DOI 10.20504/opus2026.32.19

CC BY

Article

Alberto José Gomes da Silva Revisited: Life and Work of a Visionary Composer

Mafalda S. **Nejmeddine**
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4992-6643
Universidade de Évora, Centro de Estudos em Música (CESEM), Portugal

Maria João **Albuquerque**
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4416-7817
Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Instituto de Etnomusicologia – Centro de Estudos em Música e Dança (INET-md), Portugal

Abstract: Two printed works by Alberto José Gomes da Silva are known, edited by himself, both published a few years after the 1755 earthquake, before the arrival of Francisco Milcent, who, in 1765, came to Portugal to introduce the art of engraving music. These are the *Regras de acompanhar para cravo, ou orgaõ* (1758) and the *Sei sonate per cembalo* (176-). The fact that the only surviving copies of the *Sei sonate per cembalo* were all found abroad and the entry of his name appears in a German biographical dictionary dated 1792, allows us to understand that these editions guaranteed Alberto José Gomes da Silva the dissemination of his work outside Portugal. It is unknown what led the composer to make this economic effort, taking into account that he did not have his own fortune, and what impact these editions had on his daily life in Lisbon. To answer these questions, research was carried out on the composer's biography and his works. This article reveals the family aggregate and professional career of this composer, clarifying the conditions that allowed the financing of these editions and the immediate repercussions on his life, from a financial point of view and recognition in his country. On the other hand, it clarifies the history of the two editions managed by himself, revealing a spirit far ahead of its time, which allows us to identify the *Sei sonate per cembalo* as the first work for keyboard instruments published in Portugal in the XVIII century.

Keywords: Gomes da Silva. Musical edition. Keyboard music. Biography. 18th century.

Alberto José Gomes da Silva revisitado: vida e obra de um compositor visionário

Resumo: Conhecem-se duas obras impressas de Alberto José Gomes da Silva, editadas pelo próprio, ambas publicadas poucos anos após o terramoto de 1755, em data anterior à chegada de Francisco Milcent, que, em 1765, veio para Portugal para introduzir a arte de gravar música. Trata-se das *Regras de acompanhar para cravo, ou orgaõ* (1758) e as *Sei sonate per cembalo* (176-). O facto de os únicos exemplares sobreviventes das *Sei sonate per cembalo* terem sido encontrados todos no estrangeiro e a entrada do seu nome constar num dicionário biográfico alemão datado de 1792, permite-nos perceber que estas edições garantiram a Alberto José Gomes da Silva a divulgação da sua obra fora de Portugal. Desconhece-se o que terá levado o compositor a efetuar este esforço económico, tendo em conta que não possuía fortuna própria, e qual o impacto destas edições na sua vida quotidiana, em Lisboa. Para responder a estas questões, foram realizadas pesquisas sobre a biografia do compositor e as suas obras. Neste artigo desvenda-se o agregado familiar e o percurso profissional deste compositor, esclarecendo sobre as condições que permitiram o financiamento destas edições e a repercussão imediata na sua vida, do ponto de vista financeiro e do reconhecimento no seu país. Por outro lado, clarifica-se sobre a história das duas edições agenciadas por ele próprio, reveladoras de um espírito muito à frente do seu tempo, que nos permite identificar as *Sei sonate per cembalo* como a primeira obra para instrumentos de tecla editada em Portugal no século XVIII.

Palavras-chave: Gomes da Silva. Edição musical. Música de tecla. Biografia. Século XVIII.

NEJMEDDINE, Mafalda S.; ALBUQUERQUE, Maria João. Alberto José Gomes da Silva Revisited: Life and Work of a Visionary Composer. *Opus* (Assoc. Nac. Pesqui. Pós-Grad. Música), João Pessoa, v. 32, e263219, p. 1-23, 2026. http://dx.doi.org/10.20504/opus2026.32.19
Recebido em 28/03/2025, aprovado em 28/10/2026, publicado em 06/11/2026.
Editor Responsável: Dr. Vinícius Eufrásio.

At the end of the seventeenth century, music publishing underwent a significant revolution with the introduction of the engraving process using burin and punches, previously used for maps and prints[1]. This allowed the printing of music composed and performed at the end of the 1600s. In other words, the typographic process could not keep pace with the evolution of musical notation of the time, which presented challenges such as complex musical passages, dense chords, and the combination of multiple concertante instruments.

The engraving process allowed for precisely what the composer had written to be etched onto a metal plate. This industry quickly developed in London with John Walsh (1665(?)–1736) and in Amsterdam with Estienne Roger (1665(?)–1722), creating two very active centres of music dissemination where composers gathered to publish their music.

It is important to note that music printed through the engraving process required more expensive production and entailed more substantial financial commitments than handwritten music. This new approach to music printing accelerated the market for sheet music sales, as it was imperative to ensure a return on the initial investment. Publishers used newspaper advertisements and pre-subscription systems to guarantee the distribution of their editions and thus promote composers more effectively.

1. Music Publishing Context in Portugal

Despite this scenario in Central Europe, the circulation of music in Portugal was predominantly in manuscript form. In the first half of the 18th Century, we can only account for one specialised house in Lisbon. This was the *Imprenta de Musica* (1715–1725) by Jaime Te y Sagau (ca. 1680–1736), which operated for about ten years but used the typographic process to print secular cantatas, including works for solo voice as well as for two, three, and four voices (Doderer, 1989, 1998, 1999. Té y Sagau, [1723]). During this period, bookseller publishers also dedicated themselves to printing liturgical books with plainchant passages or music theory books with musical examples, using single-impression music printing (Bernstein, 2023)[2].

Only in the second half of the 18th Century did the first music engravers appear in Portugal, albeit with brief and often precarious enterprises. Francisco Domingos Milcent, invited by the Portuguese Crown in 1765, and Álvares Ribeiro, who in 1791 printed works using woodcut techniques from a Dutch press, were key figures in early Portuguese music publishing. However, between the late 1750s and 1760, two music editions were self-published by Alberto José Gomes da Silva, in Lisbon. These editions used the engraving process and represented a bold and forward-thinking effort on his part to establish his reputation as a composer (Albuquerque, 2006, p. 68 and 77).

1.1 Self-published Works of Gomes da Silva

Alberto José Gomes da Silva was enrolled in the Irmandade de Santa Cecília (Brotherhood of Saint Cecilia), following the royal instructions for all musicians of the time who worked in Lisbon and its suburbs. In 1755, with the Great Lisbon earthquake, the brotherhood lost the book where members were

[1] For this topic, consult Krummel; Sadie, 1990, p. 40-54.

[2] The single-impression method was a letterpress technique in which the musical sign and a short segment of the staff were cast together on a single piece of type. This allowed the music and staff lines to be printed in one press run, making the process more efficient than earlier multiple-impression methods.

registered and ordered a new book to be made to replace the original. Gomes da Silva signed his re-enrollment on November 12, 1764, which states that he was already a member of the brotherhood before the earthquake (Fig. 1).

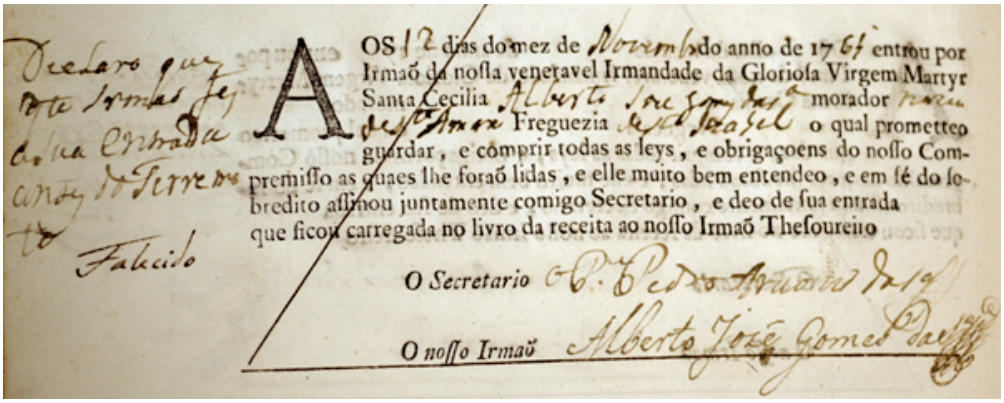
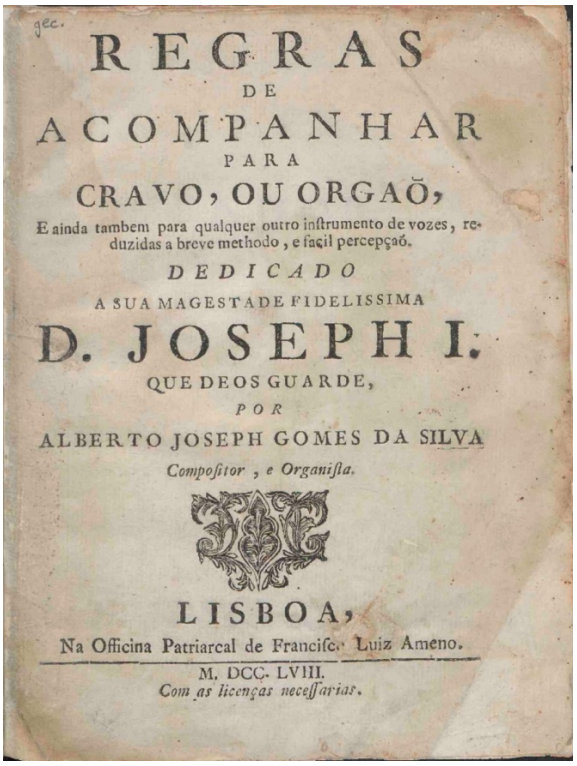


Figure 1. Register of Alberto José Gomes da Silva in the book of entries of the Brotherhood of St. Cecilia.
Source: Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico – Irmandade de Santa Cecília, Livro 1º das entradas dos irmãos (1756–1825), fol. 56v, PT/LSB20/ISC/15/01. [Permission to use the image by the rights holder]

In 1758, he published his first music edition entitled *Regras de acompanhar para cravo, ou órgão* and the second one—*Sei sonate per cembalo*—was likely published early in the 1760s (Gomes da Silva, 1758, ca. 1760). Despite being few, these two works self-published by Alberto José Gomes da Silva reveal a significant pioneering spirit from this composer. Both editions have been the subject of significant scholarly analysis, with several authors examining their contributions (Nejmeddine, 2000. Trilha, 2012).

The first title is frequently referenced in studies on basso continuo. At the same time, the *Sei sonate* is a rare and valuable example of 18th-century Portuguese keyboard music, embodying Italianate style, educational intent, and the broader cultural trends of the period. Mafalda Nejmeddine and Gerhard Doderer carried out the musical analysis of the six sonatas in their modern edition (Doderer; Nejmeddine, 2003), while the recording and production of the album, played on the José Calisto harpsichord, was later undertaken by Mafalda Nejmeddine (Nejmeddine, 2018). However, this analysis of these two editions will concentrate exclusively on aspects related to the publishing process and the historical context of these publications.

Published as an instructional guide on basso continuo accompaniment and dedicated to King José I, this *Regras de acompanhar* stands as the only known Portuguese work exclusively focused on basso continuo (Fig. 2). Presented in a quarto codex, it features numerous musical examples, predominantly etched—a technique not yet widely adopted in Portugal for music printing—though a few examples (p. 2-4) are rendered in woodcut.


gec.

REGRAS
DE
ACOMPANHAR
PARA
CRAVO, OU ORGAÕ,
E ainda tambem para qualquer outro inſtrumento de vozes, reduzidas a breve methodo, e façil percepçaõ.
DEDICADO
A SUA MAGESTADE FIDELISSIMA
D. JOSEPH I.
QUE DEOS GUARDE,
POR
ALBERTO JOSEPH GOMES DA SILVA
Compoſitor, e Organiſta.
LISBOA,
Na Officina Patriarcal de Franciſco Luiz Ameno.
M. DCC. LVIII.
Com as licenças neceſſarias.

Figure 2. *Cover page of Regras de acompanhar para cravo, ou orgão, […] por Alberto Joseph Gomes da Silva. Compositor e Organista.*
Source: Utrecht University Library, catalog ODL 3242. [Digitized by the Utrecht University Library; CC BY-NC-SA 4.0]

In the early 18th century, metal engraving in Portugal flourished, primarily due to foreign influence, as King João V invited French and Flemish engravers to teach the craft to local artists (Ramada Curto *et al.*, 2007). Within this context, the French printer Guilherme Francisco Lourenço Debrie (fl. 1731–1762) arrived in Portugal in 1731 at the king's invitation, contributing extensively through his book illustrations, saint images, portraits of nobility, and ornate frontispieces.

In Gomes da Silva's *Regras de acompanhar*, several plates (f. 2 after p. 33) bear signatures by Debrie and Carlos Peixoto, while others were made by lesser-known engravers from Porto. Debrie does not sign any plates with musical notation, while Peixoto signs only one. Most musical plates are either unsigned or marked with the abbreviation 'S.za,' whose origin remains unclear. It may reference 'Sousa,' although no engraver by this name is documented from that period.

The most curious feature of this work is an explanatory wheel for interval formation engraved by Debrie (p. 6). It consists of a wheel with interval classifications and a rotating central disc indicating tones, fastened to the folio with a metal tack, allowing transposition calculations. Ten copies of *Regras de acompanhar* are identified: five in Portugal (Coimbra, Lisbon, Mafra) and the others in Brazil, the United States, and the Netherlands. Few of these copies retain the explanatory wheel intact, and none are registered in the RISM.

The other edition, *Sei sonate per cembalo*, was likely self-published by the author in the early 1760s and fully engraved using the etching process. Given the high quality of the engraving and the lack of specialised music engravers in Portugal at that time, it was likely produced abroad at the author's

CC BY

expense. The title page, however, appears to be the work of Debrie, showing stylistic elements typical of this engraver. The paper, from the Dutch firm C. & I. Honig, was also uncommon in Portugal at the time, where music printing was still underdeveloped.

2. Dissemination of *Sei Sonate per Cembalo* as a Promotion of the Composer

As mentioned earlier, there are 10 copies of *Regras de acompanhar*, but only three surviving copies of Gomes da Silva's *Sei sonate per cembalo*. The National Library of Portugal (catalog P-Ln C.I.C. 87 V.) holds a notable copy acquired by Ivo Cruz,[3] part of the Ivo Cruz Collection. Previously in London, this particular copy was purchased by Cruz at an auction and later sold to the National Library of Portugal in 1971, forming an integral part of the Ivo Cruz Collection. The acquisition was highly significant and was reported in the national press at the time, as noted by Ivo Cruz in his book *O que fiz e o que não fiz* (1985).

This copy is bound with marbled paper guards and bears the ex-libris of George Livius. Through this ex-libris, we can trace this copy's history to its first owner, George Livius, who was born in Lisbon in 1743 to a German merchant from Hamburg and an Irish mother. In 1775, Livius served as General Commissioner at the English East India Company, where he established himself in Calcutta and amassed a considerable fortune. By 1785, he returned to England and married the daughter of Joseph Foster-Barham, thereby integrating into a wealthy English family (Izard; Reichart, 1940).

There is speculation that this copy travelled to England when Livius left Portugal. Subsequently it was sold at an auction and eventually acquired by Ivo Cruz. The trajectory of this copy is particularly significant because it reveals Gomes da Silva's unusual awareness of the mechanisms of dissemination available to printed music[4]. In a Portuguese context where music printing was not yet supported by a stable commercial infrastructure, the fact that the composer financed the edition himself and appears to have promoted its circulation through wealthy and influential foreign owners suggests a remarkably forward-looking distribution strategy. Gomes da Silva's publication of the *Sei Sonate per Cembalo* may therefore be understood as an attempt to devise a visionary strategy for promoting and circulating his own music through print, in line with early eighteenth-century practices adopted by composers such as Antonio Vivaldi with *L'estro armonico*, published by Estienne Roger in Amsterdam in 1711 (Mcveigh, 2002), or Handel through his relationship with John Walsh in London, especially in the late 1730s (Burrows, 2008; Zur Nieden; Over, 2023).

The British Library in London (catalog GB-Lbl d.8.) houses the second copy of this edition. One of only three surviving examples, this copy is notably the most damaged, with significant portions of ink missing on various folios. These gaps were meticulously filled by hand using sepia ink, indicating an

[3] Manuel Ivo Cruz (1901–1985) was a Portuguese conductor, composer, and teacher. He was Director of the National Conservatory (1938–1971) and founder of the Lisbon Philharmonic Orchestra. He assembled an important bibliographic collection on musical themes, now housed in the National Library of Portugal as the Ivo Cruz Collection. This collection includes extremely rare and unique printed works.

[4] Printed music played an important role in the dissemination of domestic repertories, small-scale commercial formats, and music manuals across Europe. Recent studies have shown this process in several European contexts: Gibson and Southey (2024) reconstruct domestic routes of acquisition and use in northern England, linking London, Edinburgh, and Newcastle; Utne-Reitan (2025) discusses the printed transmission of music theory in Norway; Lebedinski (2020) shows how English vocal music circulated through songbooks, broadsides, and single-sheet engravings; and the importance of intermediaries and commercial networks is further underlined by Górny (2023).

effort to preserve the legibility and integrity of the text. Additionally, this copy no longer retains its original period binding, having been rebound in modern times. This modern binding reflects ongoing conservation efforts to maintain the physical condition of the volume despite its historical wear and damage. Once again, we find an edition in England suggesting that a wealthy individual residing in Portugal could have taken it there. This recurring pattern of editions appearing in England highlights the mobility of such works and the role of affluent patrons in their dissemination. These individuals, who often had extensive networks and the means to travel, likely contributed to the international spread of these editions. The presence of these works in England further underscores the cultural exchanges between Portugal and England during this period, facilitated by the movement of the elite[5].

A third copy, recently discovered, is housed in the Library of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels (La Bibliothèque du Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, catalog B-Bc 11258) (Fig. 3). According to the institution's librarian, this copy originates from the collection of Johann Jacob Heinrich Westphal (1756–1825). Around 1835, François-Joseph Fétis, the first director of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, acquired it. In 1846, the Belgian state purchased part of Westphal's collection to integrate it into the Conservatory's holdings (Bruxelles, 2024). This historical trajectory could explain why this particular exemplar of the edition of the six sonatas is now preserved at the Library of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels.

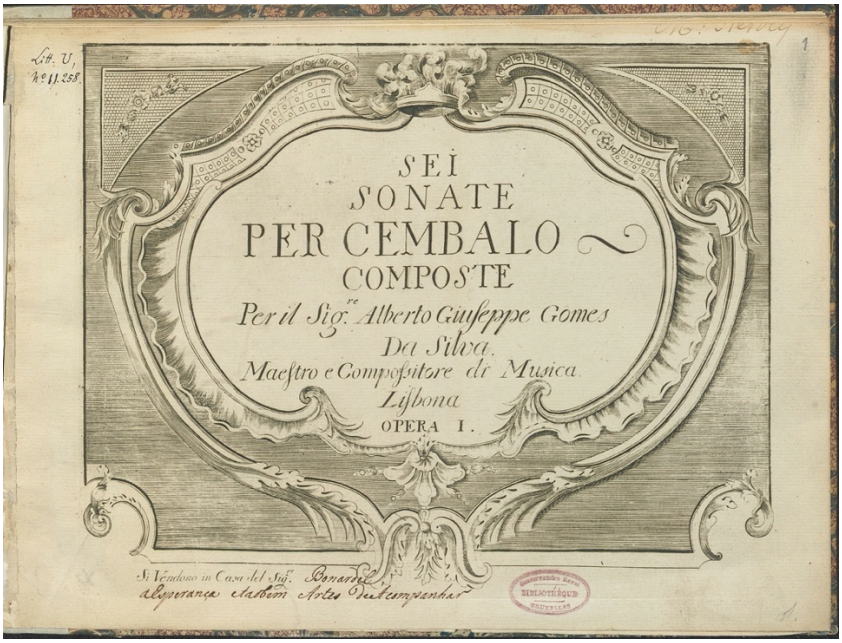


Figure 3. Cover page of Sei sonate per cembalo: Opera I composte per il Sigre. Alberto Giuseppe Gomes da Silva Maestro e Compositore di Musica.

Source: La Bibliothèque du Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, réf. B-Bc 11258. [Permission to use the image by the rights holder]

This copy is distinguished by its late 18th-century binding, reflecting the historical context of its preservation and its journey through various significant collections before arriving at its current location. Now held at the Library of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, this copy exemplifies how Gomes da Silva's

[5] For insights into the representations of Portugal during the late 18th and 19th centuries, consult Sousa (2003) and Nery (2001).

targeted distribution strategy successfully facilitated the spread of his music beyond Portugal, reaching and embedding itself within prestigious foreign collections.

From the surviving copies, we can see that all were abroad, even the one now belonging to the National Library of Portugal, taken by temporary foreign residents in our country. This edition was also likely distributed by foreign publishing houses and booksellers, including manuscript copies of the original printed edition, as evidenced by an entry found in Gerber's dictionary: "da Silva (Gomes). Around 1780, Westphal's music shop had six keyboard sonatas in manuscript by this composer"[6]. This practice was quite common at the time, with music publishers often manually copying popular editions for sale within fashionable circles of the period.

Through the edition of his sonatas, Gomes da Silva aimed to disseminate his work internationally, not limiting it to the national market. It was undoubtedly an excellent self-promotion campaign, similar to what other European musicians were already doing, allowing him recognition through an entry in a German dictionary. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Gomes da Silva's peers, such as Solano, did not mention his sonatas but instead praised his theoretical work. For example, in 1779, Solano commended Gomes da Silva's *Regras de Acompanhar* in his *Novo tratado musica métrica, e rythmica*.

> […] I did not forget that the Rules for accompanying the Harpsichord and the Organ are composed with the utmost precision by the best Professors, already printed, already in manuscript […] those of the very meritorious Harpsichordist Mr. Alberto José Gomes da Silva in Lisbon in the year 1758[7].

However, Gomes da Silva's work seems to have fallen into oblivion after his death.

When, in the second half of the 19th Century, Inocencio Francisco da Silva undertook the task of describing the national bibliography in a dictionary, he initially found no surviving copies of Gomes da Silva's works. He noted that Gomes da Silva "appears to have been a professional musician. Composed and printed in Lisbon in 1758 an Art or Principles of Music under this or a similar title,"[8] adding that the work seemed rare and was known only through a citation by Francisco Ignacio Solano. Later, in 1865, Inocêncio acquired a copy of Silva's work, confirming its title and publication details (Silva, 1858–1867, vol. 4, p. 23).

Fétis's entry in his *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique* (1866, vol. 4, p. 55) likely contributed to clarifying the bibliographic details of Gomes da Silva's *Regras de acompanhar*. In this entry, Fétis accurately mentions the work but observes that the harmony examples in the manual reflect poorly on Gomes da Silva's musical taste and knowledge. Fétis's awareness of Gomes da Silva's work was likely linked to his acquisition of Westphal's collection, where the sonatas were included. However, it is odd that Fétis did not mention the sonatas in his account.

[6] "da Silva (Gomes): von diesen [sic] [diesem] Komponisten befanden sich in der Westphalischen Musikhandlung VI Klaviersonaten in MS Ums Jahr 1780". (Gerber, 1790–1792, vol. 2, p. 519)
[7] "[…] não me esqueci, de que as Regras de accompanhar ao Cravo, e ao Orgão correm compostas com todo o acerto pelos melhores Professores, já impressas, já manuscriptas […] as do muito benemerito Cravista o Senhor Alberto José Gomes da Silva em Lisboa no anno de 1758." (Solano, 1779, p. vii).
[8] "que parece ter sido musico de profissão. Compoz e imprimiu em Lisboa no anno de 1758 uma Arte ou Principios de Musica com este ou diverso titulo." (Silva, 1858–1867, vol. 1, p. 24).

3. Aim and Methodology

Considering the importance of these editions in the Portuguese music publishing context of the time, we aim to know the origin of the financing of both and the impact they had on Gomes da Silva's life. We also aim to investigate the strategies employed by Alberto José Gomes da Silva in disseminating his music through printed editions and to understand the socio-economic and cultural factors that influenced these efforts.

This study includes research into the composer's household and professional activity. Based on Gomes da Silva's address indicated in the book of entries of the brotherhood of St. Cecilia, we searched for his family in the parish's records, preserved at Torre do Tombo National Archive, as well as in the *Conjunto Documental da Décima da Cidade* (St. Isabel Parish, Lisbon) preserved at the Court of Auditors Historical Archive, both in Lisbon. To find out more about his professional activity, we consulted documents related to the Brotherhood of Saint Cecilia.

The study also involves a comprehensive analysis of the extant copies of Gomes da Silva's editions. This analysis is complemented by biographical research to contextualise Gomes da Silva's initiatives within the broader framework of 18th-century music publishing. Archival research, provenance studies, and examination of historical records related to key figures such as Francisco Luís Ameno and Lourenço António Bonardel are employed to trace these editions' distribution networks and impact.

This multidisciplinary approach enables a thorough understanding of the family context and the significance of Gomes da Silva's work, as well as its contribution to the international dissemination of Portuguese music.

4. Commercial strategy

Good distribution was also necessary for the success of the edition. At that time, there were no specialised music sales in Portugal. Only in 1791 did the first Music Warehouse emerge, initiated by harpsichordist Pedro Anselmo Marchal, who later founded the first music publisher in our country in partnership with Francisco Domingos Milcent (1792–1793)[9]. Thus, when Gomes da Silva edited his sonatas and *Regras de Acompanhar*, the distribution channels were mainly booksellers, mostly of French origin (established in Lisbon from the 1730s), small retailers of miscellaneous warehouses, and harpsichord makers and tuners who published advertisements in the Lisbon Gazette to publicise the sheet music they had for sale in their establishments.

During the period when these two editions were printed, we do not find any advertisements in the Lisbon Gazette or any other periodical of the time. This indicates that Gomes da Silva adopted a commercial strategy to monetise his investment better, using a printer and publisher highly influential in Lisbon society and very close to the royal power, Francisco Luís Ameno.

[9] Pedro Anselmo Marchal (1762–c.1828), a harpsichordist and music teacher, began selling music in his shop in 1791. In 1792, he partnered with Francisco Domingos Milcent (c.1739–1806) to establish the Real Impressão de Música, a music publishing house, and together they printed the Jornal de Modinhas. Milcent, the first professional music engraver in Portugal, had previously founded the Real Fábrica de Música in 1788. After the partnership ended, Marchal continued publishing independently, while Milcent maintained his influential role in the development of Portuguese music printing until his death (Albuquerque, 2006).

Francisco Luís Ameno (fl. 1740–1793) was a printer, translator, and author of several works spanning theatre, poetry, education, and pedagogy (Gama, 1967). He was a distinguished printer and language scholar credited with works like the *Exegetic Dictionary* (1781) and praised by bibliographers such as Inocêncio and Barbosa Machado for his pedagogical contributions. Renowned for his high-quality prints and typefaces, Ameno's press became one of the finest in Portugal. His close ties to the king secured him a ten-year privilege to print the *Portuguese Comic Theatre* (1759) collection, featuring works by António José da Silva, *o Judeu*. From 1755, his shop operated under the name Officina Patriarcal de Francisco Luís Ameno, reflecting his influence in Lisbon. Despite a brief imprisonment in Brazil in 1777, likely for attempting to establish a press there, he returned to Lisbon, where his publishing house thrived until he died in 1793.

Although Francisco Luís Ameno handled the edition, it becomes clear from a petition to the Royal Censorship Board that it was the author himself who commissioned its printing and took responsibility for creating the plates for the musical examples. Indeed, in his petition to the institution, he requested a ten-year printing privilege to prevent "any person without his consent from printing, selling, or importing a book of which the supplicant is the author and intends to publish, titled Regras da composição para cravo ou órgão," emphasising that he had incurred "great expenses to print the said book with engravings, ensuring it is of the highest quality for clarity [...] otherwise, he will not recover his efforts and expenses."[10]

Since all the financial effort, as we will see later, belonged to Gomes da Silva, Francisco Luís Ameno's collaboration was mainly intended to ensure high-quality printing, good contacts with top engravers who could open the engraving matrices and musical examples, and also to rely on his influence and guarantee of good public recognition to ensure the successful distribution of the edition.

4.1 Determining the Publication Date of Sei sonate per cembalo

It was not only through Francisco Luís Ameno that Gomes da Silva ensured good distribution of his work. The recent discovery of a copy belonging to the Royal Conservatory Library in Brussels allowed us to confirm that the six sonatas, as well as the *Regras de acompanhar*, were sold at the Casa de Bonardel, as indicated by the inscription on the title page "Si vendono in Casa del Sig.re Bonardel a Esperança e taobem Artes de Acompanhar" (Fig. 4).



Figure 4. Imprint from the cover page of Sei sonate per cembalo by Alberto Giuseppe Gomes da Silva.
Source: La Bibliothèque du Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, catalog B-Bc 11258. [Permission to use the image by the rights holder – confirmation required]

[10] "pessoa algua sem faculdade sua possa imprimir, vender ou mandar vir de fora hum livro de que o supplicante he auctor, e pretende dar ao prelo intitulado Regras da composição para cravo ou órgão" uma vez que fizera "grande despeza para imprimir o referido livro em estampas, só assim da melhor percepção […] de outra sorte senão recuperará do seu trabalho e despeza" (Portugal, 1756-1769).

Regarding the French bookselling Bonardel family, Ramada Curto *et al*. (2007) inform us that three families with the surname Bonardel (sometimes indicated as Bonnardel) practised the book trade in Lisbon (Ramada Curto *et al*., 2007):

- José Bonardel established himself between 1753 and 1760, residing at Portas de Santa Catarina and, after the 1755 earthquake, at Alto da Calçada do Combro;
- Lourenço António Bonardel between 1756 and 1762, residing at Largo da Cruz da Esperança;
- Pedro José Bonardel between 1814 and 1821, at Rua do Correio Geral, near Calhariz.

They all likely belonged to the same family, as their addresses are very close. In the specific case of the sale of the *Sonatas* sheet music, the seller was undoubtedly Lourenço António Bonardel, who was in Portugal between 1756 and 1762, as the address associated with the seller refers to "A Esperança," clearly indicating Largo da Cruz da Esperança, where this merchant had his shop (Gama, 1967).

Lourenço António Bonardel, the distributor of Gomes da Silva's sonatas, was subjected to an inquiry by the Inquisition between 1757 and 1759, for smuggling and selling prohibited books (Portugal, 1757–1759), having been even imprisoned for questioning and prohibited from exercising his activity. After June 1759, he resumed his activities in Lisbon, operating his shop at Largo da Cruz da Esperança until June 1762 before leaving Portugal later that year. The handwritten sales note on the sonatas' score confirms that they were published after Gomes da Silva's *Regras de Acompanhar*, as this one was already available in Bonardel's

shop when the sonatas began to be sold. This evidence suggests the sonatas were printed at the beginning of the 1760s, during the short window when Bonardel was active in Lisbon after his trial at the Court of the Holy Office. These details firmly place the publication and distribution of the six sonatas between 1760 and 1762.

However, what is particularly interesting to note is how Lourenço António Bonardel's trial before the Inquisition highlights his significant influence within Portuguese society and his strong connections with diplomats in Lisbon. Accused of smuggling and selling prohibited books, Bonardel claimed that the collection—comprising novels, philosophical treatises, and even libertine literature—was solely for the use of the Dutch ambassador, protected by diplomatic immunity. However, discovering duplicate copies suggested a broader illicit trade, likely catering to influential individuals within the ambassador's circle.

Despite these accusations, Bonardel's connections ensured his release and allowed him to resume business. By 1761, he was again active in Lisbon, as noted in the Annales Typographiques (Annales, 1761, p. 382-384). This reputation as a well-connected and resourceful bookseller likely led Gomes da Silva to choose Bonardel to distribute his six sonatas. Bonardel's established network and prominence in Lisbon's intellectual and diplomatic circles would have offered Gomes da Silva the best opportunity to broadly disseminate his work. How Gomes da Silva financed his editions remains to be understood, since we have already seen that it was a personal investment, and what these editions contributed to his career. This is what we will address next.

5. Financing conditions

5.1 The family

Alberto José Gomes da Silva was the son of Manuel Gomes da Silva and Constança Joaquina and had two siblings, António José and Rita Germana (Paróquia de Carnide, 1727–1780, f. 108. Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1759–1761, f. 336)[11]. His sister, Rita Germana, married the Italian doctor João José Salomão, on December 28, 1755, in the Parish Church of St. Lourenço de Carnide, in Lisbon[12]. Gomes da Silva was a witness and signed the marriage registry, which took place a month after the great Lisbon earthquake.

This document indicates that Rita Germana was baptized in the Parish of Our Lady of Conceição da Rua Nova and lived in the Parish of St. José, both in Lisbon, having been registered in the latter parish in Lent 1755. During Lent, each parish filled out a book with the names of the people who lived in the houses and who were old enough to confess and receive communion. The books of baptism and mixed registers of the Parish of Our Lady of Conceição da Rua Nova do not contain the names of Rita Germana or her brother, Alberto José (Paróquia da Conceição Nova, 1701–1713, 1713–1737, 1723–1730, 1737–1754). The only book of confessants from the Parish of St. José, preserved from the period before the great Lisbon earthquake, also does not contain their names (Paróquia de São José, 1753).

When Rita got married, she and her future husband lived in the parish of Carnide (Paróquia de Carnide, 1727–1780, f. 108). We do not know whether Alberto José Gomes da Silva lived with his sister at this time[13]. Between 1756 and 1759, the whereabouts of the family are unknown.

From 1759, Gomes da Silva and his family lived in the Parish of St. Isabel (Lisbon) with his brother, sister and her husband (Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1759–1761, f. 62). He had a property under construction on the south side of St. Amaro Street (Portugal, 1762–1763a, f. 151 and 152v). The family had two servants at their service and, the following year, four servants and a nanny were hired, specially to take care of Rita Germana and her husband's child(ren) (Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1759–1761, f. 62 and 186v).

6. Financial impact

6.1 Housing

During the years 1761 to 1764, Gomes da Silva's family kept three employees working at home (Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1759–1761, f. 336, 1762–1764, f. 142v, 247v and 332v). In this last year, the construction of the ground floor and first floor of the house was completed (Portugal, 1764, f. 121).

After Lent 1765, his sister and her husband left the house and Gomes da Silva lived alone, with a servant, until the early 1770s (Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1765–1766, f. 276v, 1767–1768, f. 11v

[11] The spelling of the names has been adapted to modern Portuguese.
[12] The name of the groom, whose registry states João Baptista Salomão (brother of João José Salomão), is corrected in a note written in the margin of the registry, dated 1831. This register also indicates a wrong origin of the groom, since he was not French. João José Salomão was Italian, born in Savona, Genoa. When he died, he was buried in the Church of Loreto, also known as the church of the Italians, as was customary for Italians living in Lisbon (Paróquia de Loreto, 1679–1778, f. 196).
[13] The books of confessed of the Parish of Carnide were not available for research.

and 200, 1769–1770, f. 23v and 190v). On May 8, 1770, João José Salomão died and Rita Germana Teresa Rosa Salomão came with her six daughters and one son, all minors, to live with Gomes da Silva (Paróquia de Mercês, 1745–1779, f. 27). Gomes da Silva only lived on the ground floor, but with the family's return he also occupied the first floor (Portugal, 1770, f. 192 v, 1771, f. 215v. Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1771–1775, f. 13). In 1779, the building was extended with an attic, which was also occupied by the family (Portugal, 1779, f. 149v).

Rita Germana died on May 31, 1783, and Gomes da Silva was left alone with his nephews, minors, in his house (Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1780–1784, f. 172v, 1784, n.p.). In 1792, Gomes da Silva rented the first floor to Joaquim José de Sousa and began living with his nephews in the attic (Portugal, 1792, f. 105v. Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1791–1792, n.p.). On June 25, 1793, he died, single, in his house on St. Amaro Street, which, later that year, became the property of his nephew, João Honorato Salomão (Portugal, 1793, f. 103. Paróquia de Santa Isabel, 1790–1800, f. 84v).

6.2 Revenue

The documentation related to Gomes da Silva's income dates back to the years 1762/1763, when the *Décima* tax on income was relaunched, including those arising from the profession. In the books where this tax was recorded, Gomes da Silva appears as 'master of music' (1769) and 'master of harpsichord(s)' (from 1780 to 1791) (Portugal, 1769, f. 176, 1780, f. 158, 1791, f. 106).

In 1762/63, Gomes da Silva paid 10$000 réis in tax (Portugal, 1762–1763b, f. 162). This amount was almost double the tax paid by his brother-in-law, João José Salomão, who was a professor of medicine and paid 5$600 réis in tax in the same year (Portugal, 1762–1763b, f. 162, 1765, f. 111v). The taxes paid in the following years are unknown. From 1772 onwards, the amount of tax paid by Gomes da Silva varied and never reached the previous level (see Table 1).

Years	Tax paid	Reference
1762/63	10$000	PORTUGAL, 1762-1763b, f. 162
1772	2$400	PORTUGAL, 1772, f. 172
1774	2$000	PORTUGAL, 1774, f. 177v
1775	2$000	PORTUGAL, 1775, f. 178
1780	$800	PORTUGAL, 1780, f. 158
1781	$800	PORTUGAL, 1781, f. 178
1782	$800	PORTUGAL, 1782, f. 161v
1783	$700	PORTUGAL, 1783, f. 164
1784	$600	PORTUGAL, 1784, f. 160v
1785	1$200	PORTUGAL, 1785, f. 121
1786	1$200	PORTUGAL, 1786, f. 126
1787	1$200	PORTUGAL, 1787, f. 126
1788	1$200	PORTUGAL, 1788, f. 116v
1789	1$200	PORTUGAL, 1789, f. 124v

Table 1. Tax paid by Alberto José Gomes da Silva between 1762/63 and 1789.
Source: Prepared by the author.

7. Recognition in Portugal

7.1 Professional activity

There are seven documents that prove that Gomes da Silva directed musicians at secular feasts and sacred functions. This activity may have begun on 1 April 1767, when he applied for a director's patent from the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and received it (Irmandade de Santa Cecília, 1760–1824, f. 7). The patent was valid for one year and could be renewed after submitting a report of the events in which he directed, paying the brotherhood fees and a commission for each event. This report was usually called a 'Manifesto' and would include information about the venue, the number of musicians participating and the amount paid to each (Irmandade de Santa Cecília, 1766, f. 6).

Gomes da Silva had his patent from 1767 to 1774 and renewed it in December 1775. Four years later, he applied for a new patent, which was renewed for the year 1781. In December of that year, he claimed to have lost the patent and was granted a third patent, which was renewed until 1789. This time, the brotherhood designated a member responsible for obtaining his 'Manifestos' (Irmandade de Santa Cecília, 1760–1824, f. 7). Although he directed musicians in events for almost twenty years (1767–1774/1776 and 1779–1789), only seven 'Manifestos' have been preserved. They describe twenty-six events that occurred in 1773, 1782 to 1785, 1787 and in an unknown year (see Table 2, in the Appendix)[14].

The events took place mainly in churches in Lisbon (20 events) and a few in private homes (6 events). The repertoire performed was essentially religious, including some events held in private homes. These events were processions, canonical hours, novenas and feast day masses, in which the director was accompanied by a variable number of musicians and sometimes participated himself as organist.

Between 1782 and 1787, with the exception of 1786 for which no 'Manifestos' are preserved, Gomes da Silva directed the music annually at the celebrations of the Holy Trinity Day, St. Peter's Day and the Holy Name of Mary's Day held, respectively, in the churches of St. Isabel, Mercês and St. Martinho. A note inscribed in the 1782 'Manifesto' allows us to conclude that Gomes da Silva had previously directed this last celebration: "I gave 960 to each person who adds up to --- 9$600 / which is what I usually receive from that function"[15].

Of all the functions that Gomes da Silva regularly directed, the St. Peter's Day feast at the Church of Mercês was the one that included the largest number of instrumentalists, made up of fifteen to eighteen musicians. In the Church of St. Isabel, the celebration of the Holy Trinity Day brought together twelve to thirteen musicians and in the Church of St. Martinho, the Holy Name of Mary's Day brought together ten musicians. Some of the most sumptuous feasts stand out, such as the feast of St. Isabel's Day, held in the respective church with nineteen to twenty musicians, and the feast held on November 8, 1785 in the Church of Mercês, which had the participation of twenty-three musicians.

[14] All the 'Manifestos' belong to the Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, except the one that is undated, which belongs to the Curt Lange Collection. Although this 'Manifesto' indicates Matins and Mass as two separate events, we consider them to be a single event, by analogy with the function held in 1773 with a similar repertoire, held in the same place and on the same feast day.

[15] "dei 960 a cada pessoa q. soma --- 9$600 / q. he o q. costumo receber daquella funcão" (Irmandade de Santa Cecília, 1782).

Gomes da Silva received a variable amount for each feast, including zero. This last situation occurred in the Church of St. Martinho, where in almost all functions he received only the amount necessary to pay the musicians who participated in it, and also with the Procession organized by the Church of St. Isabel. In the case of the feasts held in this last church, Gomes da Silva's remuneration varied between $960 and 1$920 (these amounts are similar to the payment of one and two musicians, respectively), except on St. Anne's Day, when the remuneration amounted to 9$120. However, it was at the Church of Mercês that he regularly earned the highest amounts on the occasion of St. Peter's Day – with values varying between 3$200 and 7$680 – and also at the November festival, in which the amount of 4$800 is mentioned as a gift[16].

7.2 Positions

During the time that Gomes da Silva was enrolled in the Brotherhood of Santa Cecília, he participated in the leadership of the brotherhood, namely in 1767, 1777, 1779 and 1789. In 1767, his participation is recorded with the following information: "Alberto Jozé Gomes / resident in Rua de Santo Ama / ro parish of Santa Izabel / Board / Director present this year"[17]. In addition to the reference to the director's patent he obtained that year, this note indicates that Gomes da Silva was part of the brotherhood's board. Unfortunately, the position he held in the respective governing body is not specified. As for the remaining years indicated, Gomes da Silva was part of the management of the Brotherhood of Santa Cecília as steward (Irmandade de Santa Cecília, 1775–1795, f. 8, 19 and 75).

8. Discussion

Despite exhaustive research in the books of the Parish of Our Lady of Conceição da Rua Nova, no place or date related to the birth and baptism of Gomes da Silva was found. As far as we know, there were two parishes adjacent to the parish of Our Lady of Conceição da Rua Nova – namely, St. Julião and St. Nicolau – and their churches were very close to the church of Our Lady of Conceição da Rua Nova (Livro, 1756–1768, f. 46, 49 and 52). Alberto José Gomes da Silva and his sister were probably born in the Parish of Our Lady of Conceição da Rua Nova and were baptized in one of these nearby churches, whose baptism books prior to the Great Lisbon earthquake were lost. Considering that, in 1755, Gomes da Silva was already old enough to be a witness at his sister's wedding and that he lived until 1793, we can point to his birth in the 1730s.

Regarding his profession, the record in the income tax books as 'master of music' and as 'master of harpsichord(s)' (from 1780 onwards) suggests that he had been a teacher of music theory and of the harpsichord or fortepiano, at the time also called harpsichord with hammers. Although 'master of harpsichord(s)' was an expression applied to harpsichord and fortepiano makers, the tax paid by Gomes da Silva in those years is not similar to the annual tax paid by officers ($400 réis) or masters (1$200 réis) who carried out this activity (Tudela, 2019, p. 28 and 54). On the other hand, his registration with the Irmandade de Santa Cecília proves that he could not be an instrument maker since this professional category was not

[16] The value indicated for the year 1783 is not exact since it is unknown whether the cost of the organ that was rented for the respective feast was deducted from the amount received by him (the director).
[17] "Alberto Jozé Gomes / m.^{or} na Rua de S.^{to} Ama / ro fr.^{a} de Sta Izabel / Mesa / Director p.^{te} neste anno" (Irmandade de Santa Cecília, 1767, f. 9).

accepted by the brotherhood. We consider that both expressions would be used to demonstrate the position he acquired as an author of theoretical and keyboard music books.

For these editions, Gomes da Silva would have had the financial support of his family, with whom he probably lived since his sister's marriage in 1755, and certainly from 1759 onwards. By the time Gomes da Silva's editions were printed, his brother-in-law was already a doctor and the family was able to finance them. The comparison between the taxes paid by him and his brother-in-law in 1762/63 proves that the editions had an immediate financial impact on Gomes da Silva's income. They appear to have a lesser impact in subsequent years. However, the reduction in the amount paid as tax can be justified by the expenses incurred in supporting the family, from 1770 onwards, and in expanding the building, at the end of that decade. The recognition of his theoretical work and his qualities as a musician by his peers (Solano, 1779, p. vii) shows that these editions also contributed to an excellent reputation, which allowed him to work as a music director for almost twenty years and, most likely, as a teacher of music theory and harpsichord.

This study's findings comprehensively explain Alberto José Gomes da Silva's strategic approach to music dissemination in 18th-century Portugal. Firstly, identifying Gomes da Silva's lineage and likely birthplace in Lisbon offers a foundational context for his subsequent professional activities. This background information is crucial in understanding the socio-economic factors that may have influenced his career.

The analysis reveals that Gomes da Silva's initiative to edit and publish his works between 1758 and 1762 was pioneering, particularly in a country devoid of specialised music publishers. This contrasts sharply with the flourishing music publishing industry in Central Europe, highlighting a significant disparity in the cultural infrastructure of Portugal compared to its European counterparts. The decision to utilise printed editions to promote his music underscores Gomes da Silva's innovative and forward-thinking approach, positioning him as a visionary within the Portuguese musical landscape.

Gomes da Silva's family wealth and personal financial investments underpinned this initiative's economic and logistical feasibility. Collaborating with influential figures such as Francisco Luís Ameno and Lourenço António Bonardel facilitated the effective distribution and promotion of his works. Ameno's proximity to both royal and ecclesiastical power and Bonardel's connections with high-ranking diplomats and society figures played a remarkable role in ensuring the success of this venture. This support network highlights the importance of socio-political connections in disseminating cultural products during this period.

These editions' significant financial and professional impact on Gomes da Silva's life cannot be overstated. The immediate economic benefits and the enhancement of his professional reputation underscore the efficacy of his publishing strategy. His national and international recognition by peers attests to his music's high quality and appeal, further validating his innovative dissemination approach.

The discovery of a copy of the Sonatas in the Royal Conservatory of Brussels Library adds a crucial dimension to this study. It not only aids in accurately dating the edition but also provides tangible evidence of the international reach and impact of Gomes da Silva's work. This finding emphasises the global circulation of his music and the recognition it garnered beyond Portuguese borders. However, the incomplete records of his distribution network pose challenges to forming a holistic view of his strategies.

9. Conclusion

This study has provided new information about Gomes da Silva's personal life and family background, as well as his professional activity, revenues, and institutional positions. He lived throughout his life in Lisbon, remained closely connected to his family, directed musical events, and was responsible for the first books printed in Portugal in the eighteenth century dedicated exclusively to basso continuo and keyboard music, respectively.

These achievements allow us to understand him not only as a Portuguese music theorist and composer, but also as a visionary figure within the musical culture of his time. Although he never left Portugal, Gomes da Silva seems to have clearly understood the potential of print as a means of promoting his music and extending its circulation beyond a strictly local context. His use of printed editions, combined with his ability to activate personal and professional networks, suggests an awareness of strategies of dissemination and self-promotion that were also being used by other European composers of the period.

In this sense, his career reveals a forward-looking understanding of musical authorship, circulation, and reputation within eighteenth-century Portuguese musical culture. His printed works therefore played an important role in securing his place in Portuguese music history and in shaping a legacy that deserves to be revisited today.

Acknowledgements

This work is financed by national funds through FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., by project references UIDB/00693/2025 of CESEM – Centre for Music Studies at University of Évora with the DOI identifier 10.54499/UID/00693/2025 and LA/P/0132/2020 with the DOI identifier 10.54499/LA/P/0132/2020 and through a CEEC (Ref. 2023.06709.CEECIND/CP2849/CT0008) with the DOI identifier 10.54499/2023.06709.CEECIND/CP2849/CT0008. We extend our gratitude to Dr. Olivia Wahnon de Oliveira of the Library of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels for her invaluable assistance in identifying the provenance of the specimen of *Sei sonate per cembalo* in the aforementioned library and to Dr. Ana Paula Tudela for her invaluable support with the biographical research for this study. We also thank to the Brotherhood of SaintWe also thank the BrotherhoodHistorical Archive, the Torre do Tombo National Archive, the St. Isabel Parish Archive and the S. José Parish Archive for allowing access to their documents.

References

ACERVO CURT LANGE. *Rol de festividades religiosas [(s.d.): Alberto José Gomes da Silva]*. Federal University of Minas Gerais, BRUFMGBUCL9.2.12.22.

ALBUQUERQUE, Maria João Durães. *A edição musical em Portugal:* 1750–1834. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2006.

ANNALES typographiques pour l'Allemagne: Tome I. Berlin: Chez Samuel Pitra, 1761. Available at: https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/ata. Accessed on: 7 Nov. 2024.

BERNSTEIN, Jane A. *Printing Music in Renaissance Rome*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2023.

BRUXELLES, Conservatoire royal de. *Fonds Johann Jacob Heinrich Westphal (1756–1825)*. Available at: https://www.conservatoire.be/la-bibliotheque/collections/fonds-johann-jacob-heinrich-westphal/. Accessed on: 17 Nov. 2024.

BURROWS, Donald. John Walsh and his Handel Editions. *In*: MYERS, R.; HARRIS, M.; MANDELBROTE, G., (eds.), *Music and the Book Trade from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*. New Castle, Delaware; London: Oak Knoll Press; The British Library, 2008, p. 69–104.

CRUZ, Ivo. *O que fiz e o que não fiz*. Lisboa: [s.n.], 1985.

DODERER, Gerhard. Jayme de la Té y Sagáu e as suas "Cantatas Humanas" (Lisboa 1715/26). *Revista da Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas,* Lisboa, nº 3, p. 141–183, 1989.

DODERER, Gerhard. An unknown repertory: The Cantatas of Jaime de la Té y Sagáu (Lisboa, 1715–26). *In*: BOYD, M.; CARRERAS, J. J. (org.), *Music in Spain during the 18th Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. p. 80–107.

DODERER, Gerhard. *Jayme de la Té y Sagáu:* Cantatas humanas a solo: Iª parte (1723). Portugaliae Musica, vol. 52. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1999.

DODERER, Gerhard; NEJMEDDINE, Mafalda. *Alberto José Gomes da Silva (+ 1795):* Sei sonate per cembalo. Musica Lusitana Série D: 2 D. [Mollerussa]: Scala Aretina, 2003.

FÉTIS, François-Joseph. *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1866, vol. 4.

GAMA, Ângela Maria Barcelos da. Livreiros, editores e impressores em Lisboa no séc. XVIII. *Arquivos de Bibliografia Portuguesa*, [Coimbra], s.n., 49/52, 1967, separata.

GERBER, Ernst Ludwig. *Historisch-Biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler* […]. Leipzig: Johann Imannuel Breitkopf, und Compag., 1790–1792.

GIBSON, Kirsten; SOUTHEY, Roz. The Domestic Music Market and Musical Circulation in Two Late-Georgian Binders' Volumes from the North-East of England. *Music & Letters*, vol. 105, nº 1, p. 52–90, 2024.

GOMES DA SILVA, Alberto José. *Regras de acompanhar para cravo, ou orgão, e ainda também para qualquer outro instrumento de vozes, reduzidas a breve método, e fácil percepção. […] por Alberto Joseph Gomes da Silva. Compositor, e Organista*. Lisboa: Officina Patriarchal de Francisco Luiz Ameno, 1758.

GOMES DA SILVA, Alberto José. *Sei sonate per cembalo: Opera I composte per il Sigre. Alberto Giuseppe Gomes da Silva Maestro e Compositore di Musica*. Lisboa: author, [ca. 1760]

GÓRNY, Tomasz. Arnaud du Sarrat and the International Music Trade in Halle and Leipzig c. 1700. *Early Music*, vol. 51, nº 3, 2023, p. 451–460. Available at: https://academic.oup.com/em/article/51/3/451/7232473. Accessed on: 18 Jun. 2026.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Compromisso da Irmandade da Gloriosa Virgem, e Martyr S.ta Cecilia, sita na Igreja de S. Roque desta Cidade, Confirmado por El Rey Fidelissimo D. Jozé I*. Lisboa: Officina de Miguel Rodrigues, 1766.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Livrinho da Presidência dos Instrumentistas (1767)*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/38/01/002.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Livro 1º das eleições (1775–1795)*, Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/11/01.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Livro 1º das entradas dos irmãos (1756–1825)*, Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/15/01.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Livro 2.º dos Diretores (1760–1824)*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/20/02.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Manifesto das Funções [1773]: Alberto José Gomes da Silva, maço 04*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/21/04.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Manifesto das Funções (1782): Alberto José Gomes da Silva, maço 13*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/21/13.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Manifesto das Funções (1783): Alberto José Gomes da Silva, maço 14*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/21/14.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Manifesto das Funções [1784]: Alberto José Gomes da Silva, maço 15*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/21/15.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Manifesto das Funções (1785): Alberto José Gomes da Silva, maço 16*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/21/16.

IRMANDADE DE SANTA CECÍLIA. *Manifesto das Funções (1787): Alberto José Gomes da Silva, maço 18*. Historical Archive of the Irmandade de Santa Cecília and Montepio Filarmónico, PT/LSB20/ISC/21/18.

IZARD, Ralph; REICHART, Walter A. An unpublished letter of Senator Ralph Izard to George Livius, Esq. *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine,* Charleston, vol. 41, nº 1, pp. 34–38, jan. 1940. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/27571614. Accessed on: 10 Sept. 2024.

KRUMMEL, D. W.; SADIE, Stanley. *Music Printing and Publishing*. London: Macmillan Press, 1990.

LEBEDINSKI, Ester. The Travels of a Tune: Purcell's 'If Love's a Sweet Passion' and the Cultural Translation of 17th-Century English Music. *Early Music*, 48, 1, 2020, p. 75–89. Available at: https://academic.oup.com/em/article/48/1/75/5796563. Accessed on: 19 Jun. 2026.

LIVRO das plantas das freguesias de Lisboa (1756–1768). Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/CF/153. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 20 Jun. 2024.

MCVEIGH, Simon. L'estro armonico, Op. 3, in Full Score: 12 Concertos for Violins and String Orchestra, and: Le quattro stagioni = The Four Seasons (review). *Notes*, vol. 58, nº 4, 2002, p. 924–926.

NEJMEDDINE, Mafalda. Regras de acompanhar para cravo ou órgão de Alberto José Gomes da Silva: Análise preliminar. *Educação Musical,* Lisboa, nº 106, p. 14–18, Jul-Sept. 2000.

NEJMEDDINE, Mafalda. *Alberto José Gomes da Silva: Sei sonate per cembalo* [compact disc]. [s.l.]: author, 2018.

NERY, Rui Vieira. O olhar exterior: Os relatos dos viajantes estrangeiros como fontes para o estudo da vida musical luso-brasileira nos finais do Antigo Regime. *In*: NERY, R. V. (ed.), *A música no Brasil Colonial*. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2001. (p.72–91).

PARÓQUIA DA CONCEIÇÃO NOVA. *Registos de baptismo, livro B4, cx. 4 (1701–1713)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB56/001/B4. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 12 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DA CONCEIÇÃO NOVA. *Registos de baptismo, livro B5, cx. 5 (1713–1737)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB56/001/B5. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 13 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DA CONCEIÇÃO NOVA. *Registos de baptismo, livro B6, cx. 5 (1737–1754)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB56/001/B6. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 14 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DA CONCEIÇÃO NOVA. *Registos mistos, livro M9, cx. 3 (1723–1730)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB56/004/M9. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 17 jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DE CARNIDE. *Registos de casamento, livro C3, cx. 9 (1727–1780)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB11/002/C3. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 13 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DE LORETO. *Registos de óbito, livro O1 (1679–1778)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB58/003/O1. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 18 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DE MERCÊS. *Registos de óbito, livro O2, cx. 31 (1745–1779)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB22/003/O2. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 19 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro dos confessados (1791–1792)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 4 dos confessados (1759–1761)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 5 dos confessados (1762–1764)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 6 dos confessados (1765–1766)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 7 dos confessados (1767–1768)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 8 dos confessados (1769–1770)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 9 dos confessados (1771–1775)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Livro 13 dos confessados (1784)*. St. Isabel Parish Archive.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Registos de óbito, livro O5, cx. 77 (1780–1784)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB30/003/O5. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 20 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DE SANTA ISABEL. *Registos de óbito, livro O7, cx. 78 (1790–1800)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/PRQ/PLSB30/003/O7. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt. Accessed on: 21 Jun. 2024.

PARÓQUIA DE SÃO JOSÉ. *Livro de desobrigas da freguesia de São José (1753)*. S. José Parish Archive.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1762-1763a. *Livro que há-de servir para o arruamento e numeramento de suas ruas e prédios assim urbanos como rústicos*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 500 AR – 1762/1763.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1762-1763b. *Livro que há-de servir para o lançamento da décima dos maneios: 1º*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 499 M – 1762/1763.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1764. *Livro do lançamento da décima das propriedades*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 500 PP – 1764.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1765. *Livro do arruamento*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 501 AR –1765.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1769. *Este livro há-de servir para o arruamento – 2º*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 503 AR – 1769.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1770. *Este livro há-de servir para o arruamento*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 504 AR – 1770.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1771. *Livro do arruamento*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 504 AR – 1771.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1772. *Livro do arruamento*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 506 AR – 1772.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1774. *Livro mestre do lançamento e do arruamento da décima que serve nesta superitendência*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 507 AR – 1774.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1775. *Livro mestre do lançamento e do arruamento da décima que serve nesta superitendência*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 508 AR – 1775.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1779. *Este livro há-de servir para o arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 510 AR – 1779.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1780. *Este livro há-de servir do arruamento*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 511 AR – 1780.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1781. *Este livro há-de servir da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 512 AR – 1781.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1782. *Este livro há-de servir para o arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 513 AR – 1782.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1783. *Este livro há-de servir para o arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 513 AR – 1783.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1784. *Livro do lançamento e arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 514 AR – 1784.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1785. *Livro do lançamento e arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 514 AR – 1785.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1786. *Livro do lançamento e arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 515 AR – 1786.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1787. *Livro do lançamento e arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 516 AR – 1787.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1788. *Livro do lançamento e arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 516 AR – 1788.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1789. *Livro do arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 517 AR – 1789.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1791. *Livro do lançamento e do arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 518 AR – 1791.

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1792. *Livro do lançamento e do arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 518 AR – 1792[1].

PORTUGAL. Erário Régio. Conjunto documental da Décima da cidade, Freguesia de Santa Isabel (Lisbon), 1793. *Livro do lançamento e arruamento da décima*. Court of Auditors Historical Archive, DC 519 AR – 1793.

PORTUGAL. Real Mesa Censória. *Requerimentos para a obtenção de privilégios de impressão e de importação de obras, cx. 179 (1756-1769).* Torre do Tombo National Archive. PT/TT/RMC/B-D/010/0001.

PORTUGAL. Tribunal do Santo Ofício. *Processo de Lourenço António Bonardel, n.º 6192 (1757–1759)*. Torre do Tombo National Archive, PT/TT/TSO-IL/028/06192. Composite document. Available at: https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=2306237. Accessed on: 05 Nov. 2024.

RAMADA CURTO, Diogo *et al*. *As gentes do livro:* Lisboa, século XVIII. Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, 2007.

SILVA, Inocencio Francisco da. Alberto José Gomes da Silva. *Diccionário bibliographico portuguez*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1858–1867. Vol. 1, 4.

SOLANO, Francisco Ignacio. *Novo tratado musica métrica, e rythmíca*, [...]. Lisboa: Regia Officina Typografica, 1779. Available at: https://purl.pt/14387. Accessed on: 3 Sept. 2024.

SOUSA, Maria Leonor Machado de. Portugal e os viajantes estrangeiros nos séculos XVIII e XIX. *Estudos Arqueológicos de Oeiras*, Barcarena, vol. 11, pp. 9–18, Dec. 2003. Available at: https://eao.oeiras.pt/index.php/DOC/article/view/97/95. Accessed on: 9 Sept. 2024.

TÉ Y SAGÁU, Jayme de la, *Cantatas humanas a solo: primera parte*. Lisboa: Imprenta de Música, [1723]. 2 vols.: Libro de la Voz; Libro del Acompañamiento.

TRILHA, Mário Marques. Silva, Alberto José Gomes da. *Dicionário biográfico do Núcleo Caravelas do CESEM/NOVA FCSH*. 2012. Available at: https://dicionario-biografico.caravelas.fcsh.unl.pt/node/3. Accessed on: 4 Sept. 2024.

TUDELA, Ana Paula. *Os Antunes, mestres portugueses de fazer cravos, pianofortes e pianos:* séculos XVIII e XIX. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 2019.

UTNE-REITAN, Bjørnar. On Music Theory in Eighteenth-Century Norway: Johan Daniel Berlin's Musicaliske Elementer (1744) and the Transfer of Theory. *Eighteenth-Century Music*, vol. 22, nº 2, p. 199–220, Sep. 2025. Available at: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/eighteenth-century-music/article/on-music-theory-in-eighteenthcentury-norway-johan-daniel-berlins-musicaliske-elementer-1744-and-the-transfer-of-theory/D70CC9009EFB2312004591B629365285. Accessed on: 18 Jun. 2026.

ZUR NIEDEN, Gesa; OVER, Berthold. Walsh in Europe and Beyond: Dissemination and Reception of English Music Prints in the 18th Century. *Eighteenth-Century Music*, vol. 20, nº 2, p. 229–233, Sep. 2023.

Mafalda S. Nejmeddine is a harpsichordist with a PhD in Music and Musicology, specializing in Performance, from the University of Évora, and an integrated researcher at the Centre for the Study of Sociology and Aesthetics of Music (CESEM) at the University of Évora. She specializes in early Portuguese music, particularly the Portuguese keyboard sonata, and has undertaken several projects involving the research, performance, and dissemination of 18th-century Portuguese keyboard repertoire. Among her most notable contributions are the recording and publication of the score of Alberto José Gomes da Silva's Sei sonate per cembalo collection. She is a pioneer in the study of music at the Monastery of Santa Clara in Vila do Conde, having prepared a critical edition of António da Silva Leite's Miserere de Villa de Conde.
E-mail: mafalda.nejmeddine@uevora.pt

Maria João Durães Albuquerque is a music librarian with a PhD in Information Sciences from Complutense University of Madrid, awarded the 2015 Special Doctoral Prize. She is an integrated researcher at INET-md and a librarian at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Portugal). She represents Portugal on the Management Committee of COST-Action 23137: PCPSCE - Print Culture and Public Spheres in Central Europe (1500-1800) (2024-2028) and co-coordinates the research line "Heritage(s), Archives, and Museums" at INET-md. She integrated the research teams of the projects "To be a Musician in Portugal" (2018-2022) and "Instrumental Music Studies in Portugal" (2010-2013). Her research focuses on Information and Musical Documentation, with expertise in Information Curation, Music Publishing, and Musical Ontologies. She received an honourable mention for the Raul Proença Award (2004), a prize for research in Librarianship. She has presented at conferences and published on music documentation and digital humanities.
E-mail: mjdalb@fcsh.unl.pt

Data availability: Data will be available upon request.

Conflict of Interest: No conflict of interest has been declared.

Evaluation method: Double-blind peer review.

A *Opus* está licenciada sob uma licença CC-BY.

APPENDIX

Place	Date / Event	Year	Feast/Function	Instruments	Amount paid to each musician	Total amount paid to musicians	Amount paid for the event	Amount received by Gomes da Silva
Mr. Morgado de Oliveira's House/ St. José de Ribamar	[St. Vincent de Fora's Day]	no info	Matins and Mass	more than 6 voices	1$200	no info	no info	no info
		[1773]	Vespers and Mass	4 voices	2$400	9$600	no info	no info
				organ	1$200	1$200	no info	no info
	August 15	[1773]	Mass	4 voices, organ	1$200	6$000	no info	no info
[Church of] St. Isabel	Holy Trinity Day	1782	Mass	5 voices, 4 violins, 2 violoncellos, 2 horns	$960	12$480	13$440	$960
		1783	Mass	5 voices, 4 violins, 2 violoncellos, 2 horns	$960	12$480	13$440	$960
		[1784]	Mass	4 voices, 4 violins, 1 violoncello, 1 contrabass, 1 oboe, 2 horns	$960	12$480	14$400	1$920
		1785	Mass	4 voices, 4 violins, 2 violoncellos, 2 horns	$960	11$520	13$440	1$920
		1787	Mass	4 voices, 4 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 oboe, 2 horns	$960	12$480	14$400	1$920
	St. Isabel's Day	1783	Mass	6 voices, 6 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 viola, 2 oboes, 1 bassoon, 2 horns	$960	19$200	24$000 a)	no info
		1787	Mass	5 voices, 6 violins, 3 violoncellos, 2 oboes, 1 bassoon, 2 horns	1$2001	22$800	24$000	1$200
	St. Anne's Day	1787	Novena and Mass	4 voices, organ	4$800	26$880	36$000	9$120
				3 voices	$960			
	Holy Friday	1787	Procession	4 voices	2$400	9$600	9$600	0
[Church of] St. Martinho	Holy Name of Mary's Day	1782	Mass	4 voces, 2 violins, 2 violoncellos, 2 horns	$960	9$600	9$600	0
		1783	no info	no info	$960	no info	no info	960 b)
		[1784]	Mass	4 voices, 2 violins, 1 violoncello, 1 contrabass, 2 horns	$960	9$600	9$600	0 c)
		1785	Mass	4 voices, 2 violins, 2 violoncellos, 2 horns	$960	9$600	no info	0 d)
		1787	Mass	4 voices, 2 violins, 2 violoncellos, 2 horns	$960	9$600	9$600	0

a) This amount includes payment for two carriages that transported the Patriarchal singers. b) The document indicates that Gomes da Silva received the same as the musicians. c) The document indicates that Gomes da Silva only received the amount to pay the musicians' expenses d) The document indicates that Gomes da Silva offered alms to Our Lady what he was supposed to receive

Table 2. Description of Alberto José Gomes da Silva's activities according to his 'Manifestos'.
Source: Prepared by the author.

Place	Date / Event	Year	Feast/Function	Instruments	Amount paid to each musician	Total amount paid to musicians	Amount paid for the event	Amount received by Gomes da Silva
Mrs. Puri's House	Jesus Procession Day	1782	no info	4 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 viola, 1 oboe, 1 bassoon	3$200	28$800	no info	no info
	no information	1783	no info	no information	no info	no info	no info	no info
	no information	[1784]	Secular	no info	no info	no info	no info	no info
[Church of] Mercês	St. Peter's Day	1782	Novena and Mass	4 voices, organ	3$200	33$920	38$400 f)	4$480
				4 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 oboe, 1 bassoon, 2 horns	1$600 e)			
				2 voices	$960			
		1783	Novena, Mass and Sext	4 voices, organ	3$200	35$520	38$400 g)	no info
				5 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 oboé, 1 bassoon, 2 horns	1$600			
				2 voices	$960			
		[1784]	Novena and Mass	4 voices, organ	3$200	29$760	40$000 h)	7$040
				1 voice, 2 violins, 1 contrabass, 1 oboe, 1 bassoon	$960			
				2 violins, 1 violoncello, 2 horns	1$600 e)			
		1785	Novena and Mass	4 voices, organ	3$200	28$800	35$200 h)	3$200
				2 violins, 1 contrabass, 1 oboe, 1 bassoon	$960			
				2 violins, 1 violoncello, 2 horns	1$600 e)			
		1787	Novena and Mass	4 voices, organ	3$200	30$720	38$400 f)	7$680
				2 voices, 2 violins, 1 violoncello, 1 oboe, 1 bassoon	$960			
				2 violins, 1 violoncello, 2 horns	1$600 e)			
	November 8	1785	Mass	7 voices, 6 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 contrabass, 2 oboes, 1 bassoon, 4 horns	1$440	33$120	37$920	4$800

e) This amount corresponds to the payment for both functions (Novena and Mass). f) This value corresponds to 8 coins that he received (according to the 1787 'Manifesto' of the Church of Mercês, each coin was worth 4$800. g) This amount includes organ rental. h) This amount included the organ rental (3$200).

Table 2. Description of Alberto José Gomes da Silva's activities according to his 'Manifestos' (continued).
Source: Prepared by the author.