

Playing Froberger's g-minor gigue

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You maybe noticed that I didn't play this gigue by Froberger the way it's written. It's written in Common time (or 4-4), instead of the usual 6-8 ternary time, but if it is played that way it won't sound like a gigue at all. Actually, it is one of many pieces written this way, and it is likely that harpsichordists at the time would transform the binary into ternary rhythms.

This can be seen in a very convincing way in Froberger's works.

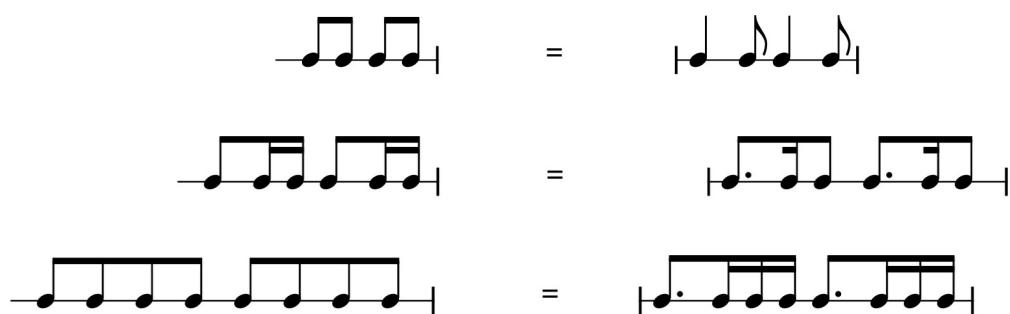
In his VII Suite, you see a gigue written in binary:



But in Suite XXIII, the same gigue is written out this way, in ternary:

A musical score for a gigue in g-minor, written in ternary time (3/8). The score is in two systems. The first system has eight measures, and the second system has eight measures, starting with a measure number '16' at the beginning. The music is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a ternary time signature (3/8). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and accidentals. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

How should one proceed in the gigue in g-minor? Here are a few possibilities for the rhythmic equivalents:



Here is one possible version of the g-minor jig, the version I prefer to play, using those rhythms.

A musical score for the g-minor jig, consisting of six systems of two staves each. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 6/8. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, dotted notes, and rests, with some measures containing repeat signs. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, while the bass line is in the bass clef.

Froberger composed a number of gigue's in both ways. You can also find examples from a later period. In J.S. Bach's works there are two gigue's, from the 1st French Suite in d-minor and from the 6th Partita in e-minor, that should be interpreted in this same way. Almost all harpsichordists today play both of those works using the gigue's typical ternary rhythms.