

Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758) served as Kapellmeister at the court of Zerbst from 1722 until the end of his life. He took a sabbatical from his post ca. 1726 to go to the famed court of Dresden, where he would observe the musical culture, buy music for Zerbst, and compose. Fasch's friend, Johann Georg Pisendel (1687–1755), served as concertmaster there. From the sabbatical until Pisendel's death, Fasch supplied Dresden with his own instrumental compositions, which included pieces for which only Dresden had the requisite talent. The renowned lutenist Silvius Leopold Weiss (1687–1750) numbered among the unique talents on Dresden's roster.

Fasch's concerto in D minor for lute and strings, FWV L: d1, was presumably intended for Weiss. It comes from the *Schrank II* Dresden Hofkapelle collection and is, in the editor's opinion, the finest example of an intact high-baroque lute concerto. This concerto's sibling relationship to a Fasch oboe concerto, FWV L: d2, comes up frequently, often with the implication that the lute concerto is a mere arrangement or transcription of a for-oboe original. The lute concerto is in fact an extensive re-build of the simpler oboe version, and the more deeply developed of the pair.

#### SOURCE

This edition is based on an autograph score, Mus. 2423-V-1, "Concerto di J. F. Fasch," in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek (SLUB), Dresden. The manuscript is available online. The cover jacket for the music contains an incipit of the violin for the first two bars with the text:

Schranck No: II. / 6. Fach 19 Lage. / No. 41 Concerto.  
Liuto Violini Viola / e Basso. / Partitura sola. / del Sig.e Fasch

The score appears to have been notated hastily, with numerous crossings-out, ambiguities and errors. It is certainly not a presentation copy but rather a working draft. Its staves are generally arrayed as follows:

Violino 1 (treble clef)  
Violino 2 (treble clef)  
Viola (alto clef)  
Liute [sic], melody staff (soprano and treble clefs)  
Liute, bass staff (bass clef, intermittent)  
Cembalo (bass clef, unfigured)

When the violins are in unison, the MS frequently shows them on a single staff with doubled treble clefs to indicate the doubling. It intermittently includes a separate staff for Lute's bass. Otherwise, the placement of Lute's melody staff immediately above the Cembalo line may be read as Lute and Cembalo sharing a common bass line.

#### EDITORIAL PROCEDURE

Clear note errors in the source are corrected in the edition without comment; when unclear they are flagged in the critical report. The edition extends original articulations and dynamics to parallel and simultaneous parts where they are lacking as appropriate and without comment. Beaming and accidentals generally follow modern conventions. Editorial dynamics appear in small type, while other editorial performance indications, such as solo, tutti, etc., are indicated in italics. Continuo figures are all editorial and derived from the written-out chords in the lute part when available. When Lute's composed realization contradicts the string parts, the figures defer to the strings.

"Cembalo" is read here as "basso continuo" and is understood to include any other bassi in the ensemble. The edition includes both an unrealized figured bass part for harpsichord and an unfigured one for melodic bass players (e.g., cellists) who prefer an uncluttered page.

The editor presumes use of the 13-course lute in D minor tuning, the dominant solo lute in 18th-century Saxony and the instrument of choice from ca. 1719 onwards for Dresden's resident lute virtuoso, Silvius Leopold Weiss. Lute appears in the score at sounding pitch in modified, grand-staff notation, i.e., an octave lower than the source's

transposed notation. The edition includes solo part-books for Lute both in modified grand-staff notation and in French tablature, plus a classical guitar transcription in single-staff, treble-octavo notation. Page turns for the soloist are inevitable, but the part-books place their turns during tutti passages, where the soloist is least audible and most expendable.

Bass notes for the lute appear in the edition with normal-sized note-heads, both when Lute has its own bass staff in the autograph and when Cembalo is the only bass staff in the autograph, presuming Lute's bass doubles Cembalo. Occasional editorial changes to Lute's bass octave and the voicing of continuo chords were necessary for technical reasons. These appear in normal-sized note-heads and without comment.

Further editorial changes to Lute's bass line are shown with small note-heads—or with square brackets in the tablature. The most significant change is the addition of bass notes in some solo passages that contradict rests in the autograph, as in the first movement, m.37. Such passages are noted in the Critical Report. The concerto's association with Dresden and its likely preparation for performance by resident lute virtuoso Silvius Leopold Weiss argue against the lack of a bass at these junctures. None of Weiss's own surviving lute concerti has the lute playing without its own bass accompaniment, so presuming a bass line stays in keeping with Weiss's own practice.

Another editorial change—noted in small notes but otherwise without comment—is the simplification of rhythm for bass notes relative to the voice that Lute is doubling. For instance the notes that Cembalo pulses in quavers at m.65, which Lute's bass doubles, is changed to sustained notes for Lute. Such variations within shared bass lines are a feature typical of 18th-century concerted lute music.

Further modifications—transpositions, additions, omissions, other voicings, etc.—are left to the soloist's discretion, though I make some suggestions in the PERFORMANCE section, below. The guitar transcription is faithful in relation to the lute solo, making only unavoidable accommodations. The guitar's accommodations are not noted in the Critical Report.

#### PERFORMANCE

As stated earlier, the 13-course lute in D minor tuning is the instrument at Dresden Weiss would have played. Since the solo is also suited to classical guitar, this edition includes a transcription for that instrument.

I recommend that lutenists consider transposing the melody up the octave in low-lying solo passages that are naturally soft. The upper range of the part does not exceed b'-flat in the source, while the lute typically plays up to d'' and higher. This aspect of the solo, along with the aforementioned silences in the lute's bass part, might indicate an incomplete understanding by Fasch of how lutes work. The lower tessitura is less of an issue for guitarists.

It is stylistically appropriate for the soloists to add slurs and melodic embellishments, fill in harmonies, and adapt the octave of bass notes to taste. The relative lack of slurs in the autograph lute part must not be taken to indicate that the soloist shouldn't slur where not shown, and likewise for ornaments, etc.

The lute's composed continuo realization raises two interesting performance-related points. First, the lute has a chord notated for nearly every bass note in the first and third movements, and every other bass note in the second. This could indicate that Fasch thought that the lute should play every notated chord. But it could also be a continuo 'tablature' in lieu of figured bass, showing what harmony the performer should produce if he chooses to place a chord above a particular bass note.

The second point concerns several apparent contradictions between the written-out chords in the lute part and what the upper strings are doing. For instance, in the first movement, m.3, second crochet, the lute has d' against the viola's c'-sharp over a bass e. Does the lutenist—and any other chordal continuo player—execute these harmonies as shown, or should they be adjusted to what is actually going on in the string parts? The edition provides both options, as noted in the editorial procedures above.

Where the soloist's performance of the continuo is concerned, I encourage lutenists and guitarists alike to explore revoicing chords for ease of execution and projection, or simply to improvise the continuo from the bass line.

The accompaniment is suitable to small- or large-force performance, ranging from a string-quartet without keyboard to an ensemble of multiples-on-a-part sections with added sixteen-foot bass and chordal continuo. The part "Cembalo" is read as "basso continuo" and is understood to include sustaining bassi in the ensemble as well as a harpsichord. Mutes for the upper strings are indicated twice, *sordini* at the beginning, *senza sordini* at the start of the final tutti in the last movement. This may suggest that the rest of the concerto is to be played muted, or that removal and replacement of mutes within the concerto is ad lib. I side with the latter.

Richard Stone

Philadelphia, August 2018

# J. F. Fasch: Concerto in D minor

FWV L: d1

[1 Allegro.]

**Violino I**  
Sordini

**Violino II**  
Sordini

**Viola**  
Sordini

**Liuto**

**Cembalo**

7 6 *p* 6 6 *f* 6 # 5

7

6 # 7<sup>b</sup> 6 4 # 5 6 6 7 # *p*<sub>6</sub>

13

# *f*<sub>2</sub> 6 7 4 6 7 4 6 6 6 6