Sebastian Klinger

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sur 18 Nov, 2026
Catégorie : Divers

"Les six suites pour violoncelle " de Jean-Sébastien Bach.

La pierre angulaire, le Grand Oeuvre de tout violoncelliste...

Pour en connaître et en apprendre plus, je vous renvoie à deux liens:

http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suites_pour_violoncelle_seul_(Bach)

http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bach

Et un jeune musicien qui est étonnant:

découverte

diapason découverte

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

1685-1750

Les six Suites pour violoncelle.
Sebastian Klinger (violoncelle).
Oehms OC718, distr. Codaex (2 CD).
Ø 2007. TT : 2 h 14'.

TECHNIQUE : 7,5/10 DDD

Très bel équilibre spectral et bon équilibre entre son direct et réverbéré, mais aucune stabilité en localisation.



PLAGE 11 DE NOTRE CD

Un an après le choc Queyras et la tentative intéressante mais inaboutie de Gastinel, voici un jeune Allemand qui, à trente ans et des poussières, vient se mêler à l'imposant cortège des grands interprètes de la bible des violoncellistes. Sebastian Klinger ne manque pas de culot. Non qu'il cherche à tout prix à faire sensation, au moyen, par exemple, de tempos inattendus ou d'effets provocateurs. Bien au contraire, il a écouté ses grands aînés (il cite entre autres Casals mais aussi Gendron au fil de l'intéressante interview figurant dans la notice) et bien saisi tout le contexte interprétatif des partitions, tant au niveau des tempos que de la dynamique et des rubatos. Elève d'Heinrich Schiff et de Boris Pergamentchikov, il a su faire son miel de leur enseignement adapté au grand répertoire romantique, mais s'est aussi passionné pour les recherches des baroqueux.

On apprécie son jeu clair et franc, ses articulations nettes mais jamais heurtées, intégrées dans une ligne joliment galbée, ses rubatos à la fois discrets et efficaces. Voilà bien son mérite : quelle que soit sa manière d'aborder un mouvement – une allemande précautionneuse (*BWV 1012*), une gigue bousculée (*BWV 1010*), une sarabande qui semble comme énervée (*BWV 1009*) – après un moment d'expectative, l'auditeur se met à penser que c'est bien comme cela qu'il faut jouer. Sebastian Klinger a l'immense talent de nous convaincre que tous ses choix, même les plus atypiques, sont les bons. Ce qui laisse le temps d'admirer les splendides impulsions des préludes (quels détachés dans la *BWV 1010* !), l'euphorie de la *Courante BWV 1012* ou encore la netteté chorégraphique des cinquièmes mouvements (menuets, bourrées et autres gavottes) dessinés au fusain mais à traits nets, bien marqués, idéalement scandés.

Sans être subjugante, la sonorité de son Camillus Camilli (Mantoue, 1736) n'est pas dépourvue de séduction. La *scordatura* de la Suite *BWV 1011* ne lui pose aucun problème et pour la *BWV 1012*, destinée à un violoncelle à cinq cordes (une *viola pomposa* ?), il touche un instrument construit par son facteur de père, un rien acide mais d'une grande clarté. Sebastian Klinger fera sans doute parler de lui à l'avenir. Cette intégrale sort très avantageusement du tout venant.

Jean-Luc Macia


Johann Sebastian Bach
Six Suites for Violoncello solo BWV 1007–1012
Sebastian Klinger
OEHMS
CLASSICS
Johann Sebastian Bach



Pour faire connaissance avec ce violoncelliste:

(l'interview suivante est en anglais, la traduction française ne figurait pas dans le livret)

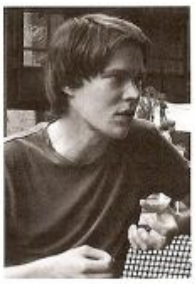
Bach as a Spiritual Experience

Sebastian Klinger talks with Marco Frei about the Suites for Violoncello solo BWV 1007–1012 by Johann Sebastian Bach

Mr. Klinger, do you consider that you prospered with Bach's music?
This music has accompanied me for some twenty years. Therefore, this is quite natural. *Cello Suite No. 1* was the beginning for me. As a child I spent considerable time with my grandparents during the summers. I played parts of that suite for hours at a time in their washhouse – that was something very special even then! The acoustics of the room with its bare walls were like that of a cathedral. I played as if in a trance, enchanted by the sounds, the accords, the organ-like effect. That feeling actually remains to this day. It is a spiritual experience. You can experience this feeling in a washing room or in a church, though it is a bit more difficult to experience it in a concert hall. This music just doesn't seem to quite fit there. In any case: since that time I have undergone a natural and continuous development in regards to all things Bach.

Is it continuing?
Yes. Making music is always "a work in progress", even this CD is a snapshot of a moment in time. A few years from now a different perspective is often achieved because you are always being influenced and continuing to learn.

Which interpretations of the Cello Suites were important for you?
The recordings by Maurice Gendron and Pablo Casals were the first recordings that I had at home as a child. Both recordings were considered authoritative at the time. I actually learned of the *Cello Suites* through these recordings! Casals' recording had to a certain extent rediscovered the *Suites* and was the first to



perform them in their entirety in concert. But if you compare the aesthetic aspects of his performance with mine, you will find few similarities.

Why?

Because as a young cellist today it is impossible to ignore the developments of the last thirty years, especially in terms of historically informed performance. The tuning, tone, vibrato, tempo etc. were incorporated in increasingly different ways starting in the late 1970s. These developments introduced me to the recordings of Anner Bylsma who was one of the first to incorporate the findings from early music study into the performance of the cello. I consider his performance of Bach to have substantially and lastingly influenced my own performance. Of course my two teachers Heinrich Schiff and Boris Pergamenschikow have exerted considerable influence in the development of my understanding of Bach.

How does one achieve their own interpretation?

It is unlikely that such a question can be answered by the interpreter. I for my part don't think about having to achieve something that has "never been before" just for the sake of doing something unusual or in a new way. That just doesn't work with this music. Interpretations develop over the years, they become internalized and are the results of all those experiences that you have had with the respective pieces. Decisive however is the exact idea of form and character of the respective piece in the context of the whole. This concept should base itself on the old

transcriptions and the findings from early music performance research and its maxims. The unique personal touches develop through time all on their own.

***What is your personal understanding of the* Cello Suites?**

I think they contain the most beautiful music that a cellist can produce. Bach was the first (and unfortunately the last) who composed such masterful music for the cello. In all 36 individual pieces, no prelude or dance resembles another, despite the fact that all of the suites are composed in the strict code of the old suite form. This music is incredibly rich in harmonic, rhythmic, rhetorical and lyrical elements, thereto the almost continuous polyphony that Bach suggests to the listener with artistic arpeggios and paraphrases. And all of that on a single instrument with which it isn't actually possible to play polyphonically!

The final two suites are of special significance.

Yes, *Suite No. 5* is noted as "Scordatura", the A-string must be tuned down a whole tone to G, which makes the entire tone darker. It supports the dark expressiveness of the C minor key. Furthermore *Suite No. 5* is the only one in the French style with its strict punctuated rhythm. It opens with a French overture and is followed by a fugue. Something that is special in every respect is *Suite No. 6*. It is composed in a radiant D major key and opens in the form of a Gigue. It is far and away the longest and the most virtuoso suite, and it is written for a five-stringed instrument.

Do you perform* Suite No. 6 *on a five-stringed instrument?

Yes. The instrument for this performance was built about a year

before the recording took place. My father built it. He has built around thirty violins and violas as his hobby over the years. At some point I was able to convince him to build a cello. The five-stringer is a luxury: Bach intended this instrument to be used in a few of his original cantatas; in addition, you can also perform Bach's *Viol Sonatas* or the *Sonata in A minor for Arpeggione and Piano* by Franz Schubert on the five-stringed Cello.

Is* Suite No. *6 easier to perform with the additional high E string? Because, with the four-stringed cello it goes quite high.



No, in sum total it is not easier, but the difficult grips in the high range are no longer present. Because you have an extra string, the difficulties are shifted to the bow-technique. The high E string is very thin, this means that one often needs only a single hair of the bow to bring the string to resonance. For the lower strings however, as usual, you have to exert a bit of strength to produce a good tone. That makes fast passages more difficult for example. Tonal differences are also a factor.

How so?

The high E string produces a very expressive nasal tone. A five-stringed cello sounds altogether more "Baroque", perhaps because it reminds you of a viol. The sound is smaller and darker, it depicts better, is grittier. The realignment of the high grips into the first position made possible by the E string enables a more resonant sound than can be achieved with a four-stringed cello. This means the longer a vibrating string is, the richer are the overtones.

What is of particular importance for your interpretation of the Suites?

Clarity and naturalness are very important in general. That applies to the entire interpretation of a suite and its individual movements just as it does to the toning, the phrasing, the articulation and the harmonic progression. During the performance, one should develop out of the other and result in a complete whole, similar to a successful improvisation. In addition, the aspects of dance and rhetoric are of significance. Everything should speak, resonate, in certain passages even "groove". And I perform the last two Suites as they are transcribed.

With which tuning did you record the Suites?

At 420 Hz: the standard 445 or 450 Hz of today's orchestras sound too overstrung for this music and are a disaster for old stringed instruments in general, because of the high tension of the strings. When one however tunes down a half or whole tone, there is a changed playability, the tone however becomes richer in overtones, more relaxed.



What is your position on vibrato?

I hardly vibrate at all when performing Bach. Since the Romantic Era, the constant base vibrato has become a standard aspect, but back then the vibrato was intentionally employed only to support certain emotions.

***As for example in the Allemande from* Suite No. 6?**

That is one of the most song-like passages of all of the suites. But what we don't have there is a song-like aspect in the sense of

espressivo with vibrato-romanticism. It is more a pure and innocent cantability, too much vibrato would only be a distraction. And although I gladly utilize vibrato in other music, I prefer the Suites with pure tones.

Actually, it is quite difficult to understand how Bach himself imagined the* Cello Suites. *All we know about them is that they were written during his time in Koethen from 1717–1723.

True, Bach's original transcriptions have remained undiscovered to this day. But there are four old sources, all copies, of which two come from Bach's direct vicinity. The most important of these is the transcription by his wife Anna Magdalena Bach. She copied so many of his works that in the end her handwriting had come to resemble his! In studying the sources, it is and remains a central issue of interpretation how the cellist understands the slurs, which Anna Magdalena sometimes inaccurately copied. Much cannot be clearly discerned and you often have to decide for yourself the logical structure the articulation is to follow. Whereas the pitch remains comparable in all four sources, the slurs vary considerably.

How about tempo and dynamic?

Except for the beginning of the Prelude to *Suite No. 6* and towards the end of the Bourrée I to *Suite No. 4,* there are no instructions as to dynamic aspects in the early sources. Dynamic in the sense of the forte and piano plays a secondary role in this music, it is much more the agogicism that provides for the dynamic effect. In terms of tempo, you have a bit of interpretational freedom. The suite movements Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue indicate a relation to basic dance characters of different velocity, but they do not determine a specific tempo. Here you have to decide for yourself on a case-by-case basis how fast to perform the piece.

Where did you record the Suites?

I recorded the Suites in the Himmelfahrtskirche (Church of Ascension) in Munich-Sendling in the summer of 2007 in three recording sessions, six days altogether. The acoustics there are beautiful, even though a church is never as quiet as a recording studio. But in my opinion the Suites belong in the church, not only due to their spiritual nature or the acoustics. The music is accentuated in the church because of its polyphonic aspects, especially with consideration for the long resonating bass tones.

Translation: Maurice Sprague



Sebastian Klinger

Born in Munich in 1977, Sebastian Klinger grew up in Spain and had his first cello instruction at the age of six. He later studied with Heinrich Schiff in Salzburg and Vienna as well as with Boris Pergamenschikow in Berlin.

After winning numerous national and international awards, he won the German Music Competition in Berlin in 2001. This was followed by debuts at the most important German festivals, including the Schleswig-Holstein, Rheingau, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Ludwigsburg festivals as well as a number of recitals in the Concertgebouw Amsterdam. In 2002, he was invited by the Cologne Philharmonic to perform in the Rising Stars Series (European Concert Hall Organization), which took him to some of the most significant music centers in Europe and the United States (Carnegie Hall New York, Wigmore Hall London, Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels, Konserthus Stockholm, Konzerthaus Wien, Concert Hall Athens etc.).

Between these appearances, Sebastian Klinger has concertized as a soloist and chamber musician throughout Europe, in Asia, the USA and South Africa, including performances with orchestras such as the RSO Berlin, the orchestra of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, which he has belonged to since 2004 as first solo cellist, the Münchener Kammerorchester, the Munich and Hamburg Symphonies, the RAI National Orchestra Turin, the Orchester der Beethovenhalle Bonn and the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra.

He has worked a number of times with conductors Mariss Jansons, Heinrich Schiff and Christoph Poppen; he will debut in February 2009 with Riccardo Muti.

Sebastian Klinger has likewise performed in chamber music settings with many prominent musicians, including Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet, Lang Lang, Chick Corea or Bobby McFerrin. He regularly works with such musicians as Julia Fischer, Natalia Prischepenko, Milana Chernyavska, Plamena Mangova and Herbert Schuch.

His previous discography includes solo works as well as chamber music. His most recent recording (early 2008) with Lisa Batiashvili, Francois Leleux und Lawrence Power is of particular note.

Sebastian Klinger plays an instrument built by Camillus Camilli in Mantua around 1736.

Further information is available
under www.sebastian-klinger.com.