



Johann Sebastian

# BACH

## Suites for Unaccompanied Cello

I - IV

(BWV 1007-1010)

Performance edition for

### Trombone

by

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and

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# Foreword

*Suites for Unaccompanied Cello by  
J. S. Bach (I – IV: BWV 1007-1010)  
Performance edition for Trombone*

This edition is intended to serve as a performing edition; though it is not a scholarly edition, it is based upon recent scholarship. Performers wishing to study the text and its sources and to make use of scholarly studies should begin by studying editions based on original sources, such as the Barenreiter Edition edited by August Wenzinger. They should also consult facsimile editions of the source-texts, which are copies by Anna Magdalena Bach and by the organist, J. P. Kellner. The sixth suite, BWV 1012, will not be included as we feel that the rendering of its polyphonic complexity exceeds the resources that it is reasonable to employ in transcription.

The trombone is an instrument with very different characteristics from the violoncello and as a result, this edition, of necessity, has become in many ways as much a transcription as an edition. The goal of the editors has been to provide a practical and uncluttered text which offers solutions for the trombonist who wishes to study and to present these unique pieces of music. It is our hope that the resulting version will be judged to allow a performance which may sound both beautiful and musically convincing.

Some general points can be made which will be helpful in approaching the performance of these works:

## **Slurs and Articulation: Breath Marks**

For this edition, the slurs and articulations found in Anna Magdalena Bach's copy of the Suites have been carefully studied and many have been

incorporated into the edition. Some have been omitted because they were judged to be impractical; many more have been found to need adaptation because of the different technical demands of the trombone. In places, the smaller sub-grouping slurs still appear, beneath a longer phrasing slur provided by the editors. The intention is that both levels be felt and executed. Breath marks (') have been given to provide breath points compatible with the suggested phrasing.

## **Dynamics**

No dynamics are given in the source-texts. There is evidence that the solo violin and solo cello works of Bach were intended to be performed throughout with as full a tone as the instruments of the day could provide, i.e. forte. On modern instruments, use of a variety of dynamics sounds more natural, if it is not carried to an extreme.

We have therefore interpreted forte to include a range of dynamics from piano to forte, and avoided the use of fortissimo and pianissimo. Bear in mind that the overall aim is to provide a full, singing, tone.

For the most part, variety in dynamics has been employed to enhance the ebb and flow of each movement, taking into account the ways in which longer lines and their direction and register affect the sound of the instrument.

## **Ornamentation**

Ornaments given in the source texts have been included only where they were felt to be compatible with the character of trombone sound but on occasion, additional ornaments have been added, mostly to enhance cadences. The execution of each ornament has been given in modern notation.

### **Tempo**

There are no tempo indications in the source texts. Suite movements do, however, have an established character, which can often be conveyed by indications such as Allegro or Andante. These have been provided, together with suggested metronome markings compatible with the phrasings and breath marks given by the editors. In the more singing movements, it will be best to use moderate, but not dragging, tempos that allow the intricacies of the line to be comfortably executed and heard. In the more lively movements, an attempt should be made to capture the character of the underlying dance rhythms.

### **Chords and Double Stops**

The editors have rendered the double stops and the three- and four-note chords that appear in the source texts in a number of different ways. Some have been expressed melodically, others have been omitted. Tones of certain double stops and chords have been included as optional variants, which may be played in repeats. As far as possible, we have tried to include all significant bass tones. Though we have omitted so much, we maintain, nonetheless, that the chords, and often, too, the double stops, of the original may be heard as implied, invoking, perhaps, the ubiquitous continuo of 18th century music, a supporting but freer element that may be taken for granted. Even without it, the harmonic meaning of the music is mostly quite clear from the principal melodic line.

Where a difficult choice has had to be made, we have chosen the version that we feel allows the performance to sound as natural as possible.

### **How to Approach Learning These Works**

Because of the complexity of this music, it is important to begin by learning the notes with the suggested metronome markings. When you are completely comfortable playing the music on the instrument and know exactly when you can and should breathe, move away from the metronomic style of playing. You must always remember that tempo markings are to be broadly understood. The approach, similar to that of a singer singing a Baroque aria, should never favor very strict time. It is our job to bring to life the piece as if it were written for trombone, not to try to make it sound like a work for cello. That being said, the performer should listen to cello recordings of the piece and learn from them, noting when we are allowed and even required to move away from strict time.

Phrasing is mostly indicated by means of dynamics, including crescendi and diminuendi, and breath marks.

We recommend against repeating the 2nd halves of movements. Repeating the 1st halves of some movements is recommended, especially in Menuets and Sarabandes. (But in the repeat of a Menuet I *daCapo*, the first half may be played without repeat.)

**Haim Avitsur**  
**Robert Cuckson**  
**Fall 2011**

# SUITE I

J.S. Bach

## Prélude

BWV 1007

arranged by Haim Avitsur and Robert Cuckson

♩ = 60 - 63

1 *mf*

4

7

10 *mp*

13 *mf* (.....) *mp*

16

19 *rit.*

# Allemande

♩ = 58

Musical staff 1: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The piece begins with a half note G2, followed by eighth notes G2-A2, A2-B2, B2-C3, C3-D3, D3-E3, E3-F3, F3-G3, G3-A3, A3-B3, B3-C4, C4-B3, B3-A3, A3-G3, G3-F3, F3-E3, E3-D3, D3-C3, C3-B2, B2-A2, A2-G2. The first measure is marked *mf*.

Musical staff 2: Continuation of the Allemande melody. It features a series of eighth notes and sixteenth notes with various accidentals (sharps and naturals). The staff ends with a double bar line.

Musical staff 3: Continuation of the Allemande melody. It includes a measure with a fermata over a half note G3, marked *p*. Above this measure is the instruction "see footnote 2". The staff ends with a double bar line.

Musical staff 4: Final staff of the Allemande. It begins with a half note G2, followed by eighth notes G2-A2, A2-B2, B2-C3, C3-D3, D3-E3, E3-F3, F3-G3, G3-A3, A3-B3, B3-C4, C4-B3, B3-A3, A3-G3, G3-F3, F3-E3, E3-D3, D3-C3, C3-B2, B2-A2, A2-G2. The first measure is marked *mp* and the second measure is marked *mf*. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

# Courante

$\text{♩} = 60$

*f*

7

14

21

27

33

## Sarabande

$\text{♩} = 40$

*mf*

8

*\* Suggested varied repeat  
in lieu of repeat sign  
in the original.*

15

# Footnotes for Suite II

## Footnote 1 – Prelude

- In Anna Magdalena Bach's copy, mm. 60 - 64 were indicated as follows:



**Adagio**



- In combining three of these bars into one and indicating *adagio*, we hope to create a feel of these triple stops as they might sound when played on the original instrument.

## Footnote 2 – Allemande

- m. 9: the 32<sup>nd</sup> notes should be played in a cadenza-like, forward-moving style

## Footnote 3 – Menuet

- For the repeat of Menuet I, we have added an *ossia* for the final bar that can serve to create a more definite ending for the movement if desired. This ending is optional and you might choose to play the movement without it.