J.S. Bach: Six Unaccompanied Cello Suites Arranged for Guitar

Stanley Yates Series
J.S. Bach: Six Unaccompanied Cello Suites Arranged for Guitar

Stanley Yates Series

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## Guide

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Preface

Introduction

Although Johann Sebastian Bach did not write any music for the guitar, arrangements of his unaccompanied string music and music for lute and lautenwerke have long been a part of the guitarists' repertoire. Indeed, this literature has become a standard by which our students are trained and our concert artists measured.

With this edition of Bach's Unaccompanied Cello Suites I offer not only further resources for the idiomatic and stylistic performance of this substantial music on the modern guitar, but also an edition designed to allow players to bring their own individuality to both the arrangements and their performance.

Format

This edition has three elements:

- performance scores
- comparison scores
- a written guide: Arranging, Interpreting, and Performing the Music of J. S. Bach

The performing scores present the music in fully-fingered arrangements for the guitar. The comparison scores place a transposed version of the cello original side-by-side with the guitar arrangement to allow for easy comparison between the two. The guide, Arranging, Interpreting, and Performing the Music of J. S. Bach, presents information not readily available elsewhere, but essential to a full understanding of the arranging process and the meaningful performance of the music. This section addresses the types of questions that I myself have had as a student of the music of J. S. Bach—and to which answers, more often than not, have not been easy to find!

The Arranging Process

In making the arrangements, I considered three aspects:

- musical structure
- instrumental idiom
- historical style and informed performance practice

By considering musical structure we discover what Bach was aiming to project with his original instrumentation, the extent to which the medium permitted him to realize his intentions, and the essence of what we are attempting to realize in our arrangements. By considering instrumental idiom, we assess the natural strengths and weaknesses of the original instrumentation and of the modern guitar, and we speculate as to how Bach might have realized his intentions on the modern guitar. By considering historical style and informed performance practice, we discover not only the most powerful means of expressing the music, but also a stylistically-appropriate means of arranging the music. Ultimately, we create a modern Baroque style for the transcription and performance of this music on the modern guitar.
Preface

Using this Edition

Although even Bach’s simplest music is challenging—the price we pay for great music—this edition may be used by players of varying levels of experience, not only the most advanced.

Since Bach composed the suites for unaccompanied cello in progressive order of difficulty (becoming increasingly confident and virtuosic with his unusual medium as he moved through the set), this is the order that I would recommend students study them. It is also plausible to play the Sarabandes and many of the *galanterian* pairs (Minuets, Bourrées, Gavottes) out of sequence, independently of their parent suites.

- **Ornamentation**

In the performance score I have indicated only the ornamentation that I consider essential to the music, sometimes supplementing that found in the original scores. However, the arrangements have been made very much with ornamentation in mind and, for more advanced players, the guide at the end of this edition provides information on how further “improvisatory” ornaments may be introduced into the music.

- **Slurs**

Left-hand slurs are very appropriate to this music and have been included in the performance score. These slurs, however, serve only as examples of appropriate textural and phraseological slurring, and as somewhat arbitrary solutions to technically difficult passages. Players and teachers are therefore encouraged to determine their own slurring, both in placement and amount. Information concerning the placement and function of left-hand slurs may be found in the guide.

[In some instances, I have enclosed more than two notes under a dotted slur. In such cases only the final note of the figure is intended to be “slurred” with the left hand—i.e., a plucked note intervenes. See, for example, Suite 6, Prelude, m. 10.]

- **Fingerings**

The performance scores are fully fingered for the left hand, taking into account both musical context and technical expediency. Consideration has been given to stylistic and idiomatic fingering systems (such as harmonic *brisé* and *campanella* fingering), as well as to contrapuntal context. Within these systems, the most straightforward fingerings have been employed. Again, discussion concerning a stylistic approach to left-hand fingering may be found in the guide, and players are encouraged to develop fingering solutions according to their own taste and technique.

The guide also provides information on the idiomatic execution of “cross-string” ornaments, as well as discussion concerning the relationship of right-hand fingering to phrasing and articulation. In the performance scores, trills have generally been conceived in the cross-string form; some players may therefore wish to adjust the fingering of such passages to accommodate slurred ornaments.

- **Notation**

The textural model adopted for these arrangements is the solo sonata. Consequently, their notation is generally in the form of a reconstructed independent “solo” instrumental voice, accompanied by a slower-moving continuo-style bass. An occasional free-entering third voice is also employed. Rests have been used in the solo line to clarify phrasing and figuration and, therefore, are not always intended as literal silences. Rests in the bass part, however, always indicate a *degree* of silence and should be given careful consideration. Parenthetical ornament symbols are editorial (but are considered essential to the arrangement). Small parenthetical notes are optional.

- **Using the Comparison Scores**

The comparison scores are provided not only for comparison between the arrangement and the original, and to allow players to study and read from the original, but also to encourage players to explore the arrangement process for themselves. I encourage players to make adjustments to the performance score, or to create their own arrangements, as they see fit—this is the Baroque spirit.
• Using the Guide: *Arranging, Interpreting, and Performing the Music of J. S. Bach*

For those who wish to become more fully involved with the intricacies of arranging, interpreting, and performing the music of J. S. Bach, the guide provides detailed information concerning rhetorical style and *Affekt*, hierarchical phrasing and meter, and other informed-performance issues. A suggested approach to developing a stylistic interpretation of the music may be found at the end of the guide.

Sources

At least four manuscript sources of the unaccompanied Cello Suites survive, none of which are in Bach's own hand. Of the three sources held in the *Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz* in Berlin, one is in the hand of Bach's wife Anna Magdalena (Mus. ms. Bach P 269); one is in the hand of Johann Peter Kellner—a former student of Bach's (Mus. ms. Bach P 804); and one is an anonymous source (Mus. ms. Bach P 289). A second anonymous source is contained in the *Nationalbibliothek* in Vienna (Mus. Hs. 5007). All four are published in facsimile form as Serie VI, Band 2 of the *Neue Bach Ausgabe*. Presumably derived from Bach's own manuscript, the copy made by Anna Magdalena Bach has been used as the basis of this edition.

The source used for the lute version of the fifth suite, provided in the comparison score of that suite, is Bach's autograph (*Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert I*, ms. II 4088).

Illustrations

The portrait of J. S. Bach found on the cover of this edition has been reproduced with the permission of the Mary Evans Picture Library. The excerpt from the Anna Magdelena manuscript reproduced on page 9 is by permission of the *Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz*, Berlin.

Acknowledgments

Of a number of people who have been of assistance in the preparation of this edition, I would like to give particular thanks to Gerald Klickstein of the North Carolina School of the Arts—his musicianship, encouragement, and insight have played a valuable role in shaping the content and format of this edition.

For their interest, support, and invaluable suggestions at what I thought was the proofing stage of a finished manuscript, I am indebted to my colleagues Dr. Solie Pott, Dr. Jeffrey Wood and Dr. Ann Silverberg of the Department of Music at Austin Peay State University, to Professor Robert Margo of the School of Economics at Vanderbilt University, to Professor Stephen Aron of the University of Akron and Oberlin Conservatory, and to Professor Frank Koonce of Arizona State University. I also wish to thank Mr. William Bay for his desire to publish my work, and for his patience in waiting for it.

Finally, my gratitude and love goes to my wife Rebekah, whose husband spent many evenings at the computer; and to my children Thomas and Ysabel, who often asked, "Is the Bach book finished yet?"

Stanley Yates

*Adams, Tennessee*

*July 1997*
Prelude, Suite 1 (ca. 1720). Manuscript by Anna Magdelena Bach (ca. 1730)
Suite 1
BWV 1007
(origin. G-major)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Prelude

Arranged for Guitar by
STANLEY YATES
Suite 1

Allemande
Menuet II

*) Berlin, Mus. ms. Bach P 804 has Ab; other sources A nat.
Suite 2 (comparison score)

Menuet 1
Suite 3

Allemande

\( \text{\textcopyright 1953 by G. Schirmer Inc.} \)
Bourée I

Suite 3
[this page intentionally without music]
Bourrée II

Fine

Bourrée I Da Capo
Suite 4 (comparison score)

Edited and Arranged by
STANLEY YATES

BWV 1010
(orig. Eb-major)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1675-1750)

Prelude

Cello

Guitar
Suite 4 (comparison score)

Bourrée II
Suite 5 (comparison score)

Edited and Arranged by
STANLEY YATES

BWV 1011*
(orig. c-minor)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1675-1750)

* lute version BWV 995, original key g-minor
Suite 5 (comparison score)

Gavotte II
Suite 6

La Fin. des Suixttes
Arranging, Interpreting, and

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Introduction

Due to the lack of written information concerning the realization of early music on the modern guitar, and because of the fundamental impact of early practices on the arranging process, I have included this guide to arranging, interpreting, and performing the music of J. S. Bach.

The discussion concerning arranging is divided into three parts:

- Musical Structure of the Unaccompanied Cello Music
- Historical Context of the Arranging Process
- Idiomatic and Stylistic Arranging for the Modern Guitar

After outlining the rhetorical compositional approach, I describe how Bach's compound lines project an implied polyphony which, although almost complete, is compromised by the technical idiosyncrasies of the cello. I then examine the historical context of the arranging process in terms of Bach's arrangements of the unaccompanied string music for lute and for keyboard, and in terms of other arrangements made by lutenists and guitarists contemporary to Bach. Arranging for the modern guitar is discussed as a function of style and idiom, taking into account the arranging models and textures of the plucked instruments of the period, in addition to the idiomatic character of the modern guitar. Discussion may also be found here concerning additions and alterations made to the originals, key choice, notational issues, left-hand fingerings, and slurs.

The discussion concerning interpretation and performance falls into two broad parts:

- Ornamentation and Embellishment
- Expression, Articulation, and Phrasing

In the account of ornamentation, I describe the execution of the standard early eighteenth-century agréments, along with a number of additional ornaments that, although popular at the time, have not generally been adopted in modern guitar performance. In addition, I outline the function and effect of these ornaments as well as the manner in which additional ornamentation may be introduced into the score. Free embellishment and codified figuration are also addressed. The discussion concerning interpretation and expression is rooted in Affekt and the rhetorical compositional model, and incorporates the Quintessis Intrinseca and the concept of hierarchical meter and phrasing. An account of the French dance style, along with its effect on phrasing and expression, is also included.

The exposition of this information should not be taken as a claim of Urtext or authenticity. Nor should it be considered a set of rules. It is only through an informed approach liberated from "authentic" idealism that idiom (the natural character of an expressive medium) may be informed by style (the rhetorical means by which a language may be most freely and most powerfully expressed). It is the marriage of style and idiom that provides the modern performer the means of achieving this expression in a genuinely creative and individual way. Aiming, therefore, neither for exclusivity nor for authenticity, I offer an exposition of objective possibilities from which an informed approach to the development of an expressive, stylistic and idiomatic Baroque style for the modern guitar may be derived.

---

1 A detailed critical analysis of the polyphonic structure of the unaccompanied string music and of Bach's transcriptions may be found in my article "Bach's Unaccompanied Cello Music: The Nature of the Compound Line and an Approach to Stylistic and Idiomatic Transcription for the Guitar," published in the Winter 1996 issue of Soundboard (XXII, No. 3, pp. 9-23).
Musical Structure of the Unaccompanied Cello Music

1.1 The Rhetorical Style

Modeled upon Greco-Roman principles of oratory and rhetoric, the Baroque compositional process consists of the expressive surface elaboration of an underlying structure. Comprising the invention of an idea (the inventio), the realization of its basic form and contrapuntal framework (the dispositio), the elaboration of this contrapuntal skeleton with rhetorical figuration (the decoratio), and the final presentation of the completed composition in performance (the pronunciato), the rhetorical musical process lies at the heart of an understanding of the Baroque style.

The birth of the expressive rhetorical style, the seconda practica, is rooted in monody—an expressive solo voice, simply accompanied. The influence of the prima practica, the elaborate multi-voice polyphony of the Renaissance, did persist however, and a confluence of the two practices led to an entirely new style of vocal writing. The essence of this new style lies in the dual function of the melodic leap, which now not only acts as a rhetorical expressive gesture, but also allows for a single vocal part to be constructed so as to give the impression of the entrance of a “second” voice in dialog with the “first.” Adopted by Italian string players, the style led to an instrumental idiom—the sonate a due (the “solo sonata”). This idiom found its highest expression some eighty years later in the unaccompanied string music of J. S. Bach; the single line now implying not only the dialog texture of the Italian sonate a due, but the supporting continuo part as well.

1.2 Implied Polyphony

The appellation “unaccompanied,” when applied to Bach’s solo string music, therefore, is a misnomer. Rather, these works are “self-accompanied,” the accompaniment being embedded in a single “melodic” line along with the “solo” part proper. This polyphonic texture is implied in three ways: through arpeggiation, melodic leaps, and multi-stopped chords (figure 1):

Figure 1. a) Prelude, Suite 3, mm. 37-39; b) Prelude, Suite 2, mm. 30-32; c) Sarabande, Suite 3, mm. 1-4.
Musical Structure of the Unaccompanied Cello Music

As can be seen in figure 1b above, the melodic leaps in Bach's original solo line imply two levels of polyphony (and sometimes more)—the implied polyphony of the "solo" line (which need not be realized in the absolute) and the supporting continuo (which may be fully realized on a harmonic instrument such as the guitar). It is the task of the arranger to decide which leaps are rhetorical (i.e. "melodically" expressive), which leaps imply polyphony, and which leaps literally represent the lower voice. In reconstructing the lower voice it is almost always necessary to add at least some pitches to those already present (see section 3.2).

Although a literal and sonorous polyphonic event, the part-writing of multi-stopped passages in the unaccompanied cello music is often significantly compromised by the physical idiosyncrasies of the instrument (figure 2).

Figure 2. Sarabande, Suite 2, mm. 21-28.

Despite such compromises, the multi-voice textures projected by Bach's compound lines are genuine contrapuntal structures, and demonstrate a high degree of polyphonic integrity. They do not, however, present a uniformly high degree of textural integrity when transferred to an instrument capable of actually realizing, rather than implying, a consistent polyphonic texture.

Transference to a harmonic instrument such as the guitar, then, is not simply a matter of re-stemming the cello original—such a process does not address the inherent voice-leading problems of the original, nor take account of the idiomatic characteristics of the receiving instrument. Taken to a conclusion, pitch-faithful arrangement succeeds only in superimposing the limitations or weaknesses of one instrument to another without substituting for this deficiency with expressive means idiomatic to the instrument receiving the injustice. The result is an arrangement expressively inferior to the original.

An appropriate approach to arranging this music, therefore, comprises the reconstruction of the polyphony in a contrapuntally and harmonically-consistent form, the reconstruction of the texture of the solo sonata (i.e., an expressive solo line supported by a slower-moving and rhythmic "continuo" line), and the realization of these goals in an expressive form idiomatic to the receiving instrument.
Historical Context of the Arranging Process

2.1 Arrangements of the Unaccompanied String Music

The arrangement of Bach's unaccompanied string music is not a recent phenomenon; in fact this music has been arranged almost continuously since its creation. Bach himself initiated the process by arranging some of the unaccompanied string music for lute and for keyboard, and was followed by several of his contemporaries: in addition to several anonymous lute tablatures of the C-minor Cello Suite and the E-major Violin Partita, the lutenist Johann Christian Weyrauch made a French lute tablature arrangement of the G-minor Violin Fugue. Later, in the nineteenth century, Carl Ferdinand Becker transcribed the same Fugue into keyboard notation. Felix Mendelssohn and Robert Schumann both added piano accompaniments to the violin works, and Johannes Brahms produced a version of the violin Chaconne for piano left-hand alone. Later arrangements include those of Ferruccio Busoni (who encased the violin Chaconne in layers of added piano texture) and Leopold Godowsky (who "very freely transcribed" the cello suites). In the present century, arrangements of the unaccompanied string music have appeared for a wide range of instruments, including guitar, lute, harpsichord, organ, piano, and even full orchestra. However, in addition to affirming the longevity of the music these adaptations also imply that a degree of alteration is required, or at least is desired, in providing an adequate realization of the unaccompanied originals when transferred to harmonic instruments.

2.2 Bach's Arrangements for Lute and Keyboard

Despite presenting considerable technical difficulty in their execution, Bach's lute arrangements of the unaccompanied string music are nevertheless well aligned with Baroque lute texture and playing technique—an ornate and fast-moving upper part executed with the fingers is supported by an articulate and slower moving lower part executed with the thumb. Beyond addressing inconsistencies in voice-leading, Bach's arrangement process for the lute is one of textural clarification and enhancement of the lower voice (figure 3).

Figure 3. Gigue, G-minor Lute Suite, BWV 995, mm. 1-8.

In his arrangement of the A-minor Violin Sonata (BWV 1003) for clavier (BWV 964), Bach goes considerably further. In addition to providing melodic, harmonic and textural clarification, ornamental elaboration, and voice-defining re-stemming, the familiar and more accommodating medium leads to a wholly-consistent three-voice keyboard texture. The transcription is so convincing that, even though the violin original is ever-present, buried within the texture, no hint is given to suggest that the music was conceived for anything other than clavier (figure 4).
Figure 4. Adagio, Clavier Sonata in D-minor, BWV 964, mm. 1-3.

Since the original version for unaccompanied violin is reasonably complete in both texture and voice leading (in contrast to the cello music), translation to a harmonic instrument is relatively unproblematic. Bach’s additions in the clavier version may therefore be regarded as a means to an appropriate idiomatic texture, rather than as solutions to compromises in the original.

2.3 Other Historical Arrangements

Period arrangements made by lutenists and by five-course guitarists confirm the idiomatic approach that characterizes Bach’s arrangements, although in the case of these two instruments reduction rather than addition to the musical texture is the norm. For example, the simplification of chords and the displacement of basses (and even the occasional upper note) are representative of idiomatic technical changes made by Baroque lutenists in their intabulations of Bach’s lute music (figure 5).

Figure 5. Fuga del Signore Bach (BWV 1000). French lute intabulation by Johann Christian Weyrauch, mm. 13-14 and 42.

More extreme reduction characterizes the five-course guitar intabulations of, for example, Robert de Visée’s versions of orchestral overtures by Lully, or Santiago de Murcia’s guitar arrangements of Corelli violin sonatas. Indeed, changes relating to idiomatic and personal style are evident even in the adoptions that five-course guitarists made of each others music.

Clearly, in their own borrowings Baroque musicians rarely, if ever, relied upon transcription in the absolute sense (i.e. a note-for-note translation). Rather, an idiom-driven and, in some cases, very free arrangement process was the norm. A practical, utilitarian approach was undertaken, not so much with a quasi-religious respect for the intentions of the composer, but for an unrestricted and functional adaptation of the original, and for the idiom itself.
3.1 Historical Models and Idiomatic Texture

While it is illuminating to examine historical arrangement processes and performance practices, particularly those involving instruments closely related to the modern guitar, it is important to bear in mind that despite certain similarities of timbre or playing technique there are also essential differences between the modern guitar and its predecessors, not to mention between Baroque musicians and modern ones. These differences color the adoption of historical transcription models and textures.

With an array of diatonically-tuned open bass strings among its up to a maximum of twenty courses, the Baroque lute is well-suited to its characteristic texture—an ornate and fast-moving upper part supported by a well-defined and slower-moving bass. Similarly, the characteristic texture of the five-course guitar is a reflection of the idiomatic character of that instrument: effectively negating the concept of pitch-differentiated register, the “re-entrant” and octave tunings employed for much of the five-course repertory result in the “base” sounding in the same pitch register as the upper parts, differentiated “voice-parts” being achieved through contrasts in timbre rather than in register—a note played on a lower course with the thumb has a timbre distinct from that of the same pitch played with a finger on an upper course.

Despite extreme differences in tessitura, the five-course guitar and the Baroque lute do share some idiomatic common ground; harmonic or *stile brisé* fingerings (idiomatic fingerings in which a free-voiced contrapuntal textures are created through arpeggiation and scale motion based around expedient chord “shapes”); and short passages of *campanella* texture (a sonorous, bell-like overlapping of scale tones created through the optimal use of open strings and the fingering of successive tones on adjacent strings). Indeed, the “imbrational counterpoint” outlined above in relation to the five-course guitar grows quite naturally out of these idiomatic fingering systems.

The modern guitar has the ability to utilize these historical techniques and textures also, but with less facility than the instruments upon which the techniques originated; the modern guitar does not have a set of free diatonically-tuned basses, nor does it have octave-stringing or re-entrant tuning. While we are free to adopt historical techniques, if we are to use the full idiomatic potential of our instrument we cannot rely solely upon them. In determining an appropriate *Baroque* texture for the modern guitar we must ultimately return to the music itself, and to the idiomatic characteristics of the modern instrument.

In order to produce a realistic transference to the modern guitar, a degree of change must be made to the cello originals. These changes involve not only the addition of notes to complete the polyphony and texture, but also the alteration of notes that, although sonorous on the cello, compromise voice-leading when heard on harmonic instruments. Once the essential polyphony has been reconstructed, it forms the *basis* for an idiomatic arrangement. A general account of idiomatic and stylistic changes appropriate to the modern guitar follows.

3.2 Additions to the Lower Voice

In order to construct a consistent bass part, in register, it is necessary to add notes to the original. Often, however, a pitch needed to complete the lower voice may be sounding elsewhere in the texture. To allow for a strong contrapuntal structure in such cases it is sometimes necessary to change the note where it appears elsewhere in the texture—especially if the note is a tendency tone or a modal degree (figure 6).

Figure 6. Courante, Suite 4, mm. 22-23.
The harmonic rhythm of the music (the rate of harmonic change) is another consideration in deciding upon places where basses may appropriately be added. Intrinsically related to tempo and to meter, harmonic change is also a function of dance type. For instance, because they tend to be slow, Allemandes often have two harmonic changes per measure; whereas faster-sounding Courantes and Minuets may have only a single harmonic change per measure. Similarly, the second-beat metric stress of many Sarabandes, and some Minuets (effectively two beats per measure, the first short and the second long) is also a product of harmonic rhythm. These important metric patterns have been reinforced in the arrangements by the appropriate positioning of basses (figure 7).

Figure 7. Sarabande, Suite 1, mm. 1-6.

Creating a temporary rise in tension before the final resolution, an increase in harmonic rhythm is typically found at cadential points. Commonly, dances in triple meter employ hemiola rhythm to facilitate a sense of cadence, making a temporary metric acceleration from one compound beat of 3/4 time to three compound beats of 3/2 time (an acceleration of 3:2). Again, in such places, added basses have been appropriately positioned (figure 8).

Figure 8. Menuet II, Suite 2, mm. 19-24.

Completion of the polyphony may also result in addition to the upper register of the texture (figure 9), as may other additions and changes intended to facilitate a more detailed contrapuntal or harmonic texture (figure 10).

Figure 9. Sarabande, Suite 1, mm. 10-12.
3.3 Dividing Long Notes

Long notes, which may be sustained or even swelled on the cello, die away quickly on plucked instruments and thus lose much of their expressive impact. In order to maintain expressive intensity and momentum on the guitar it is often appropriate to break or divide such notes, or to add rhythmic interest in another voice (figure 11):

Figure 11. Bourrée II, Suite 3, mm. 18-19.

Extended passages of multi-stopped chords, sonorous and expressive on the cello, are effective when arpeggiated on the guitar (figure 12):

Figure 12. Prelude, Suite 2, mm. 59-63.

3.4 Imitation

Although the cello music is not set in an imitative contrapuntal style (with the exception of the Prelude to the Fifth Suite), the intervallic structure of a passage may lend itself to imitative texture (figure 13 and also figure 11, above).

Figure 13. Sarabande, Suite 3, mm. 13-16.
Bach's keyboard gigues are often imitative pieces and short imitative openings, restricted to the first few measures of each binary half of a gigue, are also found amongst the tablatures for five-course guitar and for lute. This type of suggested imitative opening is often possible in the cello gigues, especially when the imitation responds to the rhythmic motive rather than to the literal intervallic one (figure 14):

Figure 14. Gigue, Suite 5, mm. 1-4 and 25-29.

The fugata subject of the Prelude to the Fifth Suite itself implies a two-voice "double subject" (becoming almost identical to the subject of the fugata found in the Prelude to the Lute Suite in E-minor, BWV 996) (figure 15):

Figure 15. Prelude, Suite 5, mm. 28-35.

3.5 Octave Transposition

Occasional octave transpositions have been employed, especially in cadential passages (figure 16), but also simply to allow a passage to sit more comfortably on the guitar (figure 17):

Figure 16. Courante, Suite 6, mm. 26-28.

Figure 17. Gigue, Suite 6, mm. 57-61.

Pedal points of varying lengths are both implied and explicitly presented throughout Bach's unaccompanied string music, and particularly in the Preludes. Due to differences in tuning however, an open-string pedal-point idiomatic to the cello may not be duplicable on the guitar. This situation, which traditionally seems to have virtually dictated key choice in arranging for the guitar, is alleviated when we realize that the octave in which a pedal tone sounds does not alter its function—that of harmonic prolongation (usually of dominant harmony). It is possible to invert a pedal point for reasons of idiom without any loss of function, and often to greater musical effect (figure 18).
3.6 Dance Type

Changes made to the originals also reflect the stylistic and expressive character (or Affekt) of the music. For example, rich harmonic realizations (containing sevenths, and other dissonances, as well as a faster harmonic rhythm) have generally been reserved for the more musically substantial and expressive movements—usually the Allemande and Sarabande; while the galanterie, (Minuets, Bourrées and Gavottes) have been harmonized in a simpler and more direct manner, reflecting their simpler galant character. The cello Courantes and Preludes, almost all of which are set in Italian rather than French style (with the exception of the Fifth Suite), are also better suited to a somewhat simpler harmonic treatment. More information on the French dances is provided in section 5.9.

Often characterized by idiomatic display, rather than strong metric patterns or predictable harmonic schemes, the Preludes also lend themselves to idiomatic texture on the guitar—campanella fingering for instance.

3.7 Ornamentation

An important factor in transferring Baroque music to the modern guitar is the ability of the arrangement to support idiomatic and stylistic ornamentation. This is especially important at cadences, but also elsewhere. Owing to the multi-functional role of the Baroque ornament (as cadential structural marker, thematic motif, expressive rhetorical gesture, variation, virtuosic filigree, etc.), it is necessary that the arrangement be not so over-filled with added notes as to compromise the execution and addition of embellishments.

In this edition, a distinction has been made between the “essential” and the “improvisatory.” Ornaments considered essential to the arrangement (cadential trills, certain appoggiaturas and mordents, etc.) have been indicated in the score, supplementing the ornamentation indicated in the originals when needed. Improvisatory ornamentation, however, is felt to be the prerogative of the performer. Detailed information concerning the interpretation, addition, and execution of ornaments may be found in section 4 of this guide.

3.8 Key Choice

From a practical standpoint, the choice of an appropriate key for guitar transcription is determined by tessitura—that is, a range in which the highest and lowest notes of the piece may comfortably be accommodated on the guitar. In these works, the cello uses a range of approximately two and a half octaves, from C two octaves below middle C to G or A above middle C (the Sixth Suite employs a five-string accordatura, extending the range of the instrument by the interval of a fifth). Since a usable two and a half-octave tessitura may be generated on the guitar starting on any pitch between D (with scordatura) and A, several transpositions for each suite appear possible. In practice, however, it is necessary for pitches to be available below the lowest-sounding note of the cello. This reduces the number of available keys on the guitar to those found at a fourth or fifth above those for cello. Ignoring “hostile” keys, the more likely transpositions for each suite, then, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cello</th>
<th>Guitar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suite I</td>
<td>G-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C-major or D-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite II</td>
<td>d-minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g-minor or a-minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite III</td>
<td>C-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G-major or A-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite IV</td>
<td>Eb-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G-major or A-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite V</td>
<td>d-minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g-minor or a-minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite VI</td>
<td>D-major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D-major or E-major (on account of the accordatura)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Idiomatic and Stylistic Arranging for the Modern Guitar

Of these, the slightly lower transpositions at a fourth usually provide greater opportunity for chordal-based fingerings in brisé style, although this is in contrast with the keys traditionally chosen. Moving through the suites however, (which, technically, musically and texturally, are set in progressive order) the open-string tonic and dominant basses resulting from transposition at a fifth (or even a sixth) are of greater technical expediency. The keys chosen for this edition, therefore, are C-major, a-minor, G-major, A-major, g-minor (with scordatura) and D-major respectively.

3.9 Left-Hand Fingering

The choice of left-hand fingering revolves around melodic and harmonic context and the compromise between musical effect, instrumental sonority, and technical expediency. Melodic fingerings, which move strictly from note to note without allowing any overlapping of notes within the line, are contrasted with harmonic fingerings which allow for the overlapping of notes belonging to the same harmony, even though the notation may not indicate such overlapping. The deciding factor in choosing one system over the other lies in the compromise between musical context and instrumental sonority. The degree to which either system may be consistently employed is further compromised by the physical limits of the instrument, and by the facility of the player (noting that results in performance will likely reflect the intentions of the player as much as the implications of the fingerings themselves). The fingerings provided in any edition inevitably are based upon the physiology and conception of a single player and should, therefore, be taken as suggestions only.

Harmonic (stile brisé) fingerings are idiomatic to both the lute and the five-course guitar, as well as some keyboard instruments; and is one upon which the arranging process employed for this edition is partly based. With the technical purpose of idiomatic expediency, and the musical one of the projection of a free-voiced polyphony, this style of fingering for the left hand is achieved by forming fingerings harmonically, allowing notes to ring into one another to form a sonorous and ambient harmonic "background"—similar to the effect of the sustaining pedal on a modern piano (although it is not possible to deal with every harmonic tone of the texture according to this idealistic scheme). Importantly, this system does not preclude the projection of independent voice-parts—bass movement may still be independently voiced beneath a layer of harmonic brisé texture. In the following example, open noteheads are allowed to ring through, while filled noteheads receive their written durations (figure 19):

Figure 19. Allemande, Suite 1, mm. 1-4.

In passages of explicit dialog texture, melodic fingerings provide an appropriate means of projecting the independence and shape of the voice parts (figure 20):

Figure 20. Gigue, Suite 5, mm. 53-57.

Combining both melodic and harmonic brisé fingerings to produce a striking and sonorous effect, overlapping campanella fingerings is a stylistic and idiomatic technique on both the Baroque lute and the five-course guitar. Ornamental in function, the technique produces a highly expressive sonority, as well as offsetting the predictability of a regularly articulated line. Subtly used, allowing successive notes to merge only momentarily, overlapping fingerings produce a seamless, expressive legato, much in the manner of the harpsichordist’s over-legato (figure 21):
3.10 Left-Hand Slurs

Left-hand slurs may be categorized in three ways: technical, textural, and phraseological. Technical slurs are used simply to aid the right hand in the execution of fast passage-work. Textural slurs relieve the monotonity of constantly-articulated equal-note passages, particularly when it may not be possible to provide enough variety of touch with the right-hand alone. Phraseological slurs are defined according to their musical effect. It is worth noting that, regardless of the motivation for their use, all slurs have a musical, or phraseological, consequence—generally that of connecting or grouping notes together, stressing the first note of the group.

Slurs found in Baroque lute and five-course guitar music are generally of the technical and textural type, and an important stylistic characteristic lies in their placement—they are invariably placed for convenience rather than for motivic consistency or relationship. The slurs notated in the lute version of the Fugue in G minor (BWV 1000), for example, are all of the descending type, and are almost always positioned so as to “pull-off” to an open string. Textural slurs may therefore be regarded as ornamental (and are included in this context in ornamentation tables for the lute and five-course guitar) and contribute to the constant variation that appears at the surface level of much Baroque music.

The slurs notated in this edition are intended as suggestions for varied articulation and as somewhat arbitrary solutions to technical problems, rather than as essential elements of the arrangement. Players are therefore encouraged to modify them as desired. Information concerning Bach’s bowing slurs, along with the effect and placement of left-hand slurs on the modern guitar, may be found in sections 4.1.10, 4.5, 5.3, 5.6, and 5.7.

3.11 Notation and Rests

Musical notation is a deceptively complex subject—an inevitable result of a need for both precision and simplicity. Beyond the general lack of notated dynamic and rhythmic nuance, notational ambiguities in Bach’s cello and lute music concern duration (and, therefore, articulation) and, particularly, the interpretation of notated rests.

The notation employed for the unaccompanied cello music is comprised of a single line with occasional multi-stops, and very few rests—a reflection of the idiomatic sustaining character of the cello. Bach's notation for clavier, on the other hand, provides very precise voice-leading information by way of careful stemming, notes tied over the barline, and carefully-placed rests—again, a reflection of the articulate and facile idiom of the clavier. The notation employed by Bach for his arrangement of the C-minor Lute Suite (an autograph) contains hardly any such ties over the barline. It does, however, include an almost overwhelming number of rests (see the parallel score provided in this edition).

To what extent does Bach’s notation represent the articulation and textural idiom of the lute? Bach did not attempt an elaborate textural or contrapuntal realization in his arrangements for the lute (as compared to the clavier arrangement) but adopted a relatively simple idiomatic texture comprising a slow-moving, yet articulate, lower voice supporting a polyphonically-incomplete and faster-moving single line above it. In general, the consistency and regularity of placement of rests does suggest a fairly literal interpretation of their duration, especially in the lower voice (although we seldom hear them performed that way today), although an element of expediency, even of over-simplification, may be noted in some parts of this score.

The notational texture employed in this edition presents a reconstructed polyphony assimilated into a single written upper voice with a slower continuo-style bass and an occasional free-entering third voice. Note durations have been realized objectively with rests consistently employed to clarify phrasing and figuration in the upper voice, noting that a period of actual silence is not necessarily intended. In the lower voice rests provide clear articulation of the larger musical structure and do indicate a degree of articulative silence. Finally, the notation in this edition does not attempt a detailed representation of the overlapping sonorities created through the use of brisé and campanella fingerings—it is, like all notation, a compromise.
Ornamentation and Embellishment

Ornamentation is a personal and creative aspect of Baroque performance, and an indispensable element of the style. The two major issues concerning this important topic are: 1) the interpretation and execution of written symbols; and 2) the introduction of additional ornamentation and embellishment to the score. The first of these involves discrete ornamental figures which are often referred to as “French-style ornaments”, Agréments or Manieren (although they are also present in Italian music). The second involves, in addition to these set figures, the use of free-embellishing diminishings, often referred to as “Italian-style ornamentation” (although, likewise, also present in French music). The integration and internationalization of musical style in the eighteenth century is such that both ornamental styles are appropriate to much middle to late Baroque music, including the music of J. S. Bach.

4.1 Discrete Ornamental Graces

Bach employs only three ornament signs in the cello works—those for the trill, mordent and appoggiatura. To these, in the lute music he adds the occasional slide and arpeggio. Although not indicated in either the cello or the lute music, several additional ornaments are also appropriate to the performance of this music on the modern guitar—the turn, acciacatura, springer and anschlag, and the ornamental slur and vibrato.

The interpretation and execution of these ornaments is dependent upon such factors as whether the ornament embellishes the harmony or the line, whether the ornament is positioned cadentially, post-cadentially, or in mid-phrase, the length of the note to which the ornament is attached, and the instrumental idiom. These factors, in turn, influence rhythmic make-up and duration, and placement on or before the beat.

4.1.1 The Trill

The standard interpretation of the Baroque trill consists of the rapid alternation of the written note with its upper auxiliary, beginning with the upper of the two notes and starting on the beat. The number of alternations applied is determined by tempo and the length of the note to which the trill is attached. On the guitar two alternations are usually enough (the half-trill or pralltriller), although in slower tempos more alternations may be applied (figure 22):

Figure 22. Pralltriller.

![Pralltriller](image)

On short notes, when time does not permit even a half-trill, a single repercussion (the equivalent of a simple descending slur or a short appoggiatura) may be all that is technically feasible (this is the only explanation offered for the trill sign by Francisco Corbetta in his 1671 and 1674 ornamentation tables for the five-course guitar) (figure 23):
Note-length also determines the possibilities for the rhythmic contour of the trill, which should tend toward flexibility rather than measured precision. Although a simple rapid alternation is often all that is possible, when more time is available the trill may begin slowly (emphasizing the dissonant effect of the upper auxiliary). Such cases also allow for the possibility of a terminating figure, which may or may not be connected to the trill itself (when connected, a turn results), and for a variety of introductory figures that may replace the first few repercussions of the ornament (figure 24):

While at cadences the function of the trill may be understood as the elaboration of a harmonic appoggiatura (adding a rhythmic element to the harmonic dissonance that precedes the final resolution of the phrase), in mid-phrase the trill functions as melodic embellishment and offers the possibility, particularly on faster notes, of a main-note start to the ornament (sometimes referred to as an inverted mordent) (figure 25):

A similar situation occurs when the trill does not begin on the beat, but is displaced by a tied note or a long initial appoggiatura (the tied-trill or cadence liée) (figure 26):
4.1.2 The Mordent

The mordent has the effect of melodic emphasis or accent, and is often found on the second note of an ascending leap or post-cadentially on the final note of a phrase. The standard interpretation consists of a more or less rapid alternation of the main note with its lower auxiliary, starting on the beat (figure 27):

Figure 27. Mordent.

4.1.3 The Appoggiatura

There are two basic types of appoggiatura: the short (usually melodic) appoggiatura, and the long (usually harmonic) appoggiatura. The standard interpretation consists of a temporary displacement of the main note by its upper or lower auxiliary. The duration of the displacement is variable and dependent upon the harmonic, rhythmic and metric context in which the appoggiatura appears, as well as the desired function of the ornament. A long appoggiatura, displacing the main note by one-half or two-thirds of its original value (depending on metric context), provides a high degree of harmonic dissonance. Requiring resolution, this may provide post-cadential closure at the end of a phrase or increased melodic momentum in mid-phrase (figure 28):

Figure 28. Post-cadential and mid-phrase appoggiaturas.

A long appoggiatura, placed post-cadentially or in mid-phrase, may be terminated with a mordent, producing the compound *port-de-voix et pinçé* (figure 29):

Figure 29. *Port-de-voix et pinçé* (appoggiatura with mordent).

The short appoggiatura, which functions melodically rather than harmonically, may be interpreted as either a short displacement of the main note, or as an anticipation of it (the so-called *passing appoggiatura*) (figure 30):

Figure 30. Short appoggiatura and “passing” appoggiatura.
4.1.4 The Slide

The standard slide is a rapid melodic ornament in which the main note is preceded by its two lower auxiliary notes. The ornament may begin on the beat, providing melodic momentum and connection to the note that follows it; or may anticipate the beat, emphasizing the main note by allowing it to stand for its full duration. Other varieties of slide are possible, and are often found fully written-out in the music (figure 31):

Figure 31. Slide.

4.1.5 The Arpeggio

The arpeggio sign indicates the more or less elaborate ornamental breaking of a chord. The degree and complexity of arpeggiation, which may range from a gentle roll to an extended and rhythmically elaborate gesture, reflects the structural significance of the chord upon which it acts (the final chord of a suite, a mid-phrase chord on a strong beat, etc.) (figure 32):

Figure 32. Arpeggio.

4.1.6 The Turn

The standard Baroque turn is a harmonic ornament consisting of an embellishment of the main note with its upper and lower auxiliaries. In this sense it may be regarded as an elaborate appoggiatura or an abbreviated trill. Although it most frequently begins on the upper auxiliary, in a melodic context (in mid-phrase) the turn may begin on the main note, either returning to it or connecting it to the third above or below (figure 33):

Figure 33. Turn.

4.1.7 The Acciaccatura

The acciaccatura may be regarded as a species of mordent or short appoggiatura, sharing with these ornaments the effect of melodic or metric emphasis or accent. The execution of the ornament may be "timeless," (that is, played on the beat but not discernibly taking any of its value); or "crushed"—the main note and its auxiliary being played simultaneously, quickly followed by the release of the auxiliary (figure 34):

Figure 34. Acciaccatura.
4.1.8 The Springer

The springer is a short rhythmic anticipation often, though not exclusively, found between two notes that move by step (figure 35):

Figure 35. Springer.

4.1.9 The Anschlag (Doppelvorschlag)

The anschlag or doppelvorschlag ("double appoggiatura"), may be compared to a compound short appoggiatura, in which the main note is briefly replaced by both its upper and lower auxiliaries. Although usually placed like the springer—between two notes that move by step—the ornament may also be applied to other intervals, in which case the first auxiliary note may be a repetition of the preceding note (figure 36):

Figure 36. Anschlag or doppelvorschlag (double-appoggiatura).

4.1.10 The Slur

Although no additional notes are involved, left-hand slurs may be regarded as ornamental in the sense of texture and articulation (Baroque lutenists and guitarists classify them this way, including them in their ornament tables). Slurs may be effectively positioned on the first note of a motivic group, especially following a leap; and on half steps, particularly when descending. The execution of the slur consists of a slight lengthening of the first note, followed by a smooth legato resolution.

4.1.11 Ornamental Vibrato

Ornamental vibrato is a feature of both lute and five-course guitar tablatures, and was also employed on the clavichord (where the technique is called the Bebung). It may be used as an alternative to the mordent, in mid-phrase or post-cadentially, to give expressive emphasis to a note, and for reasons of contrast, variety or even expediency. The technique may also be used, as it is today, to maintain the expressive intensity of a long note.

4.1.12 Bach's Explication

Bach left only a single set of instructions regarding the execution of the ornament symbols found in his music. This explication is found in the instructional Clavierbüchlein written in 1720 for his son Wilhelm Friedemann, who at the time was ten years of age. Although the explanations are intended for keyboard instruments and, considering the age of Wilhelm Friedemann, are likely quite introductory in nature, I nevertheless reproduce Bach's ornamentation table here due to its obvious relevance to the subject of ornamentation in his music (figure 37):
4.2 Adding Ornamentation in Performance

Examining the changes in indicated ornamentation made by Bach in his own arrangements, one feature is particularly apparent: the amount of ornamentation indicated reflects the instrumental idiom. In this respect, ornamentation is more profuse and varied in the Sonata for clavier than in the violin original, and in the Lute Suites than in the corresponding versions for violin and cello. We should therefore feel free to employ an amount and type of ornamentation in our performances on the modern guitar with which we feel idiomatically and stylistically comfortable and, as a result, we may well decide to alter or even disregard an ornament indicated in the score. More pertinent, however, is the introduction of additional ornamentation to the music.

In adding ornamentation, it is necessary to understand that ornamentation is multi-functional. At larger structural levels, ornamentation serves to emphasize the formal design of a movement by marking cadences, providing thematic or motivic identity, and supporting metric stress patterns. At the level of melodic phrasing, ornamentation provides articulative and rhythmic variety, and enhances momentum, accent, emphasis and closure. Ornamentation may also be rhetorical or affective, providing a dramatic expressive gesture or a brilliant flash of virtuosity. Adding ornamentation, then, is a matter of matching the ornament to the function.

The most obvious place to add ornamentation is at a cadence, where the trill is an integral part of the gesture. Although not all cadences are compatible with a trill, those that have a stepwise preparation and resolution, and a long enough note (some adjustment of the written notes may be necessary), are prime candidates (figure 38):

Figure 38. Adjusted cadential trill, Gigue, Suite 1, mm. 11-12.

A trill or a mordent may also be added post-cadentially, to provide a final gesture of resolution—if the final note is approached from above, then a trill is appropriate, if from below a mordent (this is a general consideration for the placement of these ornaments). Either ornament may be prefaced with an appoggiatura (figure 39):

Figure 39. a) Post-cadential trill, Menuet II, Suite 1, mm. 7-8; b) Post-cadential mordent with appoggiatura, Menuet II, Suite 2, mm. 23-24.
Ornamentation and Embellishment

A trill or mordent may also be used to provide an emphatic affective gesture at the opening of a movement, or at a dramatic point within a movement (figure 40):

Figure 40. Affective ornamentation: a) Prelude, Suite 3, mm. 1-2; b) Prelude, Suite 2, mm. 40-41.

In mid-phrase, ornamentation tends toward two types: anticipatory ornaments that lead to and emphasize the beat that they precede, and connective melodic ornaments that provide momentum and variety to the phrase.

Anticipatory ornaments include anticipatory slides, short “passing” appoggiaturas, and “timeless” acciacature and springers. Anticipatory slide-like figures are useful in emphasizing important notes while still leaving them unaltered. Although the standard slide is an ascending figure filling the interval of a third (as described earlier), other varieties are not only are possible but are often found fully written-out in the music (figure 41):

Figure 41. Written-out slides, Allemande, Suite 5, mm. 22-24.

Connective ornaments include on-the-beat slides, standard appoggiaturas, turns and terminated trills, as well as a wide range of codified and free embellishing figuration. On-the-beat slides provide melodic momentum and connection (figure 42):

Figure 42. Connective slide, Manuet I, Suite 1, mm. 9-10.

Appoggiaturas, which should be prepared or preceded by step, can be used in many ways to provide variation and to fill and connect beats (figure 43):

Figure 43. Connective “melodic” appoggiatura. Sarabande, Suite 4, mm. 13-16.

Appoggiaturas may also be used to expressively enrich the harmony and provide momentum (figure 44):
Figure 44. Connective "harmonic" appoggiatura, a) Allemande, Suite 5, m. 13; b) Sarabande, Suite 6, mm. 28-29.

Measured turns are effective in stepwise passages (figure 45):

Figure 45. Measured turn, Gavotte II, Suite 6, mm. 1-2.

In fast continuous movements, where there is not enough time for a trill or a mordent, springers, acciaccaturas and short appoggiaturas provide an appropriate alternative (figure 46):

Figure 46. Springer, Courante, Suite 2, mm. 1-2.

4.3 Free-Embellishing Figuration

Free embellishing figuration is not represented by symbols in the score but may be introduced in an improvisatory fashion by the performer. Consisting of the division-like diminution of longer note-values into quicker ones, this type of ornamentation ranges from the occasional embellishment of a single note to the extended and elaborate adornment of an entire movement.

The simplest figures consist only of the repetition or addition of a single pitch to fill and connect the interval of a third or to elaborate a second (figure 47):

Figure 47. Single-note diminution, Menuet I, Suite 1, mm. 11-12.

More elaborate passage work, outlining the melodic contour and harmony of the original, may also be introduced (figure 48):
Ornamentation and Embellishment

Figure 48. Comprehensive elaboration, Allemande, Suite 1, mm. 1-6.

4.4 Codified Figures and Written-Out Embellishment

The "standard" Baroque ornaments are only the best-known examples of a much larger vocabulary of figures that had begun to be documented as early as 1550. In addition to what became the codified and mannered agrément of the later Baroque, many sources document examples of short figures or motives (figurae superficiales) used to break-up intervals and sub-divide and connect beats in a much more measured manner. Originally improvised, these figures provide much of the surface elaboration that, from around 1700, composers finally began to write-out in their scores. The following examples, taken from W. C. Printz (Dresden, 1689), also appear in later North German treatises more contemporary to Bach, and are very common in Bach's music: the figura coda (short figure); messanza; salti (arpeggio); tirata (short scale); groppo (turn); mezzo circolo (five-note turn); circolo (extended turn) (figure 49).

Figure 49. Figure superficiales; Printz (1673).
Although the figures may be used in isolation (i.e. on a single note), they are also commonly found acting upon a series of notes, as in the following passage taken from the Courante to the First Suite (figure 50):

Figure 50. *Figure superfìscles*, Courante, Suite 1, mm. 5-6.

Although such ornamentation need not be literally improvised (it is simply a style of ornamentation that should *sound* improvised), spontaneous improvisation (of varying degrees) in performance is a wonderful expressive freedom afforded the early-music performer—and one that should be fully embraced.

A final thought: while modern performances tend to reserve embellishment for the repeats of binary movements, there is no reason to deny ornamentation the first time around—the possibilities for ornamentation and variation are so great that one may simply take the opportunity to do things differently and, perhaps, a little more freely and elaborately, the second time.

### 4.5 Idiomatic Execution of Ornaments on the Modern Guitar

Many ornamental figures may be idiomatically articulated in two distinct ways on the modern guitar: slurred on a single string with the left hand; or plucked across two or more strings with the right hand. It is also possible to combine the two.

Historically, the execution of ornamentation on the lute and on the five-course guitar was performed almost exclusively with left-hand slurs—a natural idiomatic consequence of a desire for both speed and lightness. Modern ornamental execution on the guitar, on the other hand, often involves plucking and overlapping the notes of a figure across two or more strings—perhaps in imitation of harpsichord articulation, but also a reaction to the heavier and less articulate effect of slurred ornamentation on the modern guitar. However, the following example, taken from a 1714 guitar tablature of French music by Santiago de Murcia, clearly demonstrates that *campanella* cross-string execution is not entirely confined to twentieth-century Baroque style (figure 51):

Figure 51. Historical cross-string trill, Santiago de Murcia, Allemande, mm. 11-12, *Resumen* (1714), pp. 263-4.

As an idiomatic technique closely related to both *briat* and *campanella* fingering, cross-string articulation is emphasized in this edition. However, both slurred and cross-string ornaments are idiomatic to the modern guitar, and both can be effective means of articulating and delineating an ornamental figure—depending on the context and desired effect (smoothness, brilliancy, incisiveness, connection, etc.). For example, slurred articulation provides lightness and variety of articulation in passages of free figuration and other ornamental figures, as well as the smooth resolution of appoggiature. Cross-string articulation, on the other hand, can provide for incisive rhythm and dissonance, although care has to be taken to preserve rhythmic contour and the dissonant stress of the upper note, as well as to clarify its resolution within the harmony (that is, the dissonant note should be somewhat held, but should not be allowed to ring together with the main note after the resolution has occurred).

Several possibilities exist for right-hand fingering of cross-string ornaments, ranging from a simple *i-p* (index-finger/thumb) alternation to more elaborate combinations involving all of the fingers. Many of these fingerings, however, are designed primarily to facilitate rapid execution and pay little attention to matching the stress-relaxation element of trilled ornaments with the relative strengths and weaknesses of the fingers used to play them. The combinations that use only the fingers are recommended; they avoid the “bump” that can result
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from fingerling the resolution (or other note) with the thumb, and also leave the thumb free to play an additional note in the bass or an inner voice at the beginning or end of the ornament (figure 52):

Figure 52. Right-hand fingerings for cross-string trills.

Combinations of slurred and plucked articulation provide for the execution of a wide variety of ornamental figures (figure 53):

Figure 53. Combined plucked and slurred ornament.
5.1 Musical Affekt, Rhetorical Figuration, and the Cantabile Style

The expressive monodic singing style (described in the Preface to Caccini's *Le nuove musiche* of 1601) was born of a desire for music to express not only the general mood of a text but, as expressively possible, the emotional meaning of individual words of a text. Influenced by the figures of speech used in classical oratory, early opera produced a large vocabulary of short rhetorical musical "figures of speech," each associated with a particular affective word (such as Winter, Dark, Night, Cold, etc.), and from which listeners could derive affective meaning. The adoption of these same figures in instrumental music resulted in an instrumental language from which affective meaning could be derived through association of the figures with their affective words. These figures became so established that the German theorists began to codify a so-called "Doctrine of the Figures" (*figurenlehre*), describing around 160 such figures along with their relationship to oratory. Numerous conflicts exist between writers, however, suggesting that no unified usage existed; rather, the figures function to embellish and emphasize a more basic overall Affekt of the music.

Concern for the overall "passion" of a movement (Sadness, Joy, Anger, Hope, Hate, Love, Doubt, Jealousy, etc.) was extended to all aspects of a composition, including meter, rhythm, interval, harmony, form, key, mode, instrumental color, and dance-type. All of the major German theorists wrote on what later became known as the "Doctrine of the Affections" or the *affektenlehre*, but again do not present a unified practice. Knowledge of the existence and function of these rhetorical-musical figures, however, at least provides insight into the motivic design of the music, as well as illuminating comments such as the following:

...instrumental music endeavors to say as much without the help of words as voices do with words...so that the listener is able to fully comprehend and clearly understand the thrust, meaning, purpose and emphasis...as though it were an actual speech... (Mattheson, 1739).

The concept of "instrumental singing" or "musical speech" also brings us to a richer understanding of the "cantabile style of playing" advocated by Bach himself on the title page to the publication of his keyboard *Inventions and Sinfonias* (1723).

5.2 Hierarchical Phrasing

The essential challenge in performing the music of Bach—more than any other composer of the Baroque—lies in the expressive reconciliation of non-coincident levels of musical structure; a balancing of what might be termed "hierarchical" levels of phrasing. This hierarchy comprises a background alternation of strong and weak metric stresses across all rhythmic levels, vivified by an incongruous and ever-changing affective, melodic, motivic and dissonant foreground, and shaped by larger metric stress-patterns at the harmonic and cadential level. The successful projection of this hierarchy in performance (i.e. the articulation or "pronunciation" of the music) is further complicated by a phraseological system of beat-contained motive and downbeat emphasis that forms the virtual antithesis of the nineteenth-century phraseological model to which most modern musicians are accustomed.

5.2.1 Quintitatis Intrinsicaca and the Metrical Hierarchy

At the heart of the Baroque metric concept is the *Quantitatis Intrinsicaca*, or "Inner Duration" of notes—the perception of a succession of otherwise equal notes or beats in strong-weak pairs. One of the clearest descriptions of this potentially elusive concept was made by John Holden (1770), who makes an analogy with the succession of equal sounds produced by the ticking of a watch:

We find them proceeding by pairs...the pulses being alternately a little stronger and weaker: 1 2, 1 2, 1 2; each single pulse may represent the time of a semiquaver [sixteenth note]. We can also place our regard on stronger pulses and disregard the weaker ones, so as to apply the same way of counting 1 ; 2 : 1 : 2 : in a slower manner...considering each pair as constituting one pulse...answering to the time of a quaver [8th note].

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Employing terminology such as good and bad notes, notes nobilres and ignobles, notes bonne and vile, long and short notes, this hierarchy of alternating strong-weak pairs, progressing from the sixteenth-note division of the beat, through eighth-note division, to paired beats, doubled-beats, and even to measures and phrases, is described over and over again by German, French, Italian, and English theorists of the period. Yet, and despite provocative terminology (such as the "long" and "short" notes of Heinichen (1728) and Scheibe (1745)—two German theorists contemporary to Bach), the theorists do not necessarily advocate that the performer is to actually lengthen or accent a note in projecting the strong-weak pairing—the effect of this quantitatis intrinseca, or "inner duration," is generally deemed to rely on the perception of the listener. Assuming that the player also perceives such groupings, however, an at least unconscious physical response is inevitable—according to Mattheson (1722), a note may be "eminent to the ear to such a degree that it invites you to agree with it."

It is noteworthy that keyboard fingerings, wind tonguings and string bowings of the period commonly articulate the projection of paired hierarchical groupings. The widely-adopted "rule of the down-bow," as described by Muffat (1698), for example, results in just such a metrical scheme—the stronger down-bow stroke is used on the "good" notes and the weaker up-bow on the "bad" ones (figure 54):

Figure 54. "Rule of the Down-Bow." Georg Muffat (1698).

5.2.2 Beat-Level Modification of the Metrical Hierarchy

In performance, the effect of additional stressed elements positioned on "bad" parts of the beat or measure produce constant and varied modification of the metrical hierarchy. For example, a dissonance is stressed, even when it falls on a weak part of the beat, and its resolution is unstressed (figure 55):

Figure 55. Stressed dissonance on weak part of beat.

Similarly, a melodic accent (a high note or a long note which follows a shorter one) is usually stressed regardless of metric placement, and may therefore superimpose an articulation on the metrical hierarchy (figure 56):
Figure 56. a) Prelude, Suite 3, mm. 38-40; b) Menuet I, Suite 1, mm. 1-2.

a) high-note stress

b) long-note stress

The delineation of motivic figures at the beat-level further acts upon the articulation of the lower-level hierarchical pairs—articulation of the natural shape of these figures usually consists of grouping conjunct notes (stressing the first of the group) and separating disjunct ones (figure 57):

Figure 57. Articulation of motivic figures.

Another articulation at odds with the metrical hierarchy may be imposed by longer conjunct groupings and shifts in melodic direction beginning or ending on a weak part of the beat or measure (figure 58):

Figure 58. Articulation of conjunct groupings and shifts in melodic direction: Prelude, Suite 3, mm. 1-6.

5.2.3 The Longer Phrase, Harmonic Rhythm and Cadence

Though the foreground level of musical detail consists of a series of short motives or figures (and not a through-composed melody), clearly-constructed phrases are nevertheless projected through the logic of the underlying harmonic or contrapuntal progression (the Dispositio of rhetorical composition). The projection of this large-scale structure, shaped by the harmonic rhythm and delineated by cadences, is the level of phrasing that provides organization, balance and forward motion to the detail of local-level articulation.

The sense of broader metric stress projected by the placement and regularity of harmonic change is the principal musical response to the metric stresses associated with each movement of the dance suite (see section 5.9 below and figures 7 and 8 on page 158, above). Although the Preludes often make a feature of avoiding a sense of cadence (partly by overlapping or eliding the beginning and ends of consecutive phrases), the dance movements have obvious cadences at the end of each binary-half as well as, in many cases, one or more internal cadences of varying degrees of conclusiveness. The proportioned articulation of these cadences through rhythmic flexibility, responding to their effect of increasing tension followed by resolution, represents the outermost level of hierarchical phrasing.  

3 Such rhythmic flexibility need not be overdone, however, and some evidence exists to suggest a relatively strict beat-to-beat tempo in Bach, and other Baroque music. For example, Paul Badura-Skoda (1993, pp. 8 and 12) reports on the evidence of a number of mechanical organ-barrels, describing a vigorous and strict tempo at the beat level, but with a free yet barely-perceptible rhythmic flexibility within the beat. Also see section 5.8, below.
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5.2.4 Articulation of the Lower Voice

The lower voice provides the chief means of controlling the larger-level phrasing of the music. Relatively unembellished and consistent, and acting at the level of the dispositio (reflecting the harmonic rhythm of the contrapuntal structure at the level of the beat and the measure), its articulation should therefore be independent of, and not compromised by, the upper part.

Although the articulation of the lower voice is indicated through notated rests, the precise duration of each note is an issue of interpretation, and is subject to considerations of tempo (the faster the tempo, the more articulate), structure (post-cadential notes are usually long), and desired Affekt.

5.3 Bach’s Bowing Slurs

In a sense, Bach’s written articulation markings represent a performance of the music and provide, in addition to technical information, an indication of phrasing and articulation. Due to the potential for somewhat strong down-bows contrasted with weaker up-bows (Muffat’s “rule of the down-bow” mentioned earlier), and the effect that the first note of a slurred group is likely to be stressed more than the notes that are slurred to it, the placement of a bowing slur also defines note-grouping and articulation.

The bowing indications contained in the cello manuscripts, which at first sight seem quite carelessly and inconsistently drawn, reveal many consistent tendencies on closer examination. Most slurs are contained within the beat, where they delineate motivic figures and dissonances or articulate “good-bad” groupings of (sometimes affective) paired eighth or sixteenth-notes (figure 59):

Figure 59. Bowing Slurs: a) Prelude, Suite 2, mm. 27-31; b) Sarabande, Suite 6, mm. 6-8; c) Menuet I, Suite 1, mm. 1-4.

As can be seen in figure 59a above, written slurs complement the natural shape of the figures, delineating the conjunct portion and clarifying the implied part-writing of the compound line by splitting-off notes that move by leap (as discussed above). It should be noted, however, that similar figures are often articulated differently (both within and between sources) and that no single “correct” articulation for a particular figure is applied in all instances. Varied articulation of similar figures is common, and often occurs when the motivic shape and metric placement of a figure are otherwise identical (figure 60):

Figure 60. Varied Articulation of Similar Figures: Courante, Suite 1, mm. 1-4.
Although slurs rarely resolve across the beat or barline, there are notable exceptions (figure 61):

Figure 61. Cross-beat slurs: a) Prelude, Suite 3, mm. 21-24; b) Allemande, Suite 3, mm. 17 and 24.

While most longer slurs outline longer conjunct groupings, the meaning of some such slurs is uncertain; some function perhaps as a short-hand indication to continue a previously-established pattern (figure 62a), while others seem to be an indication to abandon "beat-contained" articulation (figure 62b):

Figure 62. a) Long slurs: Prelude, Suite 4, mm. 56-58; b) Prelude, Suite 4, mm. 88-92.

In the many instances where no slurs are present it may reasonably be assumed that the performer should add them, grouping notes as appropriate and perhaps taking an earlier marking as a model. Although casually applied, occasional dots are employed in the Anna Magdelena manuscript and almost certainly are intended to confirm that slurs are not to be used at that point (they are also sometimes used to clarify the endpoint of a carelessly-drawn slur) (figure 63, and also see Suite 3, Gigue, mm. 34, 38, 94 and 98):

Figure 63. Articulation dots: Gigue, Suite 1, mm. 1-2.

To facilitate further examination, the bowing indications from the Anna Magdelena source have been included in the parallel score provided with this edition. Due to the vague placement of many markings in the original manuscripts (which often vary from source to source), a good deal of subjective interpretation has been necessary in deciding to which notes they belong.

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4 Several recent authors state that Bach's cello slurs are *never* written so as to cross the barline. Clearly, this is not the case. In addition to the examples cited above, the Gigue to the French-style Fifth Cello Suite, in particular, makes a feature of cross-measure slurs.

5 Although making little specific reference to the Cello music, the following study of articulation marks in Bach's chamber and concerted vocal music is recommended: John Butt, *Bach Interpretation: Articulation Marks in Primary Sources of J. S. Bach*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
5.4 Dynamics

In only a single instance does Bach provide dynamic markings in the Cello Suites—an “echo” passage at the beginning of the Sixth Suite Prelude (figure 64):

Figure 64. Dynamics: Prelude, Suite 6, mm. 1-4.

![Music notation showing dynamics and expression marks.

This kind of dynamic effect is notated fairly often by Bach, and by other Baroque composers, and has given credence to the concept of the “terrace dynamic”—a block of music that progresses at a single dynamic level until countered by another marking. While echo effects such as that shown above are present in Baroque music (an extrinsic manifestation of the quantitatis intrinseca), they are by no means the only type of dynamic shaping employed at the time. Consider figure 65, taken from Quantz (1752), in which is described the relative dynamic of each note of an elaborate thirty-two measure ornamental passage. Quantz uses the terms weak, strong, crescendo and decrescendo at the level of the beat, delineating the natural shape of musical figures or motives. As today, such effects respond to the natural shapes and tensions in the music and we may reasonably assume that, although not notated, this kind of nuance was natural on any instrument capable of producing it.

Figure 65. Dynamic Shaping - Quantz (1752).

![Music notation showing dynamic variations and expression marks.

One, controversial, dynamic effect remains to be mentioned—the dynamic accent. The early eighteenth-century theorists present at least three distinct positions in their discussions of metric accent and emphasis: one related to the quantitatis intrinseca in which accent is perceived but not physically produced; one related to emphasis through the subtle lengthening of notes; and one related to accent enhanced by note length and moderate dynamic stress. It is not until the late eighteenth century, with the abandonment of musical figures in favor of clearly-defined melodic phrases, that the theorists begin to describe dynamic accent alone as the means to metric stress.

5.5 Bach’s Clavier Articulation

Although the information regarding Bach’s performances is scant, it is nevertheless quite illuminating—Bach appears to have possessed an unsurpassed legato style of playing. According to Johann Nikolaus Forkel, in his seminal work On Johann Sebastian Bach’s Life, Genius, and Works (Leipzig, 1802):

Johann Sebastian Bach's manner of managing the clavier was admired by all those who had the good fortune to hear him, and envied by all those who might themselves claim to be considered as good players...hitherto nobody has explained in what this difference properly consisted....I have often wondered that C. Ph. Emanuel [Bach’s soul], in his "Essay on the True Manner of Playing on the Clavier," did not describe at length this highest degree of distinctness in the touch of that instrument as he not only possessed it himself, but because in this consists one of the chief differences by which the Bachs’ [J. S., C. P. E., and W. F.] mode of playing on the clavier is distinguished from all others. He [C. P. E.] says..."Some persons play too stickily...their touch is too long, because they keep the keys down beyond the time. Others have attempted to avoid this defect and play too short, as if the keys were burning-hot. This is also a common fault. The middle path is best."6

This description of Bach’s precise legato style of playing is confirmed by E. L. Gerber (ca. 1750) who, in describing another organist, says:

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...his manner could not possibly please those who knew Bach's legato manner of playing, for he played everything staccato.7

Bach's legato style may perhaps be best understood as a general articulation rather than a constant one—a legato articulation of note groupings that should be so articulated in the cantabile manner. A constant articulation is no articulation at all.

5.6 Phrasing and Articulation in an Idiomantic Context

The motives, figures, placement of slurs, embellishments, ornaments, and phrase structures discussed thus far represent, for Bach, a common practice—these features appear in the same way in all of his music, whether it be string, keyboard, wind or vocal. Each instrument, however, has its own particular idiomatic manner of articulating them. Bowed instruments, for example, tend toward dynamic stress as an almost unavoidable consequence of playing technique and bow construction—the weight being toward the heel of the Baroque bow, combined with lower tension gut strings, results in a greater difference between up-bow and down-bow and, consequently, the tendency to dynamically stress the "good" beats or the first note of a slur. While Italian string players claimed equal facility with either bow, on "good" notes or "bad," the French and the Germans adhered to Muffat's "rule of the down-bow" which places the heavier articulation on the "good" parts of the beat. Not that French bowing was a relentless alternation of strong and weak strokes—the gambists (Marais, Forqueray, Loulié, etc.), for example, used numerous varieties of bow stroke related to gradations of attack, sustain and release, while other writers describe the bariolage (the slurred alternation of the same note across two strings), the détaché (a detached or staccato stroke) and the sautille (the spiccato or "flying staccato" stroke) as additional strokes, each with its own particular articulative effect.

The harpsichordists, on the other hand, had no recourse to dynamic stress in projecting the shape of the music. That Bach's keyboard slurrings are applied in the same way as the string bowings (although much less profusely) is extremely interesting—since slurs have no technical purpose on keyboard instruments they are, therefore, musical indications requiring an articulation from the player. And a variety of articulation is available on keyboard instruments—even on the harpsichord—and ranges from the detached to the legato, even to the "over-legato" (an overlapping of successive tones). Like string instruments, keyboard technique also projects a basic paired metrical hierarchy through the alternation of relatively strong and weak fingers, even though no dynamic effect can result from them. Right-hand execution of passage-work on the lute, which relies upon the alternation of the stronger thumb with the weaker index finger, is yet another instance of paired metrical articulation tied to basic instrumental technique.

Clearly, we may discern two types of articulative emphasis—one through dynamic stress, the other through duration and rhythm. These effects are not mutually exclusive however and, when available, both are appropriate. On dynamically-limited instruments such as the guitar and, especially, the lute, modest dynamic stress reinforced by rhythmic and durational emphasis is particularly effective.

5.7 Phrasing and Articulation on the Modern Guitar

As we have seen, the articulation of Bach's music requires a detailed and proportioned stress or emphasis at a variety of levels—ranging from the hierarchical pairs and the delineation of motives and figures, to the projection of harmonic rhythm and the larger phrase. We have also seen that both dynamic and durational nuance are an effective means of providing this emphasis. However, since we have also noted that each instrument has its own idiomatic means of articulating this music, we should take care not to limit our expressive devices to those of other instruments—rather, we should explore and take full advantage of appropriate techniques idiomatic to the modern guitar.

Each finger of the right hand is relatively strong or weak and this inequality, enhanced by a slight lengthening of the "good" notes, may be applied to the projection of hierarchical pairs at the level of beat division. As with p-i (thumb/index-finger) alternation on the lute, a strong-weak pairing may be conveniently projected on the guitar by arranging for a strong finger (the middle, or possibly the ring finger) to play the "good" notes, with the index finger reserved for the "bad" ones—noting that the desired articulation will "speak" only if the natural inequality of the fingers is allowed to come through by using a relaxed right-hand technique (a "rest-stroke" technique will likely produce quite the opposite effect—the equalization of paired notes). An overall light touch also allows for subtle accentuation, which may be applied to the delineation of motives and figures within the beat—the first note of a conjunct group will receive an emphasis (equivalent to the first note of a slurred group on the cello).

Although we cannot reasonably replace the cello bowings with left-hand slurs on the guitar, it is possible to delineate the first note of a conjunct group or the resolution of a dissonance with a slur—provided the slur is well controlled. As mentioned earlier, the effect of left-hand slurs on the modern guitar tends to be heavier and less articulate than on earlier instruments, and can lack the agility of plucked articulation in providing the

7 Bach Reader, p. 187, fn77.
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Subtle and constant accentuation necessary to delineate small-scale figures and motives in a proportioned way. The use of left-hand slurs to delineate and group ornaments is a different matter since hierarchial articulation does not take place at this level of beat division. However, left-hand slurs are perhaps best used as they are on the Baroque lute and on the five-course guitar—as varied articulation and ornamental texture, conveniently placed but without phraseological or motivic association. In this way we may produce a rich and varied articulative texture which freely mixes slurs, plucked notes, campanella and stile brisé, leaving motivic delineation and phrasing to right hand accentuation and agogic accent—in contrast with the constant détaché that often characterizes modern performances of this music.

Timbral change is rarely associated with early music performance; nor, in general, need it be. However, even though the cello suites were not conceived with organized concertante contrasts in mind, a change of tone color may be used to enhance “echo” passages, as well as the differentiation of voice parts.

As mentioned earlier, ornamental vibrato is a common feature on the lute and five-course guitar (where it is often found in place of a mordent), as well as on the clavichord. Beyond ornamental use, however, there is no good reason not to use vibrato in place of a bowed swell to maintain the intensity of a long or otherwise expressive note.

Articulation of the larger structure of the music (harmonic rhythm, dance meter, cadence and the longer phrase) may be achieved through clear articulation of the lower voice and proportioned durational lengthening. A slight broadening of tempo prepares the approach to a cadence and, as mentioned earlier, a subtle preparatory hesitation before the main harmonic changes (which usually reflect the strong beats of the dance) provides emphasis without forced accentuation as well as maintaining the beat-contained articulation (which is almost antithetical to modern players raised on a nineteenth-century phraseological model based on de-emphasis of the downbeat).

We cannot, of course, consciously control all rhythmic and articulative levels as we play—rather, the basic metrical and harmonic hierarchy is internalized and subconsciously “felt” as the background against which the detailed motivic articulation is expressively applied. The proportion and overall balance of these levels, however, is the essential challenge in performing the music of Bach. We may remind ourselves of a contemporary description of him: “full of rhythm in every part of his body”[8]

5.8 Bach’s Tempos

The few surviving descriptions of Bach’s performance manner refer to his relatively “brisk tempos.” According to Forkel, in his On Johann Sebastian Bach’s Life, Genius, and Works (Leipzig, 1802):

In the execution of his own pieces he generally took the time very brisk, but contrived, besides this briskness, to introduce so much variety in his performance that under his hand every piece was, as it were, a discourse.

And in the Nekrolog auf Seb. Bach (Bach’s Obituary), written in 1754, C. P. E. Bach and J. F. Agricola mention that:

In his conducting he was very accurate, and of the tempo, which he generally took very lively, he was uncommonly sure.

Tempo is, of course, a relative measurement; and it is perhaps more important that these references also mention the quality of Bach’s playing at such tempos. Johann Abraham Birnbaum, in his well-known defense of Bach against Johann Adolph Scheibe written in 1738, describes Bach’s “quite special adroitness, even at the greatest speed, in bringing out all the tones clearly and with uninterrupted evenness.”[11] It should hardly need mentioning that speed of execution should always defer to quality of execution—a sentiment stated in no uncertain terms by both C. P. E. Bach and J. J. Quantz, amongst others.

5.9 The French Dance Style: Phrasing, Affekt, and Tempo

The social significance of the French dancing style can hardly be overemphasized. Evidenced by the large number of French dancing masters employed abroad during the early eighteenth century, the widespread popularity of both French theatrical and social dancing across Europe resulted in the almost universal adoption

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[8] Taken from a letter written by Johann Matthias Gesner to Marcus Fabius Quintillianus in 1738, Bach Reader, p. 231.


of the French dances in stylized musical settings. Bach himself associated with several of the French dancing masters employed in Germany, and must certainly have been acquainted with the intricacies of the style.

In general, the French dancing style is characterized by grace, dignity and even by a certain "nonchalant" attitude, but not by constant motion or relentless drive. The downbeat, which is usually prefaced by a preparatory downward gesture made by bending at the knees (a plié), is marked by a "rise" (an élévé) comprised of one of a variety of springing or gliding steps. The steps proceed, therefore, by an alternation of motion and rest (or arsis and thesis), creating a period of "pregnancy" before the strong beats of the dance. This moment of hesitancy, which is difficult to sense without at least trying to dance the steps, has considerable consequences for musical phrasing—it serves to emphasize the downbeat of the measure without giving a forced accentuation. The steps are further grouped into the phrases that comprise the characteristic sectional structure of most Baroque dance movements.

In the suites for cello, Bach includes the "standard" complement of dance movements: an Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue, along with the customary galanterian pair—Minuets in the first two suites, Bourrées in the middle two, and Gavottes in the last two. As stylized versions of ballroom dances, not only does each have its own associated tempo and metric stress pattern, but also its own expressive character, or Affekt. Although no attempt may reasonably be made to match a dancing tempo to a musical one (choreographic tempo responds to physical rather than musical motion and anyway, like music, is also subject to aesthetic taste), the relative tempi attributed to the dances are useful in asserting the overall movement-to-movement shape of the suite. The theorists identify six relative tempo levels, of which four apply to the dances used by Bach in the Cello Suites:12

| Fastest | Bourrées and most Giguees  
|        | Gavottes and some Giguees  
|        | Minuets and Italian Courantes (Correntes)  
| Slowest | Sarabandes and French Courantes ("one beat per measure" of 3/2 meter) |

Tempo is perhaps the main determinant in asserting the expressive Affekt or character of a movement.

While Bach's stylized instrumental dance settings are not intended to represent music that could actually be danced, their underlying structure is nevertheless derived from the metric stress patterns and phrasing of the dances after which they are modeled. An account of these patterns follows, along with the affective descriptions the theorists ascribed to each.

5.9.1 The Prelude

Although no standard form exists for the Prelude, a few general characteristics are worth mentioning. The essence of the Prelude is one of improvisatory effect through idiomatic display. Repeated arpeggio and scale figures, sequences, slow harmonic rhythm (a single change per measure or even every two measures), irregular phrase-lengths and weak or avoided cadences all combine to give the impression that the composition of the piece is unfolding as it is being performed. Many of these features invite a rapid delivery, although too brilliant a tempo can destroy the intended improvisatory effect. Fermatas and short cadenza-like passages (which may be further elaborated by the performer) appear after the mid-point of many Preludes and act as emphatic structural markers, often helping to extend the movement and preparing the concluding section. Such fermatas need not be hurried.

Another important characteristic of the Prelude is that it sets the overall character or Affekt of the suite, providing a cohesiveness that unifies the diverse dance movements that follow it.

5.9.2 The Allemande

Since the Allemande was regularly used as the opening movement of suites without Preludes, this dance is often the most harmonically substantial movement of the suite—Walther (1732) described it as "the proposition out of which the other suites [movements] flow." This substance is also reflected in the widespread use of the Allemande as the basis of the elegiac and programmatic tombeau, as well as the slow and stately outer sections of the French Overture. In its French form the dance is somewhat slow, dignified and majestic with characteristic dotted rhythms (as in the Fifth Suite). Often, however, the dance takes on a more Italianate character, consisting of constant running sixteenth-notes. The characteristic opening sixteenth-note upbeat and following downbeat often seem to serve as a coup d'archet, steadying and restraining the forward motion of the movement from the outset (figure 66):

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12 See Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne's Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 19-20. This excellent work also provides much information relating to the affective characteristics of the dances, discussed below.
5.9.3 The Courante

The Courante also takes two very distinct forms: the French Courante and the Italian Corrente, though Bach uses the nomenclature "Courante" for both types. The theorists describe the French Courante as "serious and solemn," "earnest," "noble," "grand," "hopeful" and "majestic," expressing "sweet hope, something heart-felt, something yearning, but also something joyful." Counted in one large beat per measure of 3/2 meter, the Courante is actually one of the slowest of the dances in terms of meter, but one of the fastest in terms of figuration. It is also one of the most rhythmically subtle and ambiguous, frequently mixing 6/4 and 3/2 meter both between adjacent measures and polymetrically between voice parts (figure 67):

Figure 67. French Courante, Suite 5, mm. 22-24.

The Italian Courante (the Corrente) is rarely mentioned by the theorists but is often found in instrumental settings (often designated "Courante" rather than "Corrente"). With little of the metric ambiguity of the French Courante, the Italian version is characterized by constant "running" eighth or sixteenth-notes. Cast in a moderate-to-fast triple meter, which due to slow harmonic rhythm is also felt in a moderately slow one-beat-per-measure, the Corrente is often a virtuosic display in Italian string style comprising varied figuration and phrase length, arpeggiation, and sequences (figure 68):

Figure 68. Italian Corrente, Suite 4, mm. 1-5.

5.9.4 The Sarabande

Known in sixteenth-century Spain as a fast and lascivious dance, accompanied by castanets and strummed guitars, the Sarabande was one of many dances that slowed down during the course of instrumental adoption and subsequent refinement under Lully at the French court. The eighteenth-century theorists describe the French version of the dance as "grave," "ceremonious," "majestic," "serious" and "melancholic" with a "delicate yet serious tenderness," although more than a hint of passion is apparent in some descriptions of its danced performance. The French Sarabande is typically a relatively slow triple meter with a strong first or second beat emphasized by harmonic rhythm, note length, and ornamentation (figure 69 and also figure 7):
5.9.5 The Minuet

The Minuet was the most widely used of all Baroque dances and demonstrates a range of tempi, from the fast and virtuosic, to the moderate, to the slow (at the French court the monarchs, well adorned in heavy robage, often ended a social event by dancing a slow minuet—consequently, French composers often place the dance at the end of their suites). The theorists describe the Minuet as "noble," "expressive," "elegant" and of "moderate gaiety." In triple meter, the dance often employs hemiola rhythms and, like the other galantarian dances, has a clear and simple phrase structure—phrases of four measures, each comprising answering two-measure halves (figure 70). Tempo variation is often appropriate between paired Minuets, as it is between other paired galantarian dances.

5.9.6 The Bourrée

The Bourrée is amongst the fastest of the dances (along with the French Gigue). In duple meter with quarter-note upbeat (often two eighth-notes), it is usually comprised of eight-beat phrases of two answering four-beat halves. The theorists describe a "gay or joyful" dance "to be played lightheartedly," "its essential characteristics are contentment, pleasantness, unconcern, relaxed, easy going, comfortable, and yet pleasing" (figure 71):

5.9.7 The Gavotte

The Gavotte exists in two forms: the fast virtuosic Italian and the more moderate French (often a rondeau). The theorists describe this pastoral dance as having a range of Affekt: "graceful," "tender" and "joyful," yet also "sad." They indicate a "graceful" or "gay" tempo, as well as a "sometimes tender and slow" one. Metrically similar to the Bourrée, the Gavotte has a slower tempo and starts in mid-measure (on the second beat) rather than with a short anacrusis, and often ambiguously (figure 72):
5.9.8 The Gigue

The Gigue appears in many styles, meters and textures, although three principal types were used by Bach: two are French and the third Italian. The first type of French Gigue is characterized by ornamented dotted sautillement rhythms in 3/8 or 6/8 meter and is amongst the faster dances, moving at the same beat-rate as the Bourrée (figure 73):

Figure 73. Dotted French Gigue, Suite 6, mm. 1-4.

Although taking the same fast Bourrée tempo, a second type of French Gigue is distinguished through its plain undotted rhythms, sparse ornamentation, and further subdivision of the beat into sixteenth notes (figure 74):

Figure 74. Undotted French Gigue, Suite 2, mm. 33-40.

The Italian Gigue (or Giga) consists of a constant eighth-note triple division of the beat in 3/8, 6/8 or 12/8 meter with irregular phrase lengths and few internal cadences. The beat-rate is the same as the Gavotte, which makes it somewhat more moderate than most other Gigue (figure 75):

Figure 75. Italian Giga, Suite 4, mm. 1-3.

All three types of Gigue may employ imitative textures, sometimes fugal.

The final phrase of a Gigue (and, often, a Sarabande) may be repeated to form a petite reprise—a final gesture of resolution to close the suite. A few suggested repetitions of this type have been indicated in the performance scores, and are marked with the sign \( \times \).

5.10 Notes Inégales and Other Rhythmic Alterations

In the French style, considerable flexibility accompanies the performance of certain notated rhythms. These alterations concern the unequal paired performance of written equal note values (the notes inégales or lourier style) as well as considerable latitude in the execution of written dotted figures (the pointé style).

Related to the quintitazione intrinseca, inégale performance consists of the execution of notated even-notes in uneven pairs, applied at the quarter division of the beat (for example, sixteenth-notes in 4/4 meter or eighth-notes in 2/2 meter). According to some theorists, inequality may be applied to conjunct pairs but not to disjunct notes, slurs of four-notes or more, nor to very quick notes (which should proceed with a slight emphasis on the first of each four-note group only), and is “canceled” by dots. The degree of inequality is variable and may range from a slight lengthening to something approaching a notated dot.\(^{13}\) As a specifically French style, inégale

\(^{13}\) The subject of notes inégales has provoked much controversy over the past thirty years—disproportionate perhaps to the actual utility and appropriateness of the technique to most baroque music. Particular debate surrounds the relationship of unequal performance to paired slurring and notated dots (in the “non-slurred” sense rather than the rhythmic one) and to the degree of inequality. The major source of information concerning notes inégales comes from the French theorist and gambist Etienne Loulié (1696), although the style is also described by the French-influenced German theorists Walther (1732), Marpurg (1755) and Quantz (1752). In addition, potentially precise information regarding relative note-length is
performance is obviously appropriate to Bach's specifically French music (in the Fifth Suite, for example). However, as a historical technique, the appropriateness of inequality applied to French galanterian dances cast in a less overtly French style is debatable. It is worth noting that inégale, in a sense, is ornamental and is applied selectively to figures, not across-the-board (this latter type of affective dotting is usually written out in the music).

The second type of rhythmic alteration in French style concerns the pointé "sharpening" of written dotted figures. The amount of "over-dotting" is variable, the effect being one of a rapid upbeat to the next note. The following passage provides a suggestion for rhythmic interpretation in French-style (ignoring the theorist's advice concerning four-note slurs—marked in the cello original) (figure 76):

Figure 76. Courante, Suite 5, mm. 1-4.

In Conclusion

In this guide it has not been my intention to provide rules, restrictions, or limitations—since there are no "rules" in artistic performance, only possibilities. Furthermore, it is the artistic choices made from amongst the possibilities that produces unique and personal interpretations that truly breathe life into the music and which, ultimately, lead the performer to the essential spirit of the music.

It seems appropriate to conclude with a final description of Bach as performer:

From the easy, unconstrained motion of the fingers, from the beautiful touch, from the clearness and precision in connecting the successive tones, from the advantages of the new mode of fingering, from the equal development and practice of all the fingers of both hands, and, lastly, from the great variety of his figures of melody, which were employed in every piece in a new and uncommon manner, Sebastian Bach at length acquired such a high degree of facility and, we may almost say, unlimited power over his instrument in all the keys that difficulties almost ceased to exist for him. As well as in his unpremeditated fantasies as in executing his compositions (in which it is well known that all of the fingers of both hands are constantly employed, and have to make motions which are as strange and uncommon as the melodies themselves), he is said to have possessed such certainty that he never missed a note.\footnote{Forkel, "On Johann Sebastian Bach's Life, Genius, and Works," \textit{Bach Reader}, p. 310.}
Appendix A—Developing an Interpretation

Because there are many factors to be considered when adopting an informed approach to interpretation and performance, it can be difficult to know where to start. With this in mind, I suggest the following sequential practice approach to help performers develop and internalize an expressive interpretation and performance vocabulary.

1. discover the expressive character
2. feel the dance meter
3. discover the underlying structure
4. explore the metrical hierarchy
5. articulate the figuration
6. separate the voice parts
7. realize and add ornamentation

1. **Expressive Character**
   Begin with the overall character of the suite, as suggested by the opening Prelude. Next try to determine the more specific character of each movement (use the affective descriptions of the dances described in section 5.9). The choice of character will inform further decisions concerning tempo, articulation, and dynamics.

2. **Metric Shape**
   Keeping the affective character in mind, conduct the underlying metric dance-shape of the movement. Feel the strong beats and the moment of "pregnancy" before the downbeat.

3. **Underlying Structure**
   Play and sing the lower part alone, perhaps converting it into a chordal continuo part—the rhythmic shape of the lower part is essential to the interpretation of the piece. Look for hemiola in triple-meter pieces (see section 3.2), and the increase in rhythmic tension at the approach to cadences. Determine and shape the longer phrases as delineated by cadences.

4. **Metrical Hierarchy**
   Group the smallest note-values in pairs (like the ticking of a clock), and continue with successively larger note-values until you reach paired measures (see section 5.2.1).

5. **Figuration**
   Look for the structural "melodic" notes and determine how they have been elaborated with figuration to fill the beat (see section 4.4). Look for and emphasize high-notes and changes in melodic direction (see section 5.2.2). Also look at the shape of each figure and decide upon an articulation for each beat by grouping the conjunct portions and articulating skips (see section 5.2.2). Consider the shapes projected by the bowing slurs (see section 5.3). Determine left-hand slurring. In imitative passages, decide upon an articulative character for the "subject" and maintain it for each entry. Don't neglect to emphasize note groupings and melodic accents through both durational and dynamic stress (see section 5.7).

6. **Separate Parts**
   Hear, sing, and play the lower and upper parts independently (not allowing one to control the other), and use the lower voice to shape the larger phrase.

7. **Ornamentation**
   Realize the ornamentation indicated in the score (see section 4.1). Devise further ornamentation where appropriate (see sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4).
AMOS, Charles N. "Lute Practices and Lutenists in Germany Between 1500 and 1750." Ph. D. diss., The University of Iowa, 1975.


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