



Judicaël Perroy

Born in Paris in 1973, Judicaël Perroy began his guitar studies at the Paris Academy of Music at the age of seven and from eleven to fifteen his main studies were with Raymond Gratien. An acknowledged prodigy by the age of eleven, he won numerous prizes culminating with his triumph in October 1997 at the Guitar Foundation of America International Solo Competition, earning him the winner's tour of the Americas, with over sixty concerts and master-classes. He is in great demand as a teacher and adjudicator at numerous international festivals. His students continue to win top prizes in regional, national and international competitions worldwide while he tours extensively throughout the world along with his appearances in duo (Paris Guitar Duo) with the French guitarist Jeremy Jouve since 2003. He has made a number of recordings while teaching at the National Academy of Aulnay-sous-Bois and has been appointed to a teaching position at the Pôle Supérieur de Lille starting in September 2011.

Photo: Carole Epinette

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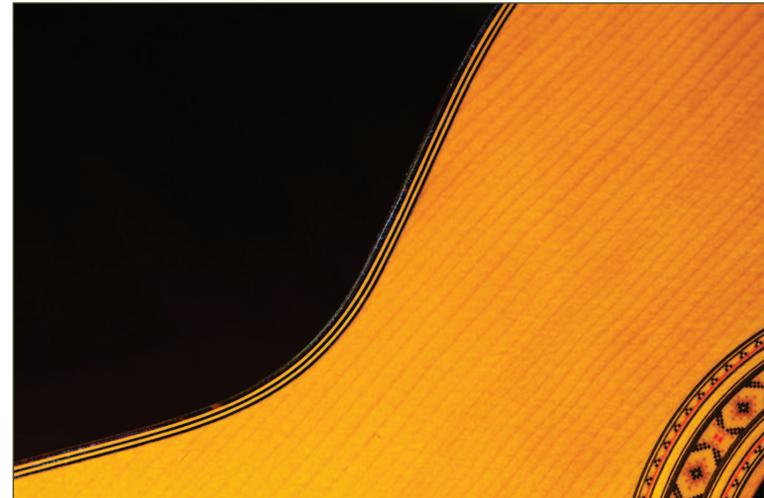


J. S. BACH

Transcriptions for Guitar

Partita No. 2, BWV 826 • Suite, BWV 997
Prelude, Fugue and Allegro, BWV 998
Concerto, BWV 972

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Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**Transcriptions for Guitar****Partita No. 2 in C minor, BWV 826 (arr. Tristan Manoukian)****Suite, BWV 997 (arr. Tilman Hoppstock)****Prelude, Fugue and Allegro, BWV 998 (arr. Tilman Hoppstock)****Concerto in D major (after Vivaldi), BWV 972 (arr. Judicaël Perroy)**

Guitarists have been playing the music of J. S. Bach ever since Francisco Tárrega well over a century ago transcribed a few movements from the solo violin suites. Baroque composers were generous in re-writing particular pieces for different instruments, and Bach was a shining example of this practice. Moreover, the classical guitar can offer his music a wide tonal spectrum of colour and variety and is eminently well suited for contrapuntal textures.

Partita No. 2 in C minor, BWV 826, is taken from the six keyboard suites, *BWV 825-30*, published under the collective heading of *Clavierübung* (Keyboard Practice) between 1726 and 1730. In the naming of these suites J. S. Bach seems to have been influenced by his predecessor as Kantor at the Thomasschule, Leipzig, Johann Kuhnau (1660-1722), who had used the same title for two volumes of keyboard music printed in 1689 and 1692. Bach ultimately published three further books of *Clavierübung* between 1735 and 1741, these volumes containing such masterpieces as the *Italian Concerto, BWV 971*, a quantity of liturgical organ music, and the renowned *Goldberg Variations*.

The *Partitas*, according to the title page, were 'composed for music-lovers, to delight their spirits'. The music historian, J. N. Forkel, commented how 'this work made in its time a great noise in the musical world. Such excellent compositions for the keyboard had never been seen or heard before.'

The virtuosic nature of Bach's keyboard writing makes this a singular challenge for any guitarist. The *Partita* begins with a brilliant *Sinfonia* in three sections, *Grave adagio* with dotted rhythms in the style of a French overture, a flowing *Andante* with a walking bass, and a fugal *Allegro* in two voices. The second movement, *Allemande*, is intricately contrapuntal, again in two voices. This is followed by a *Courante*, in the French style in three-two time with much

ornamentation written into the music in the form of rapid semiquavers. The *Sarabande* is also highly contrapuntal with a complex bass line and poignant melodic touches. The fourth movement, called *Rondeaux* by Bach, is an imitative duet between treble and bass, the theme itself constructed around a sequence of leaping sevenths. The finale, *Capriccio*, consists of a strict fugue in three parts, all three voices being present at the opening. The two halves of the *Capriccio* are precisely equal in length though not symmetrical. The piece is characterized by leaps of a tenth in the subject.

The four so-called 'lute suites' have been known by various designations. In the case of *BWV 997*, the title 'suite' does not appear in the chief sources and is indeed closer to the concept of a *sonata da chiesa*, though some editors prefer to describe it as a *partita*.

It was Dr Hans Dagobert Bruger's edition of *Johann Sebastian Bach: Kompositionen für die Laute* (Johann Sebastian Bach: Compositions for the Lute) in the early 1920s which first numbered the four 'lute' suites, implying some kind of structural unity overall as had occurred with the cello suites. Research established not only that a number of transcriptions existed for baroque lute, but also that others were probably intended to be played on the lute-harpsichord (a keyboard, strung mainly with gut, which sounded like a lute) or were also performed in a cello version.

Several manuscripts of *Suite BWV 997* exist in keyboard notation while an earlier copy of the *Prelude, Sarabande* and *Gigue* is in lute tablature (written out by the lutenist, J. C. Weyrauch). Thus the suite might originally have been conceived as in three movements, the *Fugue* and *Double* to the *Gigue* being added later for the keyboard or the lute-harpsichord. Though the original scoring is in C minor, guitarists usually perform the suite in A minor.

The *Prelude* and *Fugue* movements recall concerto-style pairings such as Bach's *BWV 894*. The *Fugue* itself is in *da capo* form, where the first section is repeated, though sometimes slightly modified, at the end. The central episode offers a contrasting texture of flowing semiquavers either in treble or bass in accordance with the part writing. The opening motif of the *Sarabande* is well known for its similarity to the theme of the last movement of the *St Matthew Passion*, which was in the same key, scored for orchestra and chorus. The *Gigue*, in sophisticated French style, is an energetic dance of great expressiveness. It is composed over similar bass patterns as the opening of the prelude, and complemented by a superbly brilliant *Double*. The great pianist and scholar Rosalyn Tureck described the *Double* as 'an invaluable example of Bach's own elaboration of a movement' and 'a true metamorphosis of the *Gigue*' revealing 'a stunning lesson in embellishment treatment'.

Wanda Landowska, the renowned harpsichordist, described the *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro, BWV 998*, as being 'of incomparable beauty, inspired, spontaneous, without a moment of arduous elaboration,' and 'unique among Bach's works'. Though the indications on the score *Prelude por la lute, ô cembalo*, suggest the piece was suitable for either lute or harpsichord, it may actually have been written for the lute-harpsichord.

The *Prelude* represents a supreme example of the *style brisé* (broken chord style) perfected by seventeenth-century French lutenists and influencing baroque keyboard players. The *Prelude* is thus a complex series of melodic fragments and broken chords with a clearly delineated bass part. The *Fugue*, in three voices, is structurally in three parts (A/B/A), the middle section being an extended episode in semiquavers. The brilliant *Allegro* exemplifies many of the attributes of a characteristic Bach *Gigue*. Of this movement Landowska commented: 'Bach's art is so masterful that we think we are hearing not two but many voices pursuing one another ... and, underlying it all, there is that bass leaping joyously, participating eagerly in the play of echoes and delighting in *chiaroscuro* effects.'

At a certain stage of his development, J. S. Bach became fond of arranging various ensemble music by composers he

admired in compact keyboard versions. At least half a dozen of these were based on concertos by Vivaldi, while four others by the same composer were arranged for organ. Most of these concertos were contained in a manuscript prepared by Bach's cousin, Johann Bernhard Bach. It is believed that these arrangements were completed by J. S. Bach around 1713, shortly after the return of Prince Johann Ernst from a tour of the Netherlands with a collection of music by Vivaldi and other composers. The scholar Christoph Wolf has observed how Bach's encounter with these Italian concertos 'confronted him with an entirely new set of problems and possibilities', leading to significant advances in the composer's creative concepts.

One of Bach's foremost biographers, Philipp Spitta, commented that 'by giving more movement to the bass, by adding animation to the inner parts, by supplementing the solo passages for the violins with counterpoint, by resolution of the suspensions, and by paraphrasing certain of the violin effects, Bach has in most cases produced a genuine work for the clavier, and at the same time essentially added to the musical value of the piece.'

Concerto in D major (after Vivaldi), BWV 972, is a reduction for harpsichord of Vivaldi's *Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 3, No. 9*, from *L'estro armonico, RV 230*. The three movements can be converted to the guitar with no loss of expressiveness and the contrasts between the *tutti* (or orchestral) passages and the sections where the soloist is prominent can be equally dramatic.

The first movement sets the mood with measured, majestic chords and dotted rhythms, this introduction being followed by an *allegro* movement which the Bach scholar, David Schulenberg, has described as 'a essentially of how much Vivaldi could accomplish in a series of short phrases confined to a few harmonies'. The sonorous opening harmonies of the *Larghetto* lead on to a memorably beautiful theme, concluding with a short reprise of the chordal beginning. The *Allegro*, a lively dance in three-eight time, begins with passages in parallel thirds. Parts of the composition are modified by Bach with individual elements not present in the original Vivaldi.

Graham Wade