

Complete Bach Flute Sonatas

VOLUME ONE

Vernon Hill flute
Roger Heagney harpsichord
Jacqueline Johnson violoncello

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digital

Complete Bach Flute Sonatas

VOLUME TWO

Vernon Hill and Virginia Taylor flutes
Roger Heagney harpsichord
Jacqueline Johnson violoncello

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Complete Bach Flute Sonatas

Vernon Hill: flute

Roger Heagney: harpsichord

Jacqueline Johnson: violoncello

* Virginia Taylor: flute

VOLUME 1

Sonata in C Major for Flute and Basso Continuo, BWV 1033 – Andante, Allegro, Adagio, Menuetto I and II

Sonata in G Minor for Flute and Harpsichord Obligato (by C.P. Bach), BWV 1020 – Allegro moderato, Adagio, Allegro

Partita in A Minor for Unaccompanied Flute, BWV 1013 – Allemande, Corrente, Sarabande, Bouree Anglaise

Sonata in B Minor for Flute and Harpsichord Obligato, BWV 1030 – Andante, Largo e dolce, Presto

Sonata in A Major for Flute and Harpsichord Obligato, BWV 1032 – Vivace, Largo e dolce, Allegro

VOLUME 2

Sonata in E-flat Major for Flute and Harpsichord Obligato, BWV 1031 – Allegro moderato Siciliano, Allegro

Sonata in E Minor for Flute and Basso Continuo, BWV 1034 – Adagio ma non tanto, Allegro, Andante, Allegro

* Sonata in G Major for Two Flutes and Basso Continuo, BWV 1039 – Adagio, Allegro ma non tanto, Adagio e piano, Allegro moderato

Sonata in E Major for Flute and Basso Continuo, BWV 1035 – Adagio ma non tanto, Allegro, Siciliano, Allegro assai

* Sonata in G Major for Two Flutes, BWV 1038 – Allegro, Vivace, Adagio, Presto

Largely, Bach wrote music for solo transverse flute to attract the attention of Dresden's flute-playing ruler Frederick the Great. A famous connoisseur of music, Frederick had turned his court at Dresden into a musical centre of great renown and had made positions in his household coveted by musicians all over

Europe. Bach never succeeded in obtaining a position at Dresden – he was to spend his life in relative obscurity at provincial Leipzig – but his involvement with the flute produced a series of solo works which utterly transformed and deepened the prevailing concept of the instrument. So precise was his understanding of the flute's possibilities that he never wrote per flauto traverso o violino (for transverse flute or violin) on his scores – whatever might appear in modern editions of them – for his vision of the instrument was too singular to allow the swapping common amongst his contemporaries.

The beginning of his interest in the flute came in Autumn 1717, when he met the principal flautist of the Dresden court orchestra, Pierre Gabriel Buffardin (1689-1768). At the time, Bach had written no music for the instrument, not even in his early cantatas, for it was associated with the frivolous French galant, a style of dance rhythms, light textures, and fussy articulations quite foreign to his interests. But Buffardin was the greatest flute virtuoso alive, teacher of such famous players as Johann Quantz, and an artist of the highest

order. Thrilled by the possibilities of the instrument in the hands of a great player, and perhaps sensing an entree to the Dresden court, Bach produced a pair of works for Buffardin, the A minor Partita, BWV 1013 (Vol. 1), and the C major Sonata, BWV 1033 (Vol. 1).

These two works were challenges for a master, the Partita completely unaccompanied and the Sonata almost certainly unaccompanied also in its original form. The accompaniment to the Sonata appeared years later, in 1731, when Bach had his son Carl Philipp Emmanuel add a harpsichord bass to the melody as a composition exercise.

Neither the C Major Sonata nor the later E flat Major Sonata appear in the authoritative Bach edition, the Neue Bach Ausgabe, for it has been customary to think these works were not by Bach at all. But the role Emmanuel played as a student and arranger of these works has now been clarified by the brilliant research of American Bach scholar Robert L Marshall, published in the Journal of the American Musicological Society XX-II/3 (1979), and there seems no need for further doubt.

Bach had no fine flautist to

write for in Leipzig; but a virtuoso – perhaps Buffardin again – seems to have come to visit in summer 1724, for at that time a series of difficult obligato flute parts suddenly appear in his cantatas, and he produced the E minor Sonata, BWV 1034 (Vol. 2). Concentrated, virtuosic and profound, this work is close in flavour to the obligato arias of the cantatas. It survives only because Bach's friend Johann Peter Kellner, who saved many of Bach's works from oblivion, copied it out by hand from the original.

In 1729, to vary his wearing duties at St Thomas' Church, Leipzig, Bach began directing the Collegium Musicum, a civic group which met regularly to play instrumental music for the local citizens. The Sonata in B minor, BWV 1030 (Vol. 1) was likely composed for this group in that year. At first setting the work for instrumental ensemble in G Minor, Bach reworked it for flute and transposed it to B minor, around 1736.

One reason why Bach never succeeded in attracting the Dresden court's interest with these pieces was his severe style, which was different from that popular at court. Frederick's musical abilities were

considerable, but his tastes were narrow and unchanging. When Bach wrote his later sonatas, therefore, he tried hard to follow the Dresden manner. The E-flat major Sonata, BWV 1031 (Vol. 2), 1730-34, is emphatic in imitating the Dresden fashion for simple triadic melodies, short phrases, and thumping basses. It comes down to us in an anonymous manuscript, with a title page on which Emmanuel has written "by J. S. Bach". Emmanuel studied this Sonata carefully, making it the basis of his own Violin Sonata in G minor, BWV 1020 (Vol. 1) of 1734, recorded here and long thought to be a work of his father's. Emmanuel was evidently more successful than his father in capturing the court manner, for soon after this he was appointed Royal Harpsichordist at Dresden.

The A major Sonata, BWV 1032 (Vol. 1) of 1731 was also written in the cheerful, light-textured Dresden style.

Finally, in 1741, Bach travelled personally to Dresden to further his case. While there he wrote the E major Sonata, BWV 1035 (Vol. 2), for Frederick's flute partner Fredersdorf. Probably the last of his works for the instrument, this Sonata is as fashionable

as Bach was prepared to be: it abandons counterpoint almost entirely for the sonata da camera idiom preferred at Dresden.

It was no more useful than its predecessors in obtaining Bach the position he wanted, but as always the intensity and beauty of the sound gives it a timeless significance, far beyond the long forgotten compositions Frederick and his circle seemed to prefer.

Of the Sonatas in G major for two flutes, BWV 1039 (Vol. 2) is thought to be original and was later reworked for viola da gamba and cembalo (BWV 1027). However, BWV 1038 (Vol. 2), also in G major was written for flute, violin and continuo and first performed around 1720. While the bass line is believed to have been written by Bach (identical to BWV 1021), the authenticity of the upper line is doubted. This recording uses two flutes and continuo.

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Vernon Hill was Principal Flute in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for more than 10 years. He represented Australia in the World Symphony Orchestra in the USA in 1971 and has played

guest principal flute in the London Symphony, the BBC, and the Sydney Symphony Orchestras. He is now Head of the Wind Department at the Canberra School of Music.

He has performed concertos with all of the Australian Symphony Orchestras in addition to numerous solo recitals in all of our capital cities. On his European solo concert tours he has performed in London, Hungary, Yugoslavia, at the Jerash Festival in Jordan for the Israel Philharmonic Society in Tel Aviv, and with the Australian Chamber Orchestra in Greece. His overseas concert tours with the Canberra Wind Soloists have also been quite extensive, taking him through Japan, Russia, Yugoslavia, New Zealand, China, Hong Kong and Korea.

He has recorded for EMI, Festival, Peter Mann, Move and the ABC, in addition to playing on many film soundtracks. His EMI recording of the Colin Brumby Concerto received wide acclaim and completely sold out shortly after its release, the slow movement of the Mozart Flute and Harp concerto (Mozart in Delphi album) was nominated for the 1987 Australian Recording Industry Awards and his 1989 performance

of the Colin Brumby Flute Concerto in Canberra did receive the Critics Award for best performance of an Australian Composition. He is a highly respected master teacher, and has published a series of ten specialised articles on playing the flute.

Virginia Taylor is undoubtedly the most exciting flautist to appear on the Australian Concert platform in recent years. In 1983, spectacular performances at the Australian Flute Convention led to her being awarded First Prize in the National Flute Competition. Her recent engagements have included tours throughout Australia for the ABC and for Musica Viva (in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs) to such exotic places as Saudi Arabia, India and Singapore and China, as well as many solo recitals, and recordings. She has performed concertos with many of the symphony orchestras throughout Australia. In 1988, Virginia was awarded the title "Young Performer of the Year". This is the Premier Prize of all Australian Competitions which selects an outright winner from each of the other winners on all instruments including voice. The competition received full National

Radio and Television coverage. Virginia's CD entitled For Flute and Guitar, released on the Tall Poppies label, with guitarist Timothy Kain, has been a best-seller. She is a member of the Austral Trio, comprising the unusual combination of flute, violin and guitar. The trio is resident at the Canberra School of Music and tours regularly both internationally and throughout Australia. In addition to her performing career, Virginia is currently Lecturer in Flute at the Canberra School of Music.

Roger Heagney has an international reputation as a harpsichordist and teaches at the University of Melbourne and the Australian Catholic University. He performs regularly with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Mozart Collection and Pro Arte orchestras and at the Melbourne International Festival of Organ and Harpsichord. As well as soloist he regularly appears as accompanist. He has been Director of Music at St Francis' Church in the city of Melbourne for many years.

In 1983 he undertook a study tour of Europe, USA and the United Kingdom which concluded with a highly successful recital in London with flautist, Vernon Hill. In

1980 he formed Trio Polyphonica with violinist Stephen McTaggart and cellist Jacqueline Johnson. As well as giving many performances throughout Australia, the group gave many broadcasts and made several recordings. The trio has been highly acclaimed for its performances of French and Italian baroque music and in 1987 toured China, playing in Beijing, Xian, Tienjin and Hong Kong.

Roger established Australia's first degree course in Church Music at the Ascot Vale campus of the now Australian Catholic University. This course has become well-respected for the training of musicians in vocal and keyboard skills both for the church and generally.

As Director of Music at St Francis' Church he has revived the singing of orchestral masses by Mozart, Haydn and Schubert in their proper liturgical setting. His continual interest in church music expanded further in 1986 and 1990 when he took St Francis' Choir on concert tours of Europe.

The **harpsichord** used for this recording was made by Melbourne master craftsman Alastair McAllister. It was made in 1975 after the original instrument

of 1756 now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts by the Alsatian builder, Henri Hemsch. It has two manuals and 3 sets of strings, two at eight foot pitch and one at four foot pitch – a manual coupler and buff stop to the upper eight foot strings. Since 1975 Alastair has completed many instruments. These have included copies of instruments by Henri Hemsch, Christian Zell, Alessandro Trasuntino. These instruments may be found at the Universities of Auckland, Melbourne, Sydney and Newcastle and in the private ownership of the noted New Zealand harpsichordist, Anthony Jennings. Alastair is currently working on three instruments after Johann Heinrich Harrass.

Jacqueline Johnson is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts. She was a finalist in the ABC Concerto and Vocal Competitions and gave an acclaimed performance of the Shostakovich 'Cello Concerto. She has played with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Melbourne Elizabethan Orchestra and the State Orchestra of Victoria.

Jacqueline has featured in Music in the Round and broadcast for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. As a founding member

of Trio Polyphonica she made several recordings and gave many performances throughout Australia. She has an enviable reputation as a teacher of 'cello and when the Trio toured China in 1987 she gave classes at the Conservatories in Xian and Tienjin.

She is a highly experienced and much sought-after baroque continuo-player yet manages to combine this highly skilled art

with performances of the standard 'cello repertoire, including the sonatas of Brahms, Beethoven and Shostakovitch.

At present, Jacqueline is living and studying in England where she has featured as soloist in recital and concerto performances.

Recorded 5-7 October 1989 at
Xavier College Chapel, Melbourne

and 15 May 1992 at Move Records' studio.

Digital recording and editing: Martin Wright.

Music notes: Warren A Bebbington
Photography: Howard Birnstihl
(photographed in the workshop of Melbourne harpsichord builder Alastair McAllister)

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