SILVIUS LEOPOLD WEISS

Sonata for Lute in E Minor

Guitar Transcription by
MICHAEL LORIMER

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Silvius Leopold Weiss is the most important lutenist of the late German baroque era. Modern guitarists have increasingly been drawn to make arrangements of his compositions because of the publication in modern notation of selections of one, and the entirety of another, of two important Weiss manuscripts.[1] Our series is in this tradition.

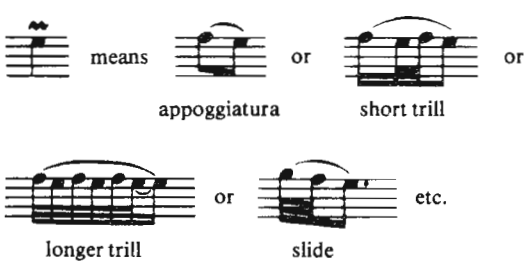
Weiss composed the present sonata about 1720, by this date he had been lutenist at the court of Dresden for two years. Dresden was the seat of the Elector August of Saxony, who was at the same time the elected King of Poland. During the few years preceding Weiss' appointment to his orchestra Elector August had built the finest musical establishment in the German speaking world. Upon his appointment Weiss' tasks were to play theorbo continuo in the opera orchestra, and to provide solo music for the chamber. His annual salary of 1000 *Thaler* was nearly as much as the court music director's and was more than the other two theorbists' salaries combined.

Because of performance demands Weiss composed a considerable number of sonatas during his first years in Dresden. Also several lute students required music and studied some of these. The present sonata apparently was performed by Weiss himself, and also taught periodically for the rest of his life. Friedrich Wilhelm Raschke, the compiler of the Dresden manuscript, indicates, "This is the first piece I studied with Mr. Weiss."

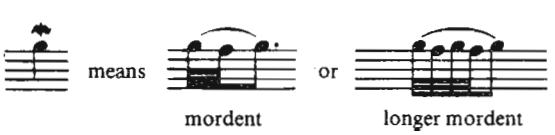
The Dresden manuscript is the source of this sonata, and the piece is holograph.

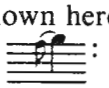
ORNAMENTATION AND EDITING

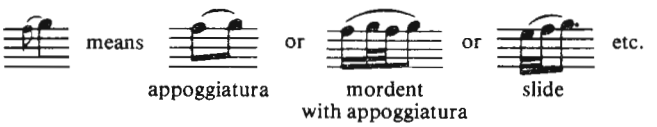
Ornamentation is an extremely important aspect of Weiss' music. His indications have been preserved *in toto* in this edition. The most prevalent is a comma following a tablature letter, which indicates an embellishment involving upper auxiliary notes. Here is used. Trills should begin on the beat with the dissonant note (the *upper* note in all standard cases):



A small + or x beside a letter signifies a mordent, which appears here as :



An arc under a letter signifies an ornament other than a mordent involving lower auxiliary notes. It is shown here by a small note preceding the main note  :



Some examples of how ornamentation may be executed are written in small notes above the score.

Slurs appear on the tablature just as they do in modern guitar notation. All of Weiss' slurs are shown: those which are omitted in the guitar fingerings appear over the beam . Editorial slurs have been included to enhance phrasing and in some cases to match on our modern instrument the legato effect of melodic string crossings on the baroque lute. They are differentiated from Weiss' by a slash: . Notes that have been raised an octave appear with a small 8: ; and those that have been lowered an octave are indicated with a small —8: . Editorial additions other than fingerings and rests are enclosed in parentheses, and places where any other departures occur are indicated in small notes preceded by *orig:*.

Guitarists who wish to further familiarize themselves with Baroque style may refer to books such as the following two by Robert Donington: *The Interpretation of Early Music,* revised version (London, Faber and Faber, 1974), and *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music,* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.)

Standard guitar indications have been used in this edition:

CI, CII	indicates full bar
¢I, ¢II	indicates half bar
⌈	(bracket) indicates partial bar
①, ②	indicates the string to be used
1,2,3,4	indicates the left hand fingering
p,i,m,a	indicates the right hand fingering
	indicates left hand slur

The editor gives special thanks to Douglas Alton Smith of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for his assistance in preparing this edition.

MICHAEL LORIMER
Berkeley, California 1976

[1] Portions of the Dresden Sächsische Landesbibliothek *Mus. Ms. 2841, V. 1* and the British Library *Ms. Add 30387* are published in Volume 12 of *Das Erbe Deutscher Musik,* Henry Litolff's Verlag, Frankfurt 1939, edited by Hans Neeman. The complete British Library *Ms. Add 30387* is published in two volumes entitled *Intavolatura di Liuto* by Suvini Zerboni, Milan, 1967, edited by Ruggiero Chiesa.

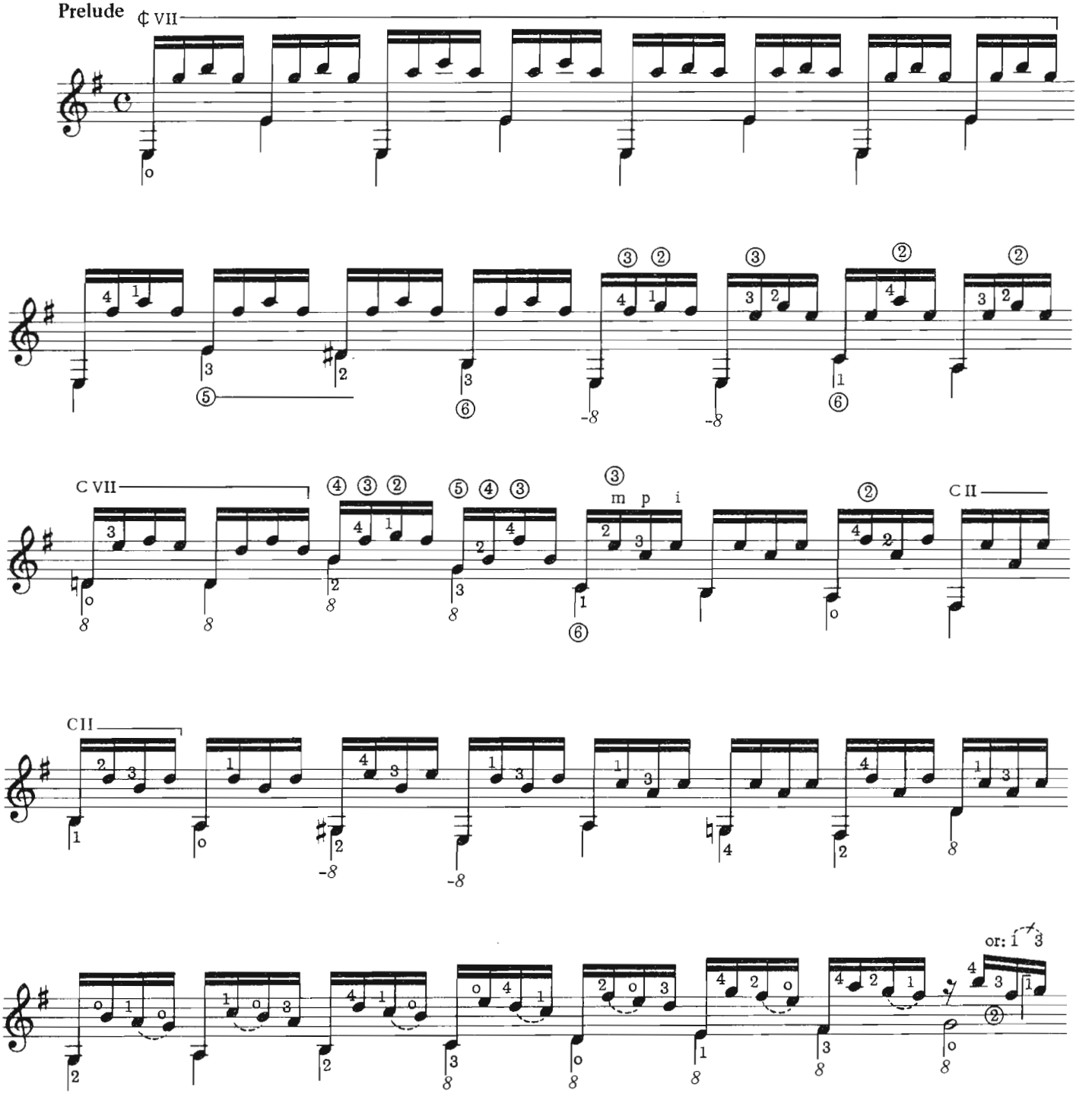
Sonata for Lute

(Original in D Minor)*

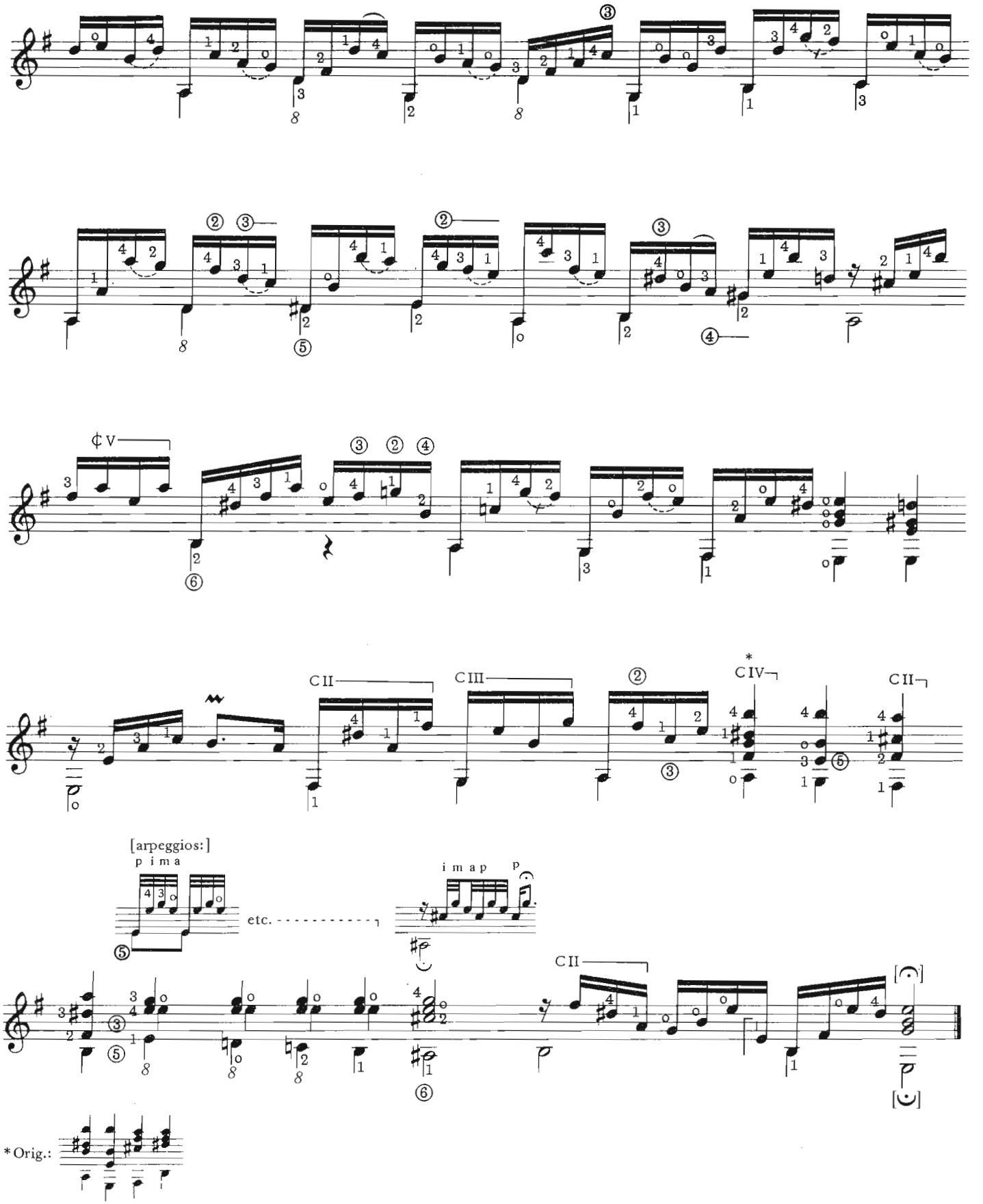
Transcribed by
Michael Lorimer
(1964 / 1976)

SILVIUS LEOPOLD WEISS
(1686-1750)

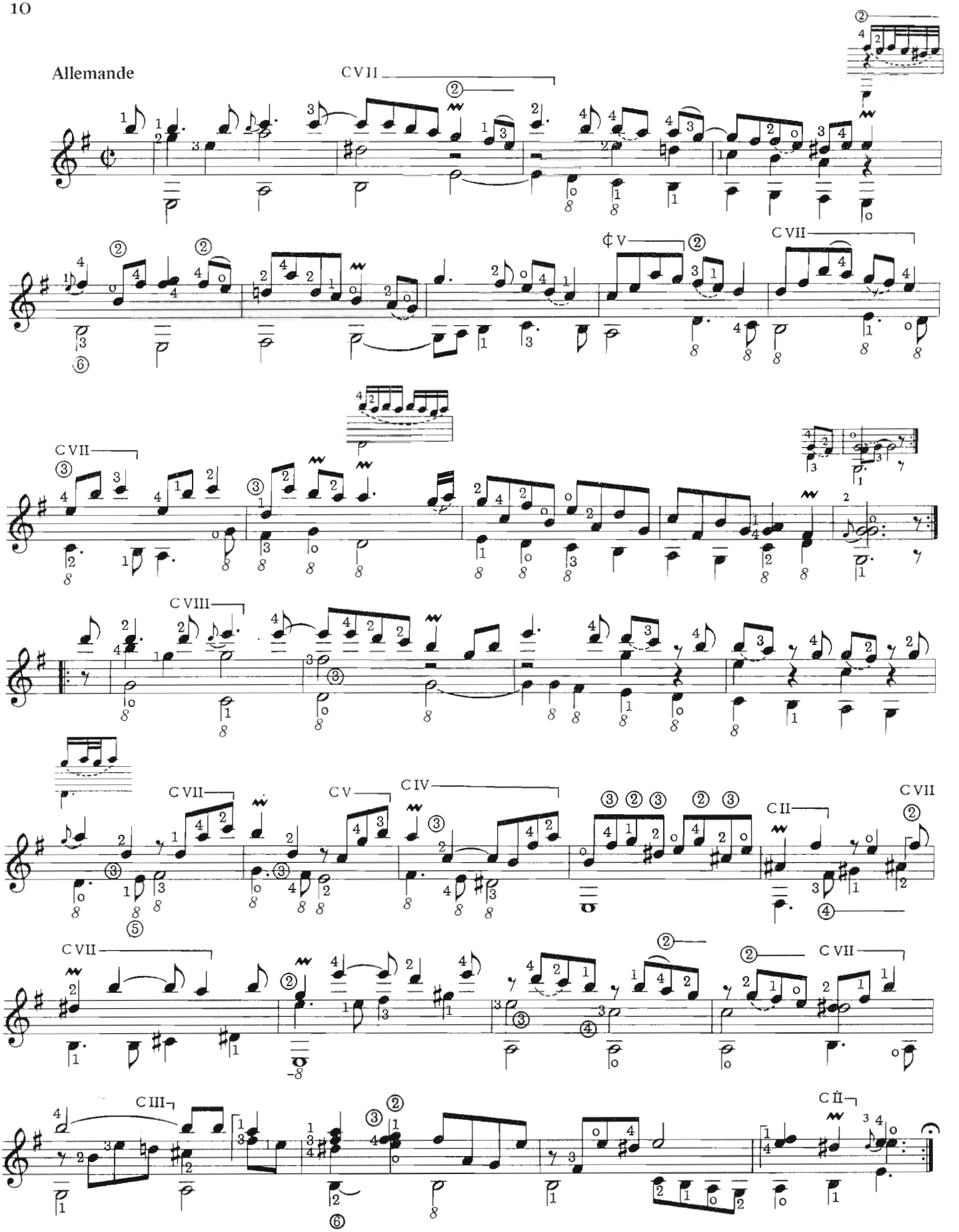
Prelude

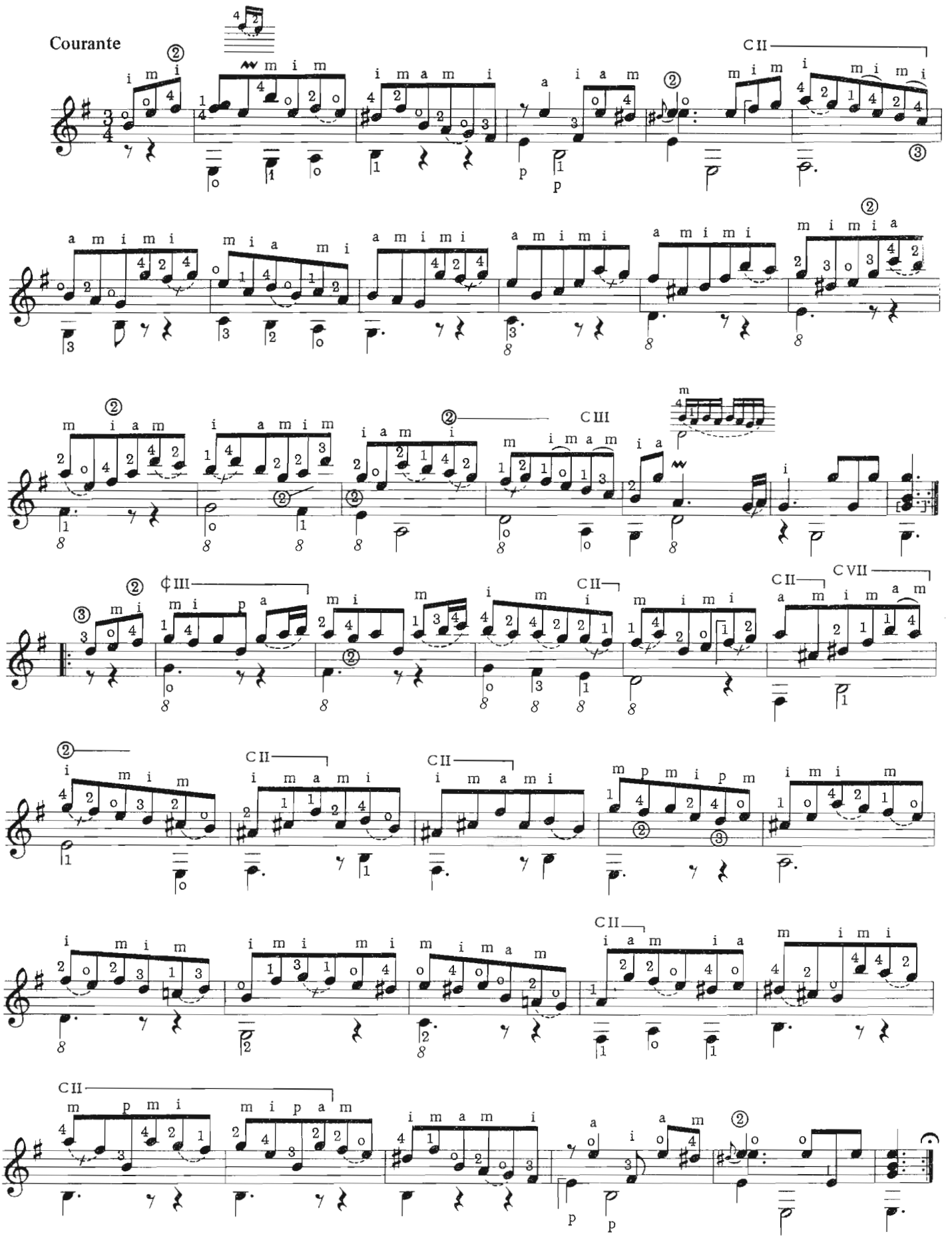


* Dresden Landesbibliothek manuscript *Musica 2841, V. 1*

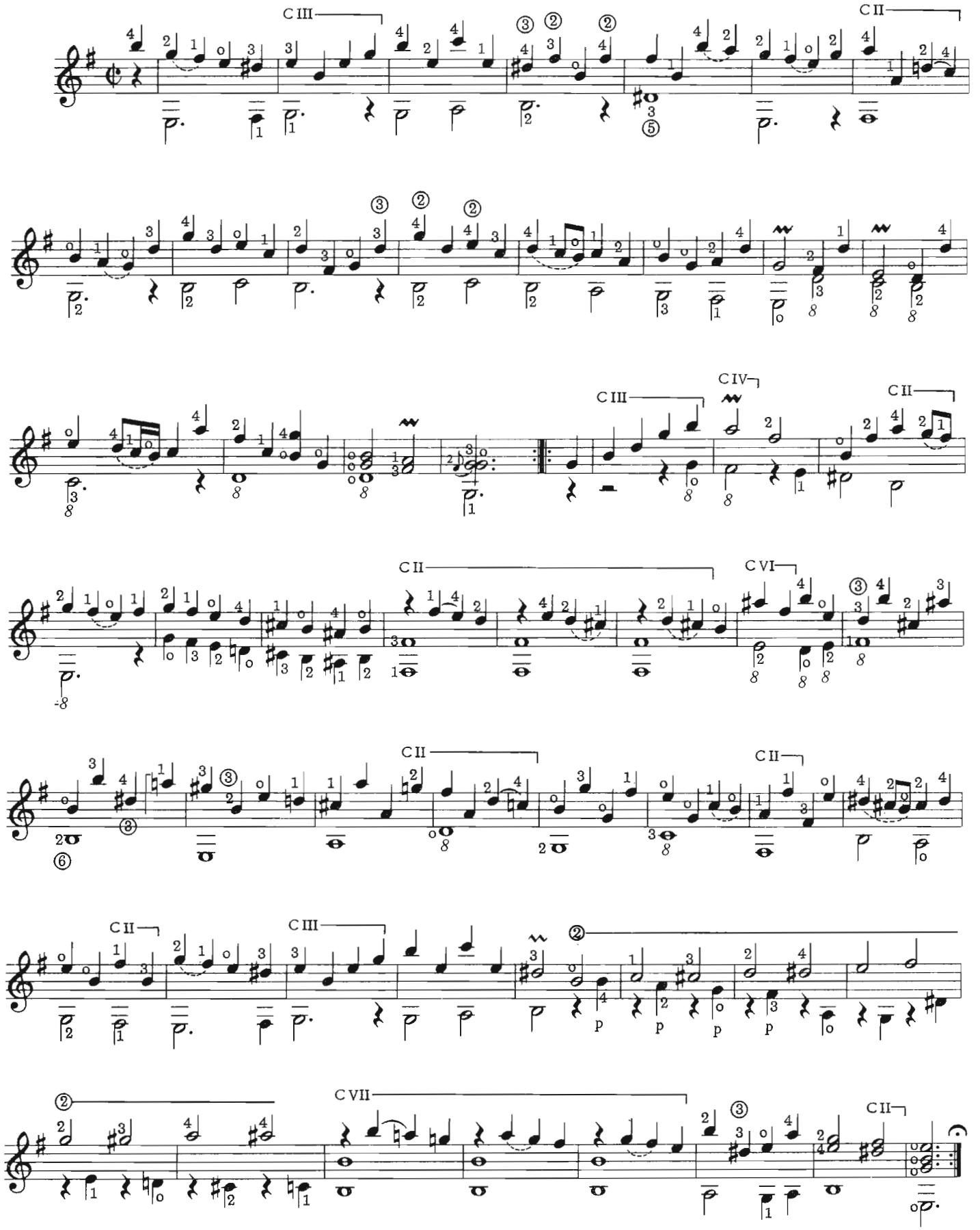

CII
CIII
*CIV
CII
[arpeggios:]
p i m a
etc.
i m a p
p
CII
*Orig.:

Allemande

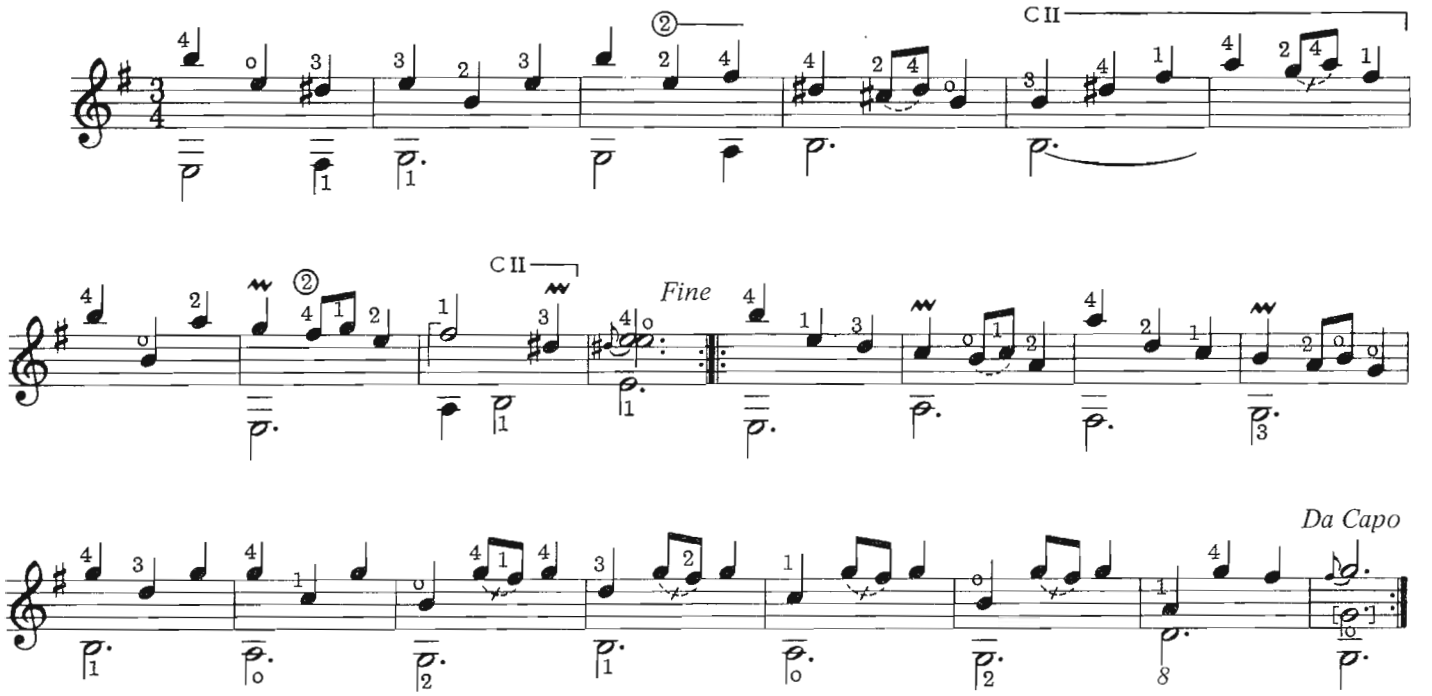



Courante
CII
CIII
CVII
¢III

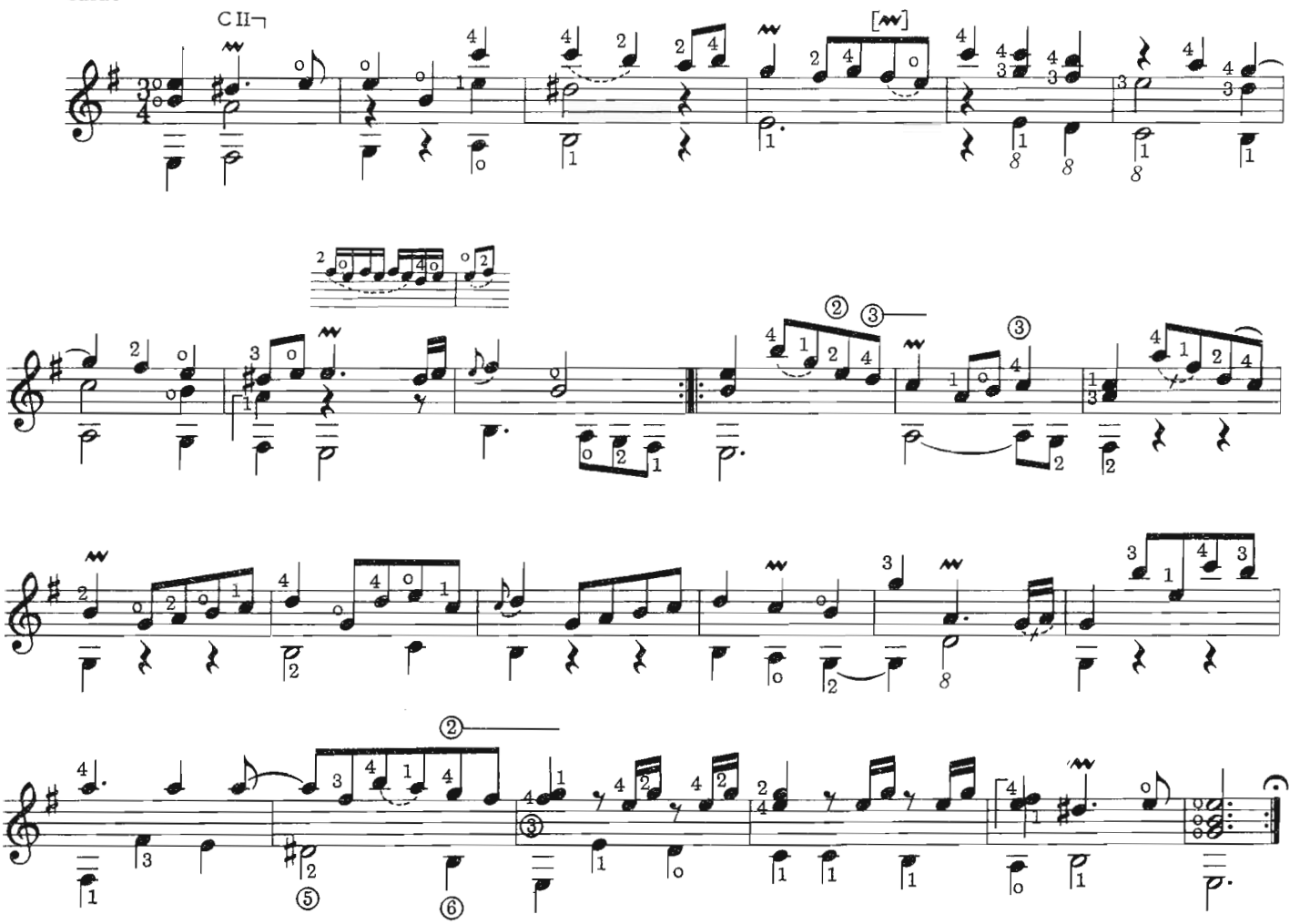
Bourée



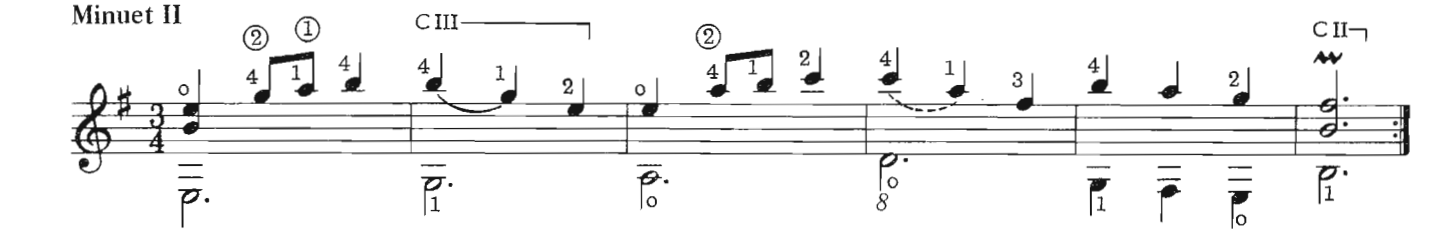
Minuet I

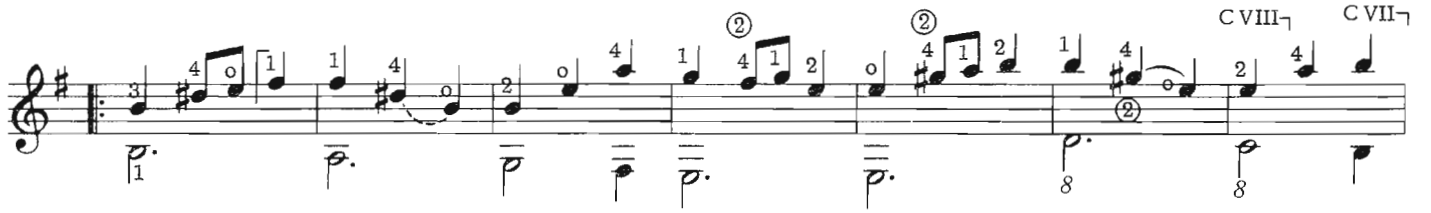


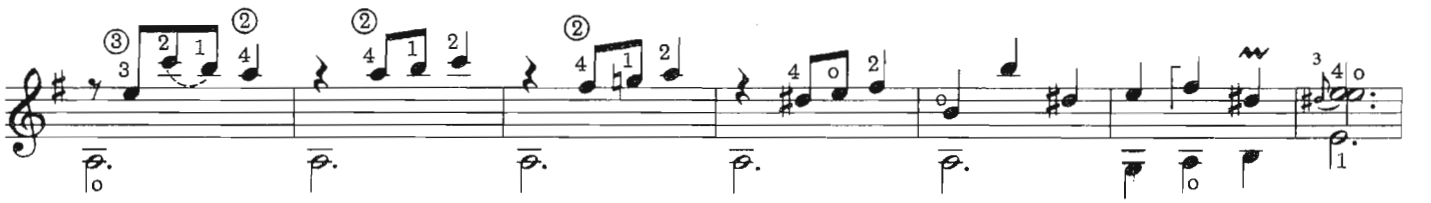
Sarabanda



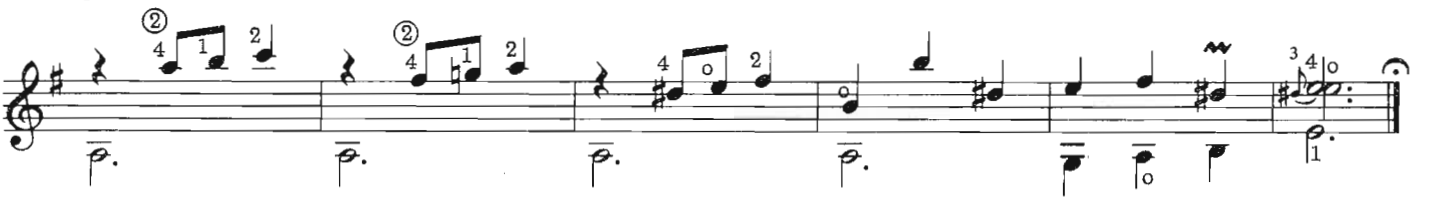
Minuet II



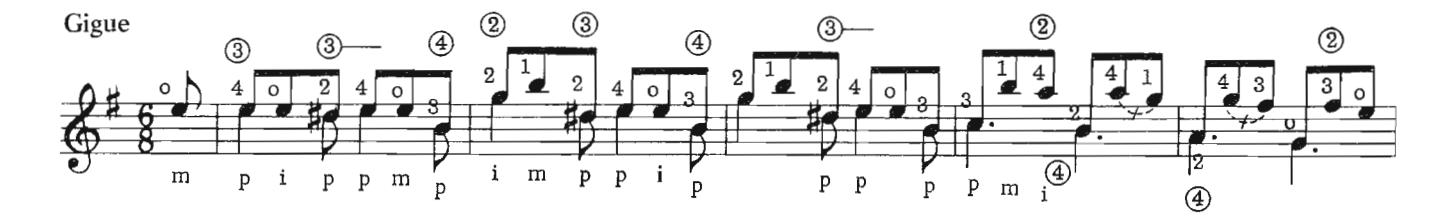


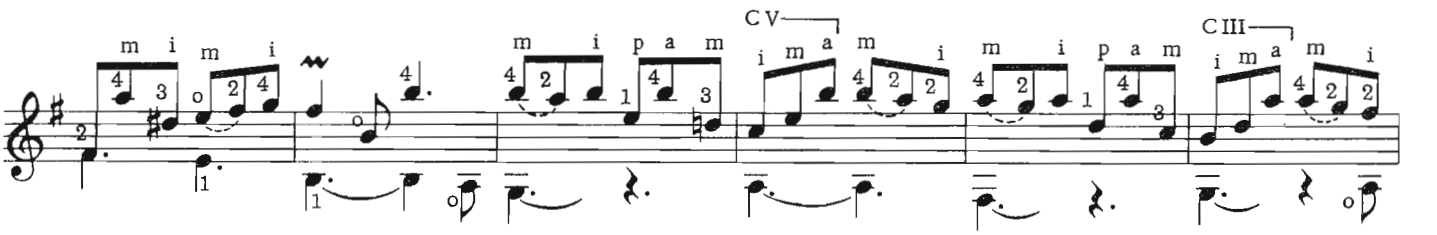


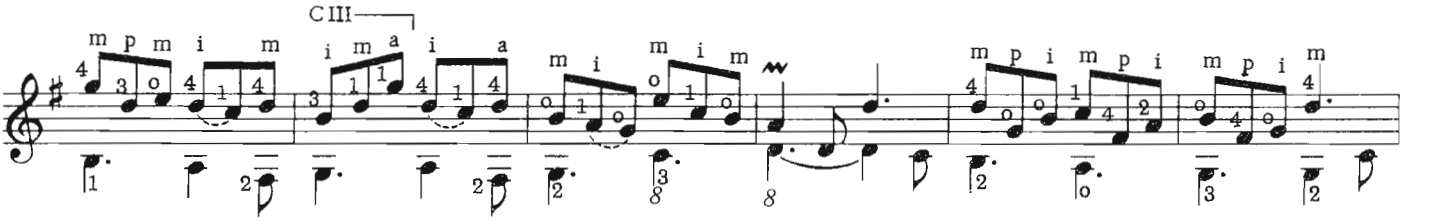
[petite reprise:]

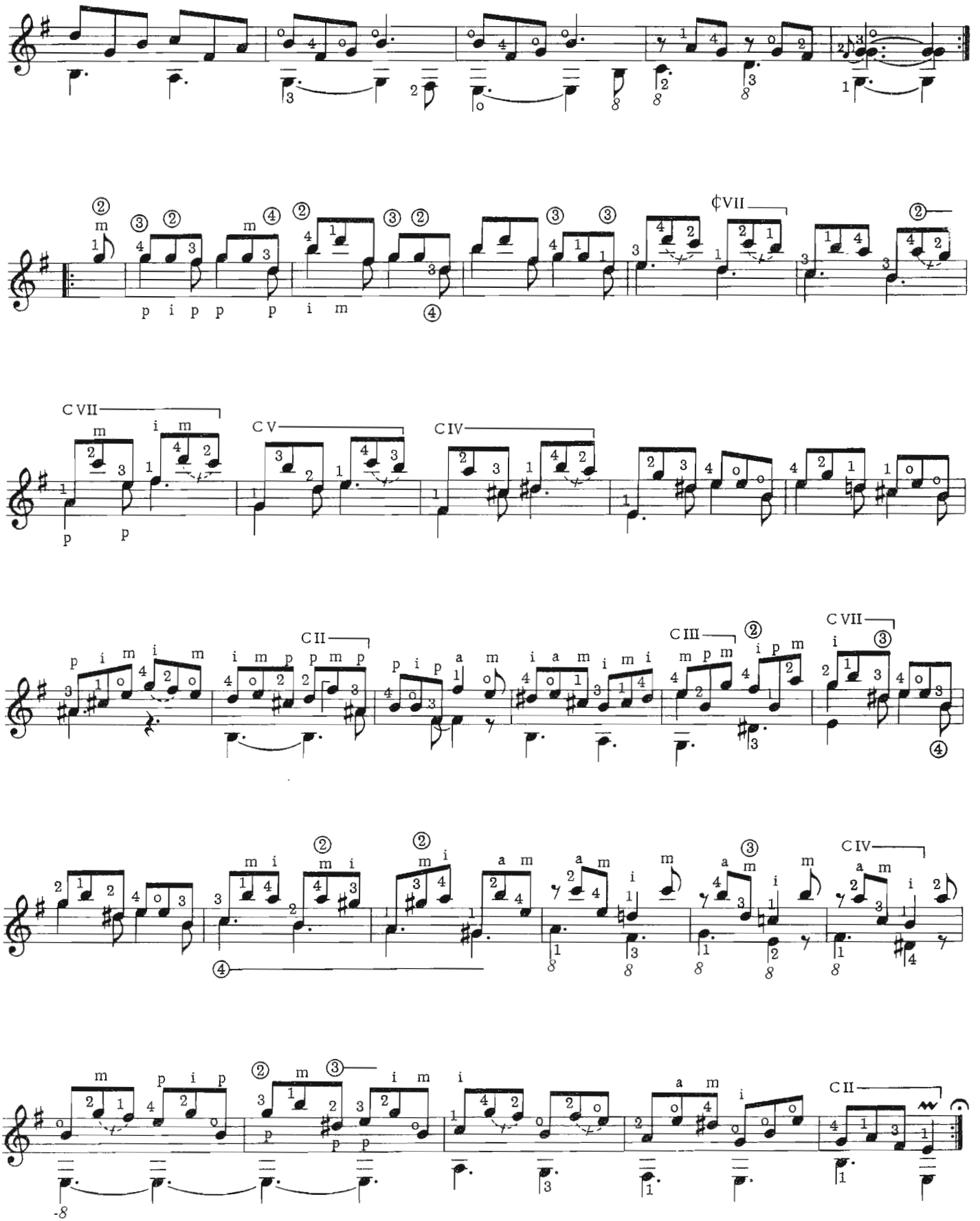


Gigue








¢VII
CVII
CV
CIV
CII
CIII
CVII
CIV
CII