



Laureate Series • Guitar



Georgi Dimitrov-Jojo

Winner 2022

European Bach Guitar Award

J.S. BACH

Lute Partita

Violin Sonata No. 1

Prelude, Fugue and Allegro

Ciaccona



Johann Sebastian
BACH
(1685–1750)

Lute Partita in E major, BWV 1006a (c. 1736–37)
(arr. Tilman Hoppstock [b. 1961], 1994) **19:34**

- ❶ I. Prelude 4:01
- ❷ II. Loure 4:33
- ❸ III. Gavotte en Rondeau 3:13
- ❹ IV. Menuett I – V. Menuett II 4:02
- ❺ VI. Bourrée 1:42
- ❻ VII. Gigue 2:03

Violin Sonata No. 1 in G minor, BWV 1001 (1720)
(arr. Manuel Barrueco [b. 1952], 1998) **14:13**

- ❼ I. Adagio 3:48
- ❽ II. Fuga: Allegro 4:47
- ❾ III. Siciliana 3:06
- ❿ IV. Presto 2:32

Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E flat major, BWV 998 (c. 1740s)
(arr. T. Hoppstock, 1994) **12:05**

- ⓫ I. Prelude 2:58
- ⓬ II. Fugue 5:56
- ⓭ III. Allegro 3:11

Violin Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004 (1720)
(arr. Paolo Pegoraro [b. 1968], 2015) **13:48**

- ⓮ V. Ciaccona

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Guitar Transcriptions

Nowadays, Johann Sebastian Bach (born in Eisenach in 1685) would certainly be described as a cosmopolitan, although he very rarely left his regional environment and there is no evidence of a single trip abroad. Aside from a two-year stay as a pupil in Lüneburg, visits to more distant cities such as Hamburg, Lübeck and Berlin are documented. Otherwise, his centre of life was limited to places in Thuringia and Saxony. There, he was employed as a composer, organist, choir and orchestra director – at Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar and Köthen, and from 1723 (until his death in 1750), Leipzig.

While contemporary composers such as Telemann and Handel enjoyed a completely different public reputation, Bach was already regarded in specialist circles – even outside Germany – as an absolute luminary in many areas of musical creativity. Always well-informed about all new musical trends, Bach should not be thought of as a provincial, narrow-minded person, despite the fact that his life was anchored in his home country. Rather, he could be described as an independent ‘citizen of the world’ who looked far beyond the boundaries of his geographical environment. If we compare such a life with the ‘zeitgeist’ of the present, we may well question whether, in our media-networked world, global travel, the mastery of many foreign languages or even a constant presence on the internet are important prerequisites for distinguishing oneself as a true cosmopolitan.

Two exemplary incidents from Bach’s life document his irrepressible interest in further education, in addition to a strong will to live and a good portion of self-confidence: as a young man, barely 20 years old and already employed as an organist in Arnstadt, he walked 400 kilometres to meet and learn from the famous organist Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1707). He stayed there – neglecting his official duties – for over a quarter of a year. The prospect of succeeding Buxtehude as organist at the local Marienkirche was combined with the delicate obligation of marrying his daughter. Bach, for his part, had little interest in such a union – his future wife Maria Barbara was already waiting for him in Arnstadt – and so he renounced the attractive post.

In 1747 – three years before his death – Bach received an invitation to meet King Frederick II at his Sanssouci Palace in Potsdam. The king, moved by Bach’s art, played him a theme on the pianoforte and asked the composer to improvise a three-part fugue on it. Bach, who solved this task with flying colours, was inspired by this ‘royal’ theme to write his great work *The Musical Offering, BWV 1079*, and dedicated his composition to Frederick II.

Bach on the Guitar

All works by Johann Sebastian Bach performed today on the guitar are arrangements. During the Renaissance and Baroque periods, it was customary to arrange music for a variety of different instruments. In the early 16th century, the well-known *vihuela* player and composer Luys de Narváez (1500–1555) made a transcription of a series of choral movements by Josquin des Prés (1455–1521) for his own instrument (the *vihuela* is an early Spanish form of guitar). The significance of the lute in the Baroque era is underlined by arrangements by the French harpsichordist Jean-Henri D’Anglebert (1629–1691) of lute music by Ennemond Gaultier (1575–1651) for the keyboard.

Johann Sebastian Bach also made numerous transcriptions of his own works and those of other composers (including Vivaldi and Marcello). In our time, there is probably no other composer whose works have been arranged more frequently for a wider variety of instrumentations than Bach. The guitar is ideal for transcriptions of his works, offering a wide range of polyphonic, melodic, dynamic and tonal possibilities which do justice to the complexity of these compositions. Since the first transcriptions of Bach’s music by the pioneering Spanish guitarists Francisco Tárrega (1852–1909) and Andrés Segovia (1893–1987), this field has experienced a prodigious development.

The Works on this Album

The seven works by Bach for lute (*BWV 995–1000* and *BWV 1006a*) and the sonatas and partitas for solo violin (*BWV 1001–1006*) have become favourites in the guitar transcription repertoire. Georgi Dimitrov-Jojo's programme for this current album presents a wonderful selection from this repertoire.

The *Lute Partita in E major, BWV 1006a* is an arrangement created by Bach from his own *Partita for Solo Violin, BWV 1006*. The *Prelude*, the first movement of the suite, also exists in an additional version for organ and orchestra forming the opening *Sinfonia* of the cantata *Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir, BWV 29*. Unlike the customary sequence of movements in a German suite (*Allemande, Courante, Sarabande* and *Gigue*), Bach selects a free combination of French-influenced dance forms in his suite for lute: *Loure, Gavotte en Rondeau, Menuett I / II* and *Bourrée*.

The *Sonata No. 1 in G minor, BWV 1001* was originally composed for solo violin. Like the two other sonatas in the cycle (*BWV 1003* and *BWV 1005*), the composition displays the same four-movement structure: an introductory movement in the style of a fantasy (*Adagio*) is followed by a fugue and a third movement in a different key (in this case a *Siciliana* in B flat major) and concludes with a virtuoso *Presto*. The *Fugue* from the sonata also exists in an arrangement for Baroque lute created by a friend of Bach, the lawyer and lutenist Johann Christian Weyrauch (1694–1771). The version performed on the current album is a blend of both versions.

The striking feature of the *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E flat major, BWV 998* is that it was simultaneously scored by Bach for both lute and harpsichord. All three movements of the late work composed in the 1740s are distinguished by their melodic impact and rich harmonic structure. The impeccable choreography of this work was precisely planned rather than being the serendipitous result of compositional inspiration. The Holy number of the Trinity plays a decisive role, firstly in the three-note subject with alternating notes running through the entire composition as a common thread. What is more, the outer movements of the three-movement structure possess identical proportions and frame the central fugue in three parts which is in turn structured in the manner of a triptych. The renowned harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt (1928–2012) admired this exceptional work to such a great extent that he not only included it regularly in his recitals, but also made two recordings of the composition.

The *Ciaccona* from Bach's *Violin Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004*, composed in 1720, is one of the most famous compositions by the Leipzig cantor of St Thomas. A theme in the manner of a sarabande is embroidered over a duration of 14 minutes in no less than 32 variations in such an astoundingly diverse fashion that the extended sequence of small units is perceived by listeners as a single transformation process, leading them on a highly imaginative musical journey through the most profound depths of Bach's fascinating music. Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) wrote about the piece in a letter to Clara Schumann: 'The *Ciaccona* is for me one of the most wonderful and yet incomprehensible pieces of music ever written. The composer succeeds in cramming an entire cosmos of profound thoughts and most powerful emotions onto a staff for a single instrument.'

Professor Dr Tilman Hoppstock

English translation: Lindsay Chalmers-Gerbracht

The repertoire I have recorded represents a major part of my musical explorations during the years I spent in Graz under the guidance of my teacher and mentor, Paolo Pegoraro, to whom I would like to dedicate this album. He has had the greatest influence on me, and has played a crucial role in my development as a musician. I would like this recording to serve as a testament to his teaching.

By recording Bach's music, I had the chance to share a very important part of my endeavour to fulfil a common dream of both Paolo Pegoraro and myself, which was to deliver something beyond the physical: a musical experience that can engulf one's mind and soul, and which transcends thoughts about matter, or indeed instrument. For that to happen, I needed to change my approach to the guitar. I wanted to create a sonority that could recreate the richness and, if I may say, the humility that Baroque instruments possess. My view is that the spontaneous movement of the phrasing has a natural closeness to human nature, so much so that it inspires creativity within the performer.

Adjustments needed to be made, therefore, in order to reduce the natural overtones of the guitar and to make it sound more like a 'chamber' instrument, and more intimate.

For the entire recording the tuning is set at 426 Hz – a very low tuning that is not compatible with most modern instruments. I'm lucky that my guitar could allow it. In Baroque times the pitch was not standardised. Modern practitioners on period instruments normally adapt the tuning of 415Hz, but it doesn't work optimally on modern guitar, so I tried to find the lowest pitch which suits my instrument. That is why for the entire recording the tuning is set at 426 Hz.

I was specific with the choice of flat tonalities, because of the lesser ability of the guitar to resonate, as opposed to sharp tonalities. Had I chosen keys that are more typical for my instrument, the result would have been much more 'guitar-like'. The change of tonality of the *Lute Partita in E major, BWV 1006a* and the *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E flat major, BWV 998* was accomplished with the use of a capo on the first fret, and I decided to preserve the original key of the *Violin Sonata No. 1 in G minor, BWV 1001*, instead of choosing the more comfortable A minor. The only tonality that I had no second thoughts about was that of the *Ciaccona* from *BWV 1004*, for which I used Paolo Pegoraro's arrangement, in which the listener can enjoy a tastefully balanced amount of additional 'voice' lines to transcend the innate ability of the instrument to sound polyphonically rich and, yet, not flamboyant.

Over the years, in interpreting Bach's music, Paolo Pegoraro and myself have implemented very specific fingerings, ornamentations and additional voice lines, influenced by the world of historical instruments, such as Baroque lute, harpsichord and violin, among others. We wanted to realise the airy freshness and creative spontaneity of this music, as has been documented in treatises on playing Baroque music by composers and performers from that time.

I am honoured to have been able to work with the amazing sound engineer and great guitarist Norbert Kraft, who created such a welcoming and inspirational atmosphere. I am grateful for his masterful captivation of the sound, and his unbreakable professionalism and care for the final product.

I would also like to dedicate this album to my godfather, patron, art endorser and friend of my family, Bert Karel, who generously provided me with the instrument that you hear in this recording – a guitar made by the luthier Carsten Kobs.

Georgi Dimitrov-Jojo

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Transkriptionen für Gitarre

Heutzutage wäre Johann Sebastian Bach (geboren 1685 in Eisenach) sicherlich als Kosmopolit zu bezeichnen, obwohl er sehr selten sein regionales Umfeld verließ und keine einzige Auslandsreise belegbar ist. Neben einem zweijährigen Aufenthalt als Schüler in Lüneburg sind Besuche in entfernter gelegene Städte nach Hamburg, Lübeck und Berlin dokumentiert. Ansonsten war sein Lebensmittelpunkt auf Orte in Thüringen und Sachsen beschränkt. Dort war er als Komponist, Organist, Chor- und Orchesterleiter angestellt. In der Reihenfolge seiner Lebensstationen sind dies Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar, Köthen und ab 1723 (bis zu seinem Tod im Jahre 1750) Leipzig.

Genossen zeitgenössische Komponisten wie z. B. Telemann und Händel eine ganz andere öffentliche Reputation, galt doch Bach in Fachkreisen – auch außerhalb Deutschlands – bereits damals als absolute Koryphäe auf vielen Gebieten des musikkulturellen Schaffens. Stets über alle neuen Musikströmungen bestens informiert, darf man sich Bach trotz seiner heimatlich verankerten Lebenssituation daher nicht als vermeintlich provinziell eingegengten Menschen vorstellen, eher wäre er als unabhängiger „Weltbürger“ zu bezeichnen, der weit über den Tellerrand seines geographisch Umfeldes blickte. Stellen wir ein solches Leben dem Zeitgeist der Gegenwart gegenüber, so darf man durchaus infrage stellen, ob in unserer medial vernetzten Welt globales Reisen, das Beherrschen vieler Fremdsprachen oder eben andauernde Internetpräsenz als wichtige Voraussetzung zu gelten haben, um sich als wirklicher Kosmopolit auszuzeichnen.

Zwei beispielhafte Begebenheiten aus Bachs Leben dokumentieren neben einem starken Lebenswillen und einer gehörigen Portion Selbstvertrauen sein unbändiges Interesse an Weiterbildung: Als junger Mann, kaum 20 Jahre alt und bereits als Organist in Arnstadt angestellt, legte er einen 400 Kilometer langen Fußmarsch zurück, um den berühmten Organisten Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1707) kennenzulernen und von ihm zu lernen. Er blieb dort – in Vernachlässigung seiner Amtspflichten – über ein Vierteljahr. Die Aussicht auf die Nachfolge Buxtehudes als Organist an der dortigen Marienkirche war mit der delikaten Verpflichtung verbunden, dessen Tochter zu ehelichen. Bach seinerseits hatte wenig Interesse an einer solchen Verbindung – in Arnstadt wartete schon seine zukünftige Gattin Maria Barbara auf ihn – und so verzichtete er auf die attraktive Stelle.

1747 – drei Jahre vor seinem Tod – erhielt Bach die Einladung für ein Zusammentreffen mit König Friedrich II. auf dessen Schloss Sanssouci in Potsdam. Der König, ergriffen von den Künsten Bachs, spielte diesem ein Thema auf dem Pianoforte vor und forderte den Komponisten auf, darüber eine dreistimmige Fuge zu improvisieren. Bach, der diese Aufgabe mit Bravour löste, fühlte sich durch dieses ‚königliche‘ Thema zu seinem Großwerk „Ein musikalisches Opfer“ BWV 1079 inspiriert und widmete Friedrich II. seine Komposition.

Bach auf Gitarre

Bei allen Werken Johann Sebastian Bachs, die heute auf der Gitarre gespielt werden, handelt es sich grundsätzlich um Bearbeitungen. Im Renaissance- und Barockzeitalter war es durchaus üblich, Musik für verschiedene Instrumente zu arrangieren. Bereits im frühen 16. Jahrhundert übertrug der berühmte Vihuelaspieler und Komponist Luis de Narváez (ca. 1505–1549) eine Reihe geistlicher Chorsätze Josquin des Prés (ca. 1450–1521) für sein Instrument (Vihuela = die spanische Frühform der späteren Gitarre). Die Bedeutung der Laute in der Barockzeit wiederum zeigt sich in den Arrangements des französischen Cembalisten Jean-Henry D'Anglebert (1629–1691), der u. a. die Lautenmusik Ennemond Gaultiers (1575–1651) für das Tasteninstrument einrichtete.

Auch Bach hat häufig fremde Werke (Vivaldi, Marcello) sowie eigene Kompositionen für andere Instrumente umgearbeitet. Und heute? In unserer Zeit gibt es neben Bach wohl kaum einen Komponisten, dessen Musik so häufig für unterschiedlichste Instrumentalbesetzungen arrangiert wird. Die Gitarre eignet sich hier in ihrer Multifunktionalität (Mehr-stimmigkeit, Melodiehaftigkeit, Dynamik und Klangfarben) in idealer Weise, die Komplexität der Werke Bachs optimal darzustellen. Seit den ersten Bach-Transkriptionen der spanischen Gitarrenpioniere Francisco Tarrega (1852–1909) und Andrés Segovia (1893–1987) hat sich in dieser Richtung vieles weiterentwickelt.

Die Werke auf diesem Album

Zum beliebten Bachrepertoire der Gitarristen gehören die sieben Lautenwerke (BWV 995–1000, BWV 1006a) und die Sonaten und Partiten für Violine solo (BWV 1001–1006). Das Programm Georgi Dimitrov-Jojos für dieses Album zeigt hieraus eine wunderbare Auswahl.

Die Lautensuite BWV 1006a in E-Dur ist eine von Bach selbst angefertigte Version der Violin-Partita BWV 1006. Der erste Satz „Präludium“ wiederum existiert – bezeichnet als *Sinfonia* – in einer weiteren Fassung für Orgel und Orchester (Eröffnung der Kantate „Wir danken Dir Gott, wir danken Dir“ BWV 29). Anders als die in Deutschland üblicherweise verwendeten Kernsätze Allemande, Courante, Sarabande und Gigue orientiert sich Bach bei dieser Suite an der freien Satzfolge französischer Vorbilder. Eingerahmt von Präludium und Gigue finden sich hier Loure, Gavotte en Rondeau, Menuett 1 / 2 und Bourée.

Ebenfalls original für Violine solo ist die *Sonate Nr. 1 g-moll BWV 1001*. Genau wie die beiden anderen Sonaten des Zyklus (BWV 1003 und BWV 1005) weist das Werk folgende viersätzliche Konzeption auf: dem fantasiehaften Einleitungssatz (Adagio) folgt eine Fuge, danach ein Satz in einer anderen Tonart (hier eine Siciliana in B-Dur) und zum Schluss ein virtuoses *Presto*. Von der in dieser Sonate enthaltenen Fuge gibt es übrigens ein Arrangement für Barocklaute des mit Bach bekannten Juristen und Lautenspielers Joh. Christian Weyrauch (1694–1771). Die hier zu hörende Version stellt eine Mischung aus beiden Fassungen dar.

Präludium, Fuge und Allegro BWV 998 ist insofern besonders, da Bach die Komposition sowohl als Werk für Laute als auch für Cembalo überschreibt. Alle drei Sätze dieses Spätwerks aus den 1740er-Jahren zeugen von außergewöhnlicher Melodiehaftigkeit und reichhaltiger Harmoniebehandlung. Die geradezu perfekte Choreografie ist hierbei kein zufälliges Ergebnis kompositorischer Eingebung, sondern genau geplant. Die göttliche Zahl drei (Trinität) spielt die entscheidende Rolle: als kleinste Einheit dient ein dreitöniges Wechselnotenmotiv, das sich wie ein roter Faden durch die gesamte Komposition zieht. Darüber hinaus handelt sich um drei Sätze (die beiden Außensätze haben identische Proportionen), in deren Zentrum eine dreiteilige Fuge steht, die wiederum gemäß eines dreiteiligen Tafelgemäldes (Tryptichon) aufgebaut ist. Der große Cembalist Gustav Leonhardt (1928–2012) maß dem Werk eine solch große Bedeutung zu, dass er es nicht nur regelmäßig in Konzerten aufführte, sondern auch zweimal auf Schallplatte aufnahm.

Eines der berühmtesten Werke des Thomaskantors ist die 1720 entstandene *Ciaccona* aus der Violinpartita Nr. 2 d-moll BWV 1004. In diesem rund 14-minütigen Werk wird ein sarabandenartiges Thema nicht weniger als 32 mal auf solch vielfältige Art und Weise variiert, dass der Zuhörer statt der Aneinanderreihung kleinerer Einheiten einen thematischen Transformationsprozess erlebt, sozusagen eine fantastische musikalische Reise, in deren Verlauf uns der Komponist immer tiefer in den Bann seiner Musik hineinführt. Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) schrieb einst an Clara Schumann: „*Die Ciaccona ist mir eines der wunderbarsten, unbegreiflichsten Musikstücke. Auf ein System für ein kleines Instrument schreibt der Mann eine ganze Welt von tiefsten Gedanken und gewaltigsten Empfindungen.*“

Prof. Dr. Tilman Hoppstock

Georgi Dimitrov-Jojo



Photo: Georgi Konstantinov/Jorj GEOPHO

Georgi Dimitrov-Jojo (b. 2000) was ten when he played for the Flamenco legend Paco de Lucía, who complimented him on his great talent. An audience favourite since he was a young student at the National Music School in Sofia, Dimitrov-Jojo has received merit awards from eminent organisations and cultural institutions in Bulgaria. He completed his BA with honours at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz with Paolo Pegoraro, Łukasz Kuropaczewski, also studying chamber music with Petrit Çeku and Baroque guitar with David Bergmüller. He is currently pursuing his MA at the Royal Academy of Music in London as a recipient of the prestigious Bicentenary Scholarship. In addition to winning First Prize at over 20 international competitions, Dimitrov-Jojo won the First and Special Prizes at the 2021 International Guitar Competition Maurizio Biasini. In 2022, he was awarded First Prize at the European Bach Guitar Award, Darmstadt, which included performances across Europe, including at the prestigious Bachfest Leipzig. He has also performed in many prestigious concert halls such as the Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid, Bulgaria Concert Hall, Teatro Comunale in Bologna, Stadtcasino Basel and Konzerthaus Blaibach. www.georgidimitrov-jojo.org

Georgi Dimitrov-Jojo, winner of the 2022 European Bach Guitar Award, presents a selection of works transcribed for guitar from the rich repertoire of Johann Sebastian Bach. Arrangements made for different instruments were customary during the Baroque period – and with a wide range of tonal possibilities, the guitar is an ideal instrument for this music. Dimitrov-Jojo's beautiful sound and poetic interpretations bring an intimate connection to Bach's boundless imagination, crowned in this substantial programme by the famous *Ciaccona, BWV 1004*.



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GEORGI DIMITROV-JOJO

Guitar Recital



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

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|--------------|--|--------------|
| 1–6 | Lute Partita in E major, BWV 1006a (c. 1736–37) (arr. Tilman Hoppstock [b. 1961], 1994) | 19:34 |
| 7–10 | Violin Sonata No. 1 in G minor, BWV 1001 (1720) (arr. Manuel Barrueco [b. 1952], 1998) | 14:13 |
| 11–13 | Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E flat major, BWV 998 (c. 1740s) (arr. T. Hoppstock, 1994) | 12:05 |
| 14 | Violin Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004 – V. Ciaccona (1720) (arr. Paolo Pegoraro [b. 1968], 2015) | 13:48 |

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

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