition of passages (both up and down) is necessary without exception whenever one wants to arrange Bach's keyboard music for lute, but never in his 'Lute Suites' which only ever require small changes in places. What this means, I do not know, but all the differences with respect to the rest of the partita make me suspect the movement was added later and almost certainly not intended for the lute. I still have chosen to play it in my own arrangement. The obvious transposition solutions are the same as the ones other lutenists have chosen. I have tried to play with the fingering possibilities Weyrauch hints at in the other movements and have consciously varied the slurring again, both with regards to slurring from weak beats, and longer left-hand-only passages.

I hope you have found this interesting. The intention of writing was not to provide definite interpretative answers, but rather to share the endless possibilities these manuscripts open the door to. I hope in time to do a more in-depth comparison with extracts from the different sources. If anyone has any questions, please get in touch through [www.jadranduncumb.com](http://www.jadranduncumb.com) or my Facebook page.

Jadran Duncumb, Oslo, February, 2021