

One of the greatest cellists of the twentieth century, a performer who combined technical brilliance with soulful expressiveness, Daniil Shafran was born in 1923, in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). Shafran's first teacher was his father, who was the principal cellist of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. At the age of eight, Shafran started studying with Alexander Shtrimer, at the Special Music School for Children. Two years later, he was among a group of students selected to advance directly to the Leningrad Conservatory. When he was eleven, Shafran made his debut with the Leningrad Philharmonic, continuing his studies with Shtrimer, who taught the young cellist to appreciate music in the wider context of humanistic culture and of art in general. In 1937, Shafran won the All-Union competition for cellists and violinists. The prize was a magnificent 1630 Amati cello, which Shafran played until the end of his life. This instrument had a delicate, but gorgeous, tone, and Shafran was sometimes criticized for playing an instrument that was perceived as more appropriate for chamber music. In 1950, the year he graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory, Shafran won the Prague International Cello Competition. Although Shafran toured Europe, the U.S., and Japan, he shunned the glamour of international fame, preferring to perform and record in the U.S.S.R. His recordings, for the Melodiya label, include much of the standard cello repertoire, with particular emphasis on Romantic and -century Russian music. For example, he recorded Kabalevsky's Cello Concerto No. 1 in 1954, creating, two years later, a legendary recording of the Cello Sonata by Shostakovich, with the composer at the piano. One of the high points of Shafran's career was his 1967 performance of Kabalevsky's Cello Concerto No. 2, one of the most demanding works of the cello repertoire. Written as a musical monument to the victims of World War II, and dedicated to Shafran, Kabalevsky's extraordinarily difficult work provided the cellist with an opportunity to display his prodigious technique and profound musicality. Throughout his career, Shafran sought to enrich the cello repertoire by playing transcriptions of works for other instruments. Many of these transcriptions, which include the Franck Violin Sonata and the Shostakovich Viola Sonata, are miniatures by composers such as Schumann, Chopin, and Brahms, which he often offered as recital encores. Shafran's performances of these familiar encore miniatures, such as Schumann's "Träumerei," from the Kinderszenen for piano, were truly magical, for his playing could transform a familiar piano piece into cello music of unearthly beauty. Shafran was particularly known for his rich, expressive tone; his vibrato was unique, and when he played without vibrato, Shafran used his prodigious bowing technique to enrich his tone. A hallmark of Shafran's highly personal style, in addition to his finely nuanced and profoundly expressive tone, was his inimitable rubato. All in all, Shafran was a stupendous virtuoso whose breath-taking technical skill was totally subservient to a profound, overwhelmingly powerful musicality. Always in total control of the formal aspects of the music he played, Shafran constantly sought, as he revisited a particular piece, to probe deeper into its inner being, methodically striving to reveal the sometimes incomprehensible complexity of the music that he played. He died in 1998.



Daniil Shafran

J.S. Bach

Suites for Cello

Unaccompanied



Mastered in DSD128

The six Cello Suites, BWV 1007 to 1012, are suites for unaccompanied cello by Johann Sebastian Bach. They are some of the most frequently performed and recognizable solo compositions ever written for cello. Bach most likely composed them during the period 1717–23, when he served as a Kapellmeister in Köthen. The title of the Anna Magdalena Bach manuscript was Suites à Violoncello Solo senza Basso (Suites for cello solo without bass).

These suites for unaccompanied cello are remarkable in that they achieve the effect of implied three- to four-voice contrapuntal and polyphonic music in a single musical line. As usual in a Baroque musical suite, each movement is based around a baroque dance type; the cello suites are structured in six movements each: prelude, allemande, courante, sarabande, two minuets or two bourrées or two gavottes, and a final gigue. The Bach cello suites are considered to be among the most profound of all classical music works. Wilfrid Mellers described them in 1980 as "Monophonic music wherein a man has created a dance of God."

Due to the works' technical demands, étude-like nature, and difficulty in interpretation because of the non-annotated nature of the surviving copies, the cello suites were little known and rarely publicly performed until they were revived and recorded by Pablo Casals in the early 20th century. They have since been performed and recorded by many renowned cellists, have also been transcribed for numerous other instruments, and are considered some of Bach's greatest musical achievements.

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Daniil Shafran

J.S. Bach Suites for Cello Unaccompanied

1. Suite for Cello Unaccompanied No.1 18:40
2. Suite for Cello Unaccompanied No.2 23:30
3. Suite for Cello Unaccompanied No.3 22:03
4. Suite for Cello Unaccompanied No.4 26:57
5. Suite for Cello Unaccompanied No.5 29:25
6. Suite for Cello Unaccompanied No.6 25:49

Total Time: 2:26:24

Transferred from a 15ips 2-track tape to DSD128

Recorded by Meloydia



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admin@highdeftapetransfers.com
or visit our website:
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