

J. S. Bach



Suites for Solo Cello

Suites 1-3

Transcribed

for

B \flat Trumpet

By

Jay Lichtmann

Notes on this Edition

"We stopped at an old music shop near the harbor. I began browsing through a bundle of musical scores. Suddenly I came upon a sheaf of pages, crumbled and discolored with age. They were unaccompanied suites by J. S. Bach – for the cello only. I looked at them with wonder: Six Suites for Violoncello Solo. What magic and mystery, I thought, were hidden in those words. I had never heard of the existence of the suites; nobody – not even my teachers – had ever mentioned them to me. I hurried home, clutching the suites as if they were crown jewels, and once in my room I pored over them. I read and reread them. I was thirteen at the time, but for the following eighty years the wonder of my discovery has continued to haunt me. Those suites opened up a whole new world...I studied and worked at them every day for the next twelve years. Yes, twelve years would elapse and I would be twenty-five before I had the courage to play one of the suites at a public concert. Up until then, no violinist or cellist had ever played one of the Bach suites in its entirety (in concert). They had been considered academic works, mechanical, without warmth. Imagine that! They are the very essence of Bach, and Bach is the essence of music."

- Pablo Casals

"She liked to practice three hours a day: some Bach – which she found as necessary to her well being as other people find jogging or swimming or yoga – and whatever new music she had decided to learn."

- Helen Epstein about violinist - Cecylia Arzewski from Music Talks

"The Bach suites are addressed directly to the performer as technical and intellectual exercises of the greatest genius. The audience really 'overhears' the performer. It is hard to imagine Bach composing them for a public occasion. The burden of communicating their beauty falls heavily on the artist with sufficient courage to take them on."

- Pianist - Richard Goode

What is it about the unaccompanied music of Bach that is so absorbing and satisfying? I will always remember an insightful comment about Bach by my teacher Mario Guarneri. At one point during my lesson, while I was playing a piece from the Gisoni/Bach book, he remarked: *"You know, one never gets tired of practicing Bach. You can study it your whole life and it is always fresh, a challenge every time you pick it up."* This is so true! I get tired and annoyed practicing and performing so many things, but it's always fun to work on Bach. My favorite and most tattered books are Bach transcriptions for the trumpet. I really love Bach but believe me, I'm just a regular guy, not a Bach fanatic or freak like some:

"Like cold showers and hot baths, Bach's music is an almost satisfactory substitute for sex. Its purity grips minds slightly too rarified to be properly religious. It must be listened to, sung and played and discussed with an expression of ineluctable piety. Compared with the music of Bach; Beethoven's and Mozart's efforts are the soiled product of the dirty human hand. It is possible to like Bach and nothing else – it is even likely. Yet in spite of the clinical and demanding nature of his music, it is tremendously popular. If you happen to meet a real Bach addict it would be better to faint, or pretend that you have to get home because of the babysitter. Any suggestion that you like other composers just as much, or even more, but can take Bach as good clean fun and enjoy listening to a recording of his cello suites while you lie in the bath, can earn you a very nasty reputation. You must take Bach seriously or not at all!

- Peter Gammond from Bluff Your Way in Music

It has been a great pleasure working on these Suites for Solo Cello over the past four years. After much consideration I have come to the conclusion that the first three suites are the most suitable for performance (as complete suites) on the trumpet. In this edition I have tried to edit these suites so that they are publicly performable. To that end I have made some changes that purists might object to:

- 1) Because of the trumpet's limited range and because of the extreme change in tone quality in each of its registers, I have had to transpose these suites from their original keys. I have also eliminated many of the awkward octave-*plus* interval jumps so that these pieces will stay in the optimum tessitura for the instrument. In several places I have changed the pitch of a note to an auxiliary note in the chord, to facilitate the execution of a passage.
- 2) I have eliminated most of the double stops that help outline the harmonic structure of these pieces. While these double stops are meaningful to the execution of these suites (some would argue that they are essential) I have felt that, on a wind instrument, the substitution of grace notes for double stops is unsatisfactory. Grace notes interrupt the fluidity of the solo line and the awkward interval jumps that one must execute to imply these harmonies sound disturbing to my ear.
- 3) I have eliminated notes here and there and have made a large cut in the Prelude of the third suite. In transcribing string and keyboard music for brass instruments, finding adequate places to breathe without distorting the musical line is always an issue. I have removed selected notes so that one may take a satisfactory breath without having to resort to the – ritard, inhale, a tempo – routine for every respiration. In doing so, I have tried to not change the implied harmonies or distort the melodic line. The cut in the Prelude of the third suite is to eliminate a long section of arpeggiated string crossings that frankly, sound tedious (even ridiculous) on the trumpet.

I have added tempo indications, breaths and slur markings but little else. The Italian tempo notations are attempts to give the performer an idea of the character of the individual movements. The breath & slur markings are the ones I have come to use (though they are always in flux) and will not work well for every player, but do give a clue as to how one might phrase these pieces. I have not included breath marks where they are all too obvious (i.e. immediately before repeats). I have also avoided including dynamics, varied articulation markings or extraneous score markings (besides the occasional *cédez*, *ritard* or *piu mosso*) because these musical determinations are quite individual, and I did not want to clutter this edition with too many markings.

- 4) I have included all repeats that occur in the original manuscript, though for obvious endurance reasons, the performer may opt to eliminate some or all of these repetitions in performance.

Finally, it is my hope that you will derive as much pleasure studying and playing these remarkable compositions as I have.

Jay Lichtmann
Avon, CT
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First Suite

Prelude

B \flat Trumpet

J. S. Bach

Allegro moderato

cédez

cédez

cédez

3

ritard

cédez

cédez

cédez

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 3-measure rest, followed by a melodic line. The word "ritard" is written below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff features a long slur over the first half. The fourth staff has a "cédez" marking. The fifth staff has a long slur. The sixth and seventh staves continue the melodic line. The eighth staff has a "cédez" marking. The ninth staff has a "cédez" marking. The tenth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.

Musique

Moderato

The musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a common time signature, and a 'Moderato' tempo marking. The melody is written in a key with one sharp (F#). The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and trills (tr). The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

This page contains a single melodic line of music, presented in eight staves. The notation is written in a treble clef and includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and trills. The first staff begins with a repeat sign. The second and fourth staves feature trills marked with "tr". The music concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the eighth staff.

Courante

Allegro

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in treble clef, 3/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, trills (tr), and accidentals. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The music is characterized by rhythmic patterns and melodic lines. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Sarabande

Grave

The musical score for the Sarabande is presented in a single system with four staves. The tempo is marked 'Grave' and the time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The notation includes various ornaments and trills, indicated by 'tr' and 'tr,' above notes. The first staff begins with a half note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth notes. The second staff continues with eighth notes and includes a trill on a G4. The third staff features a repeat sign at the beginning and includes a trill on a G4 and a mordent on a G4. The fourth staff concludes with a trill on a G4 and ends with a double bar line.

Minuet I

Moderato

tr

Fine

Minuet II

poco meno mosso

D.C. Minuet I

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Minuet II". The score is written on six staves of music, all in the key of G minor (three flats) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked "poco meno mosso". The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with some slurs. The second staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The third staff begins with a repeat sign. The fourth, fifth, and sixth staves continue the melodic line with various rhythmic patterns and slurs. The sixth staff concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots, and is labeled "D.C. Minuet I".

Gigue

Vivo

The musical score for 'Gigue' is written in 3/8 time and consists of eight staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the tempo is marked 'Vivo'. The music is characterized by a lively, rhythmic melody with frequent eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/8 time signature. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff features a change in clef to a bass clef. The fourth staff returns to a treble clef and includes a repeat sign. The fifth staff continues the melodic line. The sixth staff features a change in clef to a bass clef. The seventh staff includes a fermata over a note and a circled '3' above a triplet of notes. The eighth staff concludes the piece with a final cadence and a repeat sign.

