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EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES FOR:  
BACH'S FIFTH SUITE FOR SOLO CELLO,  
BWV1011; BEETHOVEN'S SONATA FOR  
PIANO AND VIOLONCELLO, OP.69;  
MARTINU'S VARIATIONS ON A  
SLOVAKIAN THEME, H.378

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by

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B.S., Austin Peay State University, 2006

A Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Masters of Music.

Department of Music  
in the Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Masters

in the field of Music

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## CHAPTER 1 - BACH'S FIFTH SUITE FOR SOLO CELLO, BWV1011

At what would be the middle year of J. S. Bach's life, 1717, he left Weimar and accepted employment thirty miles north of Leipzig in Köthen. Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen hired Bach to serve as *Kapellmeister* of the court orchestra. The Prince greatly admired Bach's talent and treated him well. Leopold himself was a string player, harpsichordist, and a Calvinist. For Bach, this meant that “he had no call to compose or play in church and could devote all his time to satisfying his patron’s demands for musical entertainments.”<sup>1</sup> Bach's new duties in Köthen change the mediums through which he was required and chose to compose. This new and altered focus, away from his prior responsibility to the church to write cantatas and play organ, allowed him to produce many instrumental works over the six years to follow. As a composer, this unique season helped in the composition of many masterpieces including the Brandenburg Concertos, the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier and the four Orchestral Suites or *Ouvertures*, as he titled them. Other purely instrumental genres through which he wrote include sonatas, concertos, partitas and suites. The unaccompanied sonatas and partitas for violin and the suites for violoncello are composed during this time. These suites reign today as the solo masterworks for their respective instruments.

The Six Suites for Unaccompanied Violoncello, BWV 1007-1012, are the earliest known compositions for unaccompanied cello in German speaking countries.<sup>2</sup> Many historians and scholars conclude that 1720 is the year of their composition. As the autograph manuscript of the

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1. Richard Taruskin, “Bach's Suites,” *Oxford History of Western Music*, [www.oxfordwesternmusic.com](http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com) (accessed Aug.1, 2013).

2. Bettina Schwemer, Douglas Woodfull-Harris, eds. *J. S. Bach 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo BWV 1007-1012: Text Volume* (Kassel: Barenreiter, 2000), 10.

cello suites is lost, an exact year cannot be precisely identified. It is possible that Bach began writing the first suite in 1717, maybe even before his departure from Weimar. It is also possible that the Suites were composed over a stretch of time, given the progression of complexity and complete wholeness of each suite individually. Some scholars think the last of the suites were not completed however until around 1725. The latter view does gain credibility with consideration for the Sixth Suite being written for viola pomposa or five-string cello which is not seen in his music until Bach's time in Leipzig. Still, other sources make a case for likely revisions and reworkings of the suites up until the last decade of his life. Regarding the time of conception, the title page of Bach's autograph copy of the violin sonatas and partitas dictate that "the violin and cello works were united as part one and two of the same volume."<sup>3</sup> He wrote on their title page: "Anno 1720" and "Libro primo." This could imply the cello suites to be a 'Libro secondo' to the violin works and quite possibly that all the suites were composed in a relatively short span of time. Of notable significance is that Bach's wife, Maria Barbara, died suddenly this same year. He remarried in 1721 to Anna Magdalena Wulken, by whose hand we are left with the most accurate copy of the cello suites. Regardless of the exact year, these suites for solo cello are "unprecedented as far as we know."<sup>4</sup>

The movements of Bach's cello suites are written in the structure of the standard Baroque suite. This form is based on Froberger's model which arose in the late Renaissance. The model consists of four basic older dances: Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, and Gigue, which were grouped and meant to be performed as a single work. Each dance implies a certain style of

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3. Dimitry Markevitch, *Six Suites for Solo Cello by J. S. Bach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1964), iv.

4. Richard Taruskin, "Bach's Suites," *Oxford History of Western Music*, [www.oxfordwesternmusic.com](http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com) (accessed Aug.1, 2013).

articulation and difference in tempo from one to the other. Whether or not Bach meant for the cello suites to be danced, these old dances provide “stylized formal conventions used as the basis for art music.”<sup>5</sup> All of these dances or movements are in binary form. This format consists of two sections, each of which is repeated. The first section moves from the tonic key (I) to the key of the dominant (V) - or relative major (III) if based in a minor key. The second section begins in this new key but returns to the tonic by the end of its section. Thus instead of just thinking binary form to be A and then B, in this case: [ A A B+A B+A ]“yields a truer thematic diagram...as the second section often returns to the thematic material of the first section.”<sup>6</sup> In addition to these four binary forms, Bach expands this framework of these with the addition of a Prelude to open each suite. Before each ending gigue, he also installs a form of the newer Galaterien dance, in pairs of either: minuets, bourees, or gavottes.

Bach's Suites consist of a unique synthesis of styles and musical influence. Knowledge of his influences becomes particularly important in the interpretation process. In general, German music in the Baroque period often blended styles and forms from both France and Italy. “While the widespread use of the dance suite is certainly more a product of French culture, the standard suite grouping (Froberger's model) is of German origin.”<sup>7</sup> Although some movements preserve a French character, “Bach's version of the mixed style in the Suites leans decidedly

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5. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 20.

6. Peter Eliot Stone, Liner notes *The 6 Unaccompanied Cello Suites*, by J.S. Bach, CBS M2K37867, 1983, Compact Discs.

7. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 24.

toward the Italian.”<sup>8</sup> However, this understanding elevates the significance of the Fifth Cello Suite from the others because it wholly represents “the French strain...as all of the movements of the fifth suite correspond with French models.”<sup>9</sup> Without Bach having to travel there, “France came to him through the musical publications that circulated widely in the Gallicized musical environment that was Germany...Bach made his most thorough assimilation of the French style...in Köthen.”<sup>10</sup>

Why did Bach write music for solo cello? The inspiration for their conception remains a mystery. In correlation with his duties for Prince Leopold, “one strand feeding into the cello suites is the German tradition of suites for unaccompanied violin, another is the German virtuoso viol tradition.”<sup>11</sup> Many sources suggest that Bach may have been inspired by the caliber of musicians at his court, namely the cellist Christian Bernhard Linigke. Bach's long-time friend Christian Ferdinand Abel is also a recipient of suggestion, even though Abel was not a cellist but a violinist and viola da gamba player.<sup>12</sup> Regardless of the possible influences, the suites display a transcendental aesthetic which has carried them beyond their era.

The Suites bring the cello to a new level as a melody instrument. Although he was not a cellist, Bach's intimate knowledge of the instrument is displayed through implied counterpoint.

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8. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 42.

9. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 25.

10. Richard Taruskin, “Bach's Suites,” *Oxford History of Western Music*, [www.oxfordwesternmusic.com](http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com) (accessed Aug.1, 2013).

11. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 37.

12. Dimitry Markevitch, *Six Suites for Solo Cello by J. S. Bach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1964), iv.



Throughout the cello suites, and unaccompanied works for violin, Bach frequently implies a harmony through compound melody “by restricting each melody to its own discrete register and sounding successive fragments and in alternation.”<sup>13</sup> If double or triple stops are not written out, Bach masterfully exercises this technique which allows for the solo instrument to accompany itself. Often this alternation of register joins with the harmonic progression to propel the motion forward in a way unique from any type of chamber music. “The writing for cello in these suites is idiomatic and assured, and he makes full use of the instrument’s lower register.”<sup>14</sup> It is only here in the fifth suite that we find many four-note chords, or quadruple stops, that directly distinguish the precise harmony. Quite frequently, the *scordatura* is what allows for many of these chords to be possible.

The Fifth Suite is especially unique from the other five in its character and timbre. Its musical content yields characterization as “the most profound, austere, yet elaborate suite.”<sup>15</sup> Bach establishes this somber mood by setting the suite in C minor. In selecting this key, Bach also masterfully exercises the full-bodied size and sustain of the cello by frequently utilizing the three lowest open strings on cello: C, G, and D. The sustain and depth of timbre is further enhanced as the suite calls for the tuning of the A string down to a G.

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13. Peter Eliot Stone, Liner notes *The 6 Unaccompanied Cello Suites*, by J.S. Bach, CBS M2K37867, 1983, Compact Discs.

14. La Jolla Music Society. “Yo-Yo Ma 5.17.09” La Jolla Music Society. <http://www.ljms.org> (accessed June 1, 2013).

15. Peter Eliot Stone, Liner notes *The 6 Unaccompanied Cello Suites*, by J.S. Bach, CBS M2K37867, 1983, Compact Discs.



This adjustment, known as *scordatura*, is not entirely uncommon during the Baroque era, especially with the flexibility of gut strings. With this suite:

Bach wanted to obtain certain effects of sonority which are impossible to achieve on a normally tuned cello. The two strings tuned in the octave G produce, by sympathetic vibration, an amplitude of sound and a particularly rich and colored quality.<sup>16</sup>

Coupled with sympathetic vibration, “the scordatura specified for the Fifth Suite, while not particularly a French compositional technique, does produce a darker, more solemn character by dimming the brilliance of the open 'A' string.”<sup>17</sup> Bach's writing carefully suggests his understanding of this adjustment in tuning. He utilizes the higher open G string frequently to create new color for the cello achieved through alternating string crossings and many chords which are not fully possible in standard tuning. For those who choose to play the suite in standard tuning, many chords are reduced and the difficulty in execution is increased. The effort of adapting to the *discordato* “will be quickly rewarded by the results obtained.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, the suite is dramatically enhanced by utilizing this special tuning which creates a slightly softer timbre and effectively matches its key of C minor.

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16. Dimitry Markevitch, *Six Suites for Solo Cello by J. S. Bach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1964), vi.

17. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 25.

18. Dimitry Markevitch, *Six Suites for Solo Cello by J. S. Bach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1964), vi.

## PRELUDE:

The opening Prelude is in the form of a French overture. It consists of two sections which are primarily distinguished by a change in meter.

In France, overtures were of a specific sort contrasting of two parts: first a stately slow section in duple meter with pervasive dotted rhythms, then followed by a faster fugal section, usually in triple or compound meter. Double-dotting is expected in the opening section and it ends on or in the dominant of the relative major; The French Overture...was quickly adopted by composers in Germany.<sup>19</sup>

To some degree, Bach's prelude “expresses on a small scale what the overture of an opera more broadly indicates” by establishing the suite's character and key which are indicative of the nature of movements to follow.<sup>20</sup> The opening section of this prelude includes “motivic working” and is stylistically marked by dotted-rhythms and tiratas amongst which “Bach adds his own predilection for weaving long runs of sixteenths.”<sup>21</sup> After a cadence in the dominant, the meter shifts to 3/8 during which a longer fugue-like movement develops. A fugue after a slow introduction points at a consciously French style...given the 'rationally controlled' compositional technique and 'controlling feelings through the force of reason.’<sup>22</sup> “The succession of cut time by 3/8 is typical of Lully; the 3/8 here is in the meter of a *passepied*,” described by Bach's pupil Kirnberger as being 'performed in a light but not entirely playful manner.’<sup>23</sup> This second section

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19. Don Michael Randel, ed. *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 486.

20. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 26-27.

21. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 214.

22. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 28.

23. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 216.

is not technically a fugue, given that the cello cannot play multiple lines simultaneously, but the polyphonic texture is undoubtedly implied. Rostropovich says “the missing voices exist at a subconscious level.”<sup>24</sup> In breaking somewhat from French tradition, Bach does not choose to return to the slow section after the fugue. However, it is the Allemande to follow that seems to pick up and continue expanding the ideas presented in the slow opening of this prelude.

#### ALLEMANDE:

The allemande is the earliest of dance movements to be used in the Baroque suite. In its more mature Baroque form, the character of an allemande:

has more to do with idiomatic instrumental writing than dance rhythms. It is ordinarily in quadruple meter and binary form, beginning with one or more upbeats and proceeding to cadences on downbeats in phrases of irregular length. Its texture is permeated with imitation and *style brisé* figures that obscure a sense of clear-cut melodic phrases; its tempo is moderately slow.<sup>25</sup>

In this particular allemande, “Bach has taken two characteristics of the French *entrée*, or first section of the overture: the dotted rhythm, and the *tirata*.”<sup>26</sup> To this framework he also adds runs of sixteenth notes. Thus, it is truly a companion to the prelude in a way that other allemandes are not by way of Bach's method of assimilation. This movement adheres to its inherent nature but is further distinguished by the “almost anguished...short phrases punctuated by contrapuntal

24. Mstislav Rostropovich, *Bach Cello Suites*, DVD, Produced by Guy Chesnais and Johannes Müller (Basilique Sainte Madeleine, Vezelay, Yonne, France: EMI Classics, 1991).

25. Don Michael Randel, ed. *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 19.

26. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 218.

answers.”<sup>27</sup> However, the short phrases are linked together in a way that propel the mixture of angst and question toward a more vast expanse beyond immediate need for answer. “The avoidance of intermediate cadential punctuation is clearly intended to make sections as continuous as possible, and an understanding of this strategy is necessary for feeling the coherence of the piece.”<sup>28</sup> The continual weight of this suite's character is passed directly into the courante.

#### COURANTE:

The courante found here in the Fifth Suite is unique from those in all the other cello suites. As opposed to the Italian 'corrente,' this suite actually fits the true 'courante' model. The Italian model Bach used in the other cello suites calls for a much swifter tempo than does this particular movement. Without making this distinction, many performers play this movement much faster than the intent of its design. Although an array of tempo deserves consideration, moving too quickly through this courante deprives a certain level of poise that Bach maintains throughout the entire suite.

The mature French courante was described by contemporary (17<sup>th</sup> c) theorists as solemn and grave, having the same pulse as a sarabande. It is usually notated in 3/2, with a strong proclivity toward hemiola figures that combine 6/4 and 3/2 accent patterns as well as related syncopated figures.<sup>29</sup>

This movement is in 3/2, and does feature hemiola effects due to some measures which move in

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27. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 33.

28. Ledbetter, David. *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 220.

29. Don Michael Randel, ed. *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 166.

the rhythm of 6/4 time. At an even slower tempo, this particular courante could pass as a breed of the sarabande made different by its lacking of consistent emphasis on the second beat typically found in a sarabande. Much like the opening of the prelude and the allemande to follow, this courante is built on a framework of chords. The chords are plotted strategically as musical checkpoints which help to define the phrasing. Even with the carry-over of dotted-rhythms, this movement's chords are connected mostly by eighth notes. What helps to further distinguish each movement is how Bach connects the chord pillars in the respective character or context of the movement itself. The connective tissue or “flourishes...are cast in the motivic language of their respective dance genres.”<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, musical phrasing is made possible through recognition of phrases that are “marked off by a figure of four descending eighth notes (m. 2,15, etc.) which is one of Bach's equivalents to the *coulé de tierce* phrase-ending formula.”<sup>31</sup>

#### SARABANDE:

The Sarabande from this suite exists as an unrivaled work of art. Mstislav Rostropovich, the renowned cellist, adequately articulated that this particular sarabande “represents the quintessence of Bach's genius.”<sup>32</sup> He furthermore concludes “Its melodic design is very unusual...it almost resembles contemporary music;...the idea embodied in the first phrase...that alone is worth many volumes by many composers.”<sup>33</sup> To some extent, words seem unfit and

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30. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 221.

31. Ibid.

32. Mstislav Rostropovich, *Bach Cello Suites*, DVD, Produced by Guy Chesnais and Johannes Müller (Basilique Sainte Madeleine, Vezelay, Yonne, France: EMI Classics, 1991).

33. Ibid.

wasted on such an unusually sublime work as this, even in light of many interesting angles from which it can be approached. Nonetheless, its significance, simplicity, and complexity are accentuated through an understanding of how Bach makes this sarabande unique.

In the cello suites, a sarabande serves as the centerpiece of an entire suite. Its placement in the suite makes it a numerical center, the fourth of seven movements, and its character tends to act as “the most lyrical and expressive movement...the beating heart.”<sup>34</sup> “Bach worked the sarabande structure in many different ways but they all have in common the four bar phrase units without which they would have no connection with the genre.”<sup>35</sup> In this case, the phrase structure is: 1 bar + 1 bar + 2 bars. Aside from structure, Bach made this sarabande unique by altering the metrical emphasis, if any is to be applied at all, and by restricting the texture to a single voice. The singular line actually lends itself to defying the need for an added pulsation within each bar. The constant rhythm of four eighth notes followed by a quarter note in the context of 3/4 time suggests more of an emphasis on beats one and three versus the weight which is typically applied on beat two. “Bach's main expressive resources are melodic dissonance and tessitura” as he restricts the composition to a single line comprised of only eighth and quarter notes without ornamentation or double-stopping.<sup>36</sup> However, “Bach's writing is ornamental in and of itself, in a sense, by virtue of the many harmonic appoggiaturas.”<sup>37</sup> There are a large

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34. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 37.

35. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 223.

36. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 24.

37. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 38.

proportion of dissonant intervals either approached directly or applied by proximity...and many appoggiaturas, which are one of the most expressive melodic devices.<sup>38</sup> Created by the constant descent of intervals, the effect of this sarabande is like “a lament surcharged with grief and longing.”<sup>39</sup>

#### GAVOTTES:

Two gavottes and a gigue serve to conclude this suite. These three dances are the final movements of the suite. Their inherent character and increase in tempo to some degree help to lighten the weight of this suite as compared to the movements preceding them. Although each suite concludes with a gigue, the fifth and sixth suites are the only two cello suites to contain a pair of gavottes. “Gavottes were rustic and unsophisticated dances...danced at court, but reflected French society's intrigue with a pastoral lifestyle...this sentiment needs to be expressed in Bach's gavottes as well.”<sup>40</sup> These sentiments can be expressed through musical execution with the simple acknowledgment of the light and leaping nature of the dance itself.

The gavottes in Suite V are presented as a pair of dances in binary form after which the first gavotte is then played again without repeats; thus:

{ A A B+A B+A // C C D+C D+C // A B+A } represents a finer detail of the overall form.

Gavotte I adheres to the traditional Baroque model more than its counterpart to follow. It is made up of four and eight bar phrases. The cut time marking, or *alla breve*, indicates that the

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38. David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 224.

39. James Gordon Kinney, “The Musical Literature for Unaccompanied Cello” (DMA diss., Florida State University, 1962), 387.

40. Leslie Hirt Marckx, “French Baroque influences on Johann Sebastian Bach's Six Suites for Violoncello Solo: with an emphasis on French court dance and Suite V” (DMA diss., University of Washington, 1998), 51.



half note is to receive the pulse. It is important to maintain this broader pulse to present the proper character of a gavotte even though it may seem that the quarter pulse is dominant. The repeated half bar upbeat, which starts the piece, is formed by two quarter notes placed on beats three and four. This upbeat begins each new phrase throughout the piece and is “the one characteristic that makes this piece identifiable as a gavotte...it is vital that this half bar upbeat is evident in performances.”<sup>41</sup>

Gavotte II functions more like a variant or episode of the dance rather than a gavotte. This gavotte features a singular, smooth and spinning line in comparison to the chordal, self-accompanying texture of the first gavotte's pomp and bounce. The second gavotte remains in the minor mode. Unlike all other movements of the suite, it cadences on tonic at the double bar which delays the half-cadence until the second section. If Gavotte II actually “approaches a little the style of the pavane,” then Bach may have intended for its tempo to be more relaxed than is often heard.

#### GIGUE:

The fifth suite gigue is written in 3/8. It is the only gigue in the suites which employs dotted rhythms and its inverted subject at the double-bar are characteristic of the French gigue.<sup>42</sup> Its primary rhythmic vehicle is a dotted eighth-note followed by a sixteenth and another eighth to round out the measure. This figure emphasizes beats one and three. However, at a swifter tempo, the hyper-meter of this movement can be easily felt in one big beat per bar with a slight

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41. *Ibid.*, 50.

42. Arthur Lewis, “The Unaccompanied Suite No.5 in C Minor By J. S. Bach, Transcribed for Viola” (DMA diss., Indiana University, 1967), 7.

emphasis on every other downbeat. True to French influence, longer notes are often tied over the bar-line to cause syncopation or momentary concealing of the pulse. Also characteristic of the French gigue is that this movement may be executed at a more relaxed tempo as compared to the swifter tempo of an Italian gigue. This could be due to the weight and conclusion of such a suite or perhaps that “the musical resistance of the dotted rhythms and tied-over rhythms,” tend to require such treatment.<sup>43</sup> This resistance and weight could possibly categorize this movement as “a type of Louré”<sup>44</sup> which is a slow and majestic French gigue during the late Baroque.<sup>45</sup> Being in 3/8, this Gigue could also serve to recapture the tempo from the fugue-like section of the prelude in a reprise of sorts.

#### THE MANUSCRIPTS:

Bach's cello suites live as masterpieces more mysterious than most. These works are open for a variety of interpretation being that almost no dynamics, bowings, or phrasings are found in the best existing copies. Today, over fifty different editions of the suites have been published dating back to 1826. Even though most editions are based on the copies by his wife, Anna Magdalena, there does exist an autograph of Suite V, but for the lute. Bach's version of this suite for lute contains ornaments and bass notes not found in Anna Magdalena's cello copy which make this manuscript “instructive since Bach underlined harmonically the inflections of the

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43. Ibid.

44. Dimitry Markevitch, *Six Suites for Solo Cello by J. S. Bach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1964), vii.

45. Don Michael Randel, ed. *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 381.

musical phrase...and also from the point of view of structural analysis and interpretation.”<sup>46</sup> Even as each different movement possesses its own history of usage, style and tendencies, “perhaps the most remarkable quality of the suites is that the artistry to be found in them is seemingly endless.”<sup>47</sup> Janos Starker suggests that “Playing Bach is a process of search and change...it is far better to enjoy them and leave the Master in peace.”<sup>48</sup>

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46. Dimitry Markevitch, *Six Suites for Solo Cello by J. S. Bach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1964), iii.

47. Harriet Kaplan, “An Examination of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fifth and Sixth Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1011 and 1012” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1994), 44.

48. J.S. Bach, *Six Suites for Unaccompanied Violoncello*, Edited by Janos Starker, (New York: Peer International Corp., 1988).

## CHAPTER 2 - BEETHOVEN'S SONATA FOR PIANO AND VIOLONCELLO, OP.69

Beethoven published his five cello sonatas as *Sonaten für Pianoforte and Violoncello*. Composed across the three periods of his life, the cello sonatas alone could be used as representations which serve to differentiate the characteristics, style, and progression of Beethoven's development. These sonatas are “a seminal group of works that serve as a foundation to the development of the piano as a collaborative instrument and the development of the violoncello as a solo instrument.”<sup>49</sup> The first two of these, Op.5, No.1 and No.2, he composed in 1796 at the age of twenty-six. The Op.5 sonatas are, in part, inspired by the advancement in cello technique attributed to the Duport brothers. Although the cello still acts in a slightly subordinate role to the piano, the Op.5 sonatas begin to mark a new era for the cello and its place in the duo sonata.

Twelve years elapse between the Op.5 sonatas and his third composition for this duo, the Op.69. During this time, Beethoven was still highly productive in writing music for both the piano and the cello, but in alternate formats. Amongst many sonatas for piano, his works include two piano trios, three string trios, a triple concerto for violin, cello, and piano, nine string quartets, nine sonatas for violin and piano, four piano concertos and his first four symphonies. Thus, Beethoven had certainly not laid aside the idea of composing for cello and piano. By the time he composed the Op. 69, after more than a decade of other significant compositions, “Beethoven's experience and knowledge of composing for the cello had increased

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49. Victor Santiago Asuncion, “Ludwig Van Beethoven: A recording survey of the five sonatas from piano and violoncello” (DMA diss., University of Maryland, 2007), 1.

considerably.”<sup>50</sup> It is, however, worth consideration that notes from Beethoven's “closest confidant,” Carl Czerny, places the Op.69 fourth on a list of six sonatas for piano and cello while placing the Op.17 third on his list. Although this work was written for piano and horn in 1801, Czerny writes that Beethoven himself arranged the cello part.<sup>51</sup> Another sonata that is not grouped in the standard canon of five cello sonatas is the Op.64. Beethoven created the Op.64 by transcribing his Op.3 string trio and reducing the best violin and cello material to just a cello part. The cello part in Op.64 serves mostly as an accompaniment to the piano, but does include some melodic passages from the original violin part. It is, however, the Op.69 which represents the first sonata in which the cello is elevated to rival the importance of the piano.

The Op.69 was composed during 1807-8 and published by Breitkopf and Hartel in 1809. Beethoven dedicated this work to Baron Ignaz von Gleichenstein, (1778-1828), who was an important friend of Beethoven for many years. This particular year Gleichenstein had helped to arrange Beethoven's pension from a group of rich patrons. Even though the Baron was himself a cellist, it is unknown for sure if the dedication was based on his musical ability, for his business skill, or perhaps just his friendship. The dedication was “probably out of gratitude for Gleichenstein's role in negotiating his annuity agreement.”<sup>52</sup> On the dedication copy Beethoven also wrote “*Inter lacrymas et luctus*” (Amid tears and sorrows). Ironically enough, most of the sonata itself does not sound like this description might indicate. Many speculate this description is indicative of an emotional state as it does not seem “appropriate as a description of a work of

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50. Ryan James Daniel, “The Piano and Violoncello Sonatas of Ludwig van Beethoven” (Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1998), 7.

51. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonatas for Violoncello and Piano*, (Wien: Wiener Urtext Edition, 2008), xvi.

52. Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2001), 269.

such quiet solemnity and moderation of emotional expression.”<sup>53</sup>

The Op.69 is set apart from Beethoven's other cello sonatas in many ways. It embodies qualities that represent the quintessence of Beethoven's genius as it falls right in the middle of his Heroic Period or middle-period, 1800-15. The Op. 69 “has that equipoise between form and expression that is the hallmark of works of Beethoven's second period.”<sup>54</sup> The work came during a prolific span, 1807-8, in which Beethoven wrote, completed and premiered both his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. In drawing out similarities amongst these three works, one angle clearly seen in the opening of these two symphonies and the Op.69 is how Beethoven begins the piece. To recognize this context is to gain a greater understanding of how this sonata is unique from the others.

Beethoven is grappling with one overriding compositional issue: how many different ways are there to halt the normative musical flow at the onset of a musical composition. By thwarting the listener's expectation of the flow of a musical composition, Beethoven intensifies the rhetorical nature of a works opening measures. By calling so much attention to the rhetorical moment, Beethoven underscores the importance of the structural information presented there. The rhetoric supports the structural ideas, which in turn, define the rhetoric...the two dimensions are inseparable.<sup>55</sup>

Another aspect of his genius is reflected in the Op.69 sonata as it “manifests Beethoven's interest in alternative ways of organizing traditional movement-plans within the sonata genre...”<sup>56</sup> A meticulous level of detail can be observed in how Beethoven chooses to use and tamper with the form of each movement by looking even deeper into the framework of each individual

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53. Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2001), 269.

54. Elizabeth Cowling, *The Cello*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 130.

55. Paul E.Beaudoin, “Rhetoric as a Heuristic in the first movement of Beethoven's Third Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op.69,” (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2002), 16.

56. Lewis Lockwood, “Beethoven's op. 69 revisited; The place of the sonata in Beethoven's chamber music,” (*Beethovens Werke fur Klavier and Violoncello: Bericht uber die internationale Fachkonferenz, Bonn. 18-20, 2004*) 146.

movement:

Even transitions develop into complex quasi-thematic structures so that the formal design, itself completely inspired by chamber music thought, pervades even the lowest levels of movement structure, from the expressive gesture to the most minimal accompanying ornamentation; everything derived from the material of the main theme and developed in a consistent dialogue process.<sup>57</sup>

The Op.69 stands out from all cello sonatas preceding it because of the cello's role of importance. As opposed to the Opus 5 sonatas, the cello opens this work with a solo presentation of the main theme. The cello then lays down to drone on the final note of its opening statement for the piano to enter as the prominent voice. As the piano and cello frequently exchange roles throughout the movement, “the sharing of material is not restricted to melodies and virtuoso passage-work, but is extended to other regions, including ornamental flourishes, inner parts and - what is of special significance for the medium – the bass.”<sup>58</sup> Thus, both parts expand beyond simply just a lead versus subordinate role. A new and true beauty is created in how Beethoven weaves together the independence of each part to produce a texture which is starkly original. This sonata liberates the cello as a chamber instrument and establishes a more equal level of importance to the piano.<sup>59</sup> Beethoven had already achieved this sort of equal status in some of his violin sonatas, such as the Op.24, but “a comparable situation (to the Op.69) is not really found until the late and subtle G major violin sonata Op.96.”<sup>60</sup> The constant dialogue and equality between the cello and piano has established this sonata historically as the first by a

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57. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonatas for Violoncello and Piano*, (Wien: Wiener Urtext Edition, 2008), xiv.

58. Ryan James Daniel, “The Piano and Violoncello Sonatas of Ludwig van Beethoven” (Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1998), 34.

59. *Ibid.*, 77.

60. Lewis Lockwood, “Beethoven's op. 69 revisited; The place of the sonata in Beethoven's chamber music,” (*Beethovens Werke fur Klavier and Violoncello: Bericht uber die internationale Fachkonferenz, Bonn. 18-20, 2004*), 153-4.

major composer for this duo which achieves a fully balanced functional relationship.<sup>61</sup> In writing the Op. 69, Beethoven must certainly have been aware that he was creating a new type of cello sonata.<sup>62</sup>

The American musicologist, Lewis Lockwood, is regarded as a leading authority on the works of Beethoven. His research and writings on the Op.69 are extensive. He explains why Beethoven's cello sonatas, especially the Op.69, are central works in the cello and piano literature:

For precisely in the cello sonata texture Beethoven finds it possible to develop textures that bring the cello into use as a prominent melodic bass to the keyboard parts...a long-range Bachian connection...the active melodic bass line in the accompanied sonata texture as a primary technical and aesthetic feature.<sup>63</sup> The solutions found in Op.69 for the problems of range, relative sonority, and matching of importance of the two instruments...emerge as an achievement equal to that inherent in the originality and quality of its purely musical ideas.<sup>64</sup>

Another great analyst and musicologist, Sir Donald Francis Tovey, suggests that advances and developments in modern music may have dulled our ears to such beauties as are found in the Op.69.<sup>65</sup> Tovey adamantly writes that “the kind of historical knowledge we need is that which enables both players and listeners to construe the composer's language rightly.”<sup>66</sup> In unison with

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61. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata for Violoncello and Pianoforte Opus 69, First Movement, (Facsimile of the Autograph)*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 1.

62. Lewis Lockwood, “Beethoven's op. 69 revisited; The place of the sonata in Beethoven's chamber music,” (*Beethovens Werke fur Klavier and Violoncello: Bericht uber die internationale Fachkonferenz, Bonn. 18-20, 2004*), 147.

63. *Ibid.*, 149.

64. Lewis Lockwood, “The Autograph of the First Movement of Beethoven's Sonata for Violoncello and Pianoforte, Op.69,” In *The Music Forum*, Vol II, ed. William J. Mitchell and Felix Salzer, 1-110. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 34.

65. Donald Francis Tovey, Michael Tilmouth, ed. *The Classics of Music: talks, essays, and other writings previously uncollected*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 67.

66. *Ibid.*, 68.



Lockwood's thoughts about the quality of Beethoven's ideas, Tovey goes on to warn that classic works like this, in which the texture is especially clear and open, contain many great passages of which “the subtlety and audacity have for some listeners become obscured by the lapse of time.”<sup>67</sup> In his own program note, Tovey advises that a useful starting point for appreciating the breadth and simplicity of Beethoven's design is knowing that in this context most of the main themes will be presented twice, by the two instruments in alternation. Furthermore, in Op. 69, “this method is made additionally effective by the conspicuous display of the wide compass of the violoncello.”<sup>68</sup>

The context in which to approach the Op.69 is not so much as a duo sonata with equal partnership, but as a piece of chamber music. It is the dialogue, equality, and the two Op.70 trios to follow which give proper chamber context to this work. In understanding not only the works preceding, but what Beethoven wrote after it, the epic and revelatory proportions of Op.69 are fully revealed. Lockwood views the Op.69 as artistically part of a trilogy with the Op. 70 Trios and notes that “all three works show the way to the 'Archduke' Trio and its expanded world of expression.”<sup>69</sup> He rightly recognizes that Beethoven's trust to employ the cello in a variety of roles, even from phrase to phrase, allows it to color the ensemble in new ways. Lockwood proposes then, with his observations, that Beethoven created a new style with his “systematic 'liberation' of the cello from its former subordinate role.”<sup>70</sup> In considering the “fully balanced

67. Donald Francis Tovey, Michael Tilmouth, ed. *The Classics of Music: talks, essays, and other writings previously uncollected*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 68.

68. *Ibid.*, 69.

69. Lewis Lockwood, “Beethoven's op. 69 revisited; The place of the sonata in Beethoven's chamber music,” (*Beethovens Werke fur Klavier and Violoncello: Bericht uber die internationale Fachkonferenz, Bonn. 18-20, 2004*), 147.

new ensemble writing...(and) the intellectual and artistic weight of Op.97,” he concludes that the Op.69 had been “the single most important turning point...in this emancipation” of the cello; which marks “the path from this sonata...to the highly developed trio literature of the nineteenth century, certainly including Schubert, and, beyond him, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms.”<sup>71</sup>

The Op.69 is comprised of three movements. The first is an *Allegro ma non tanto* in sonata form. The first four notes of the cello's five bar solo opening are A-E-F# -C#. Amazingly common in works by Beethoven is how these opening pitches actually forecast the respective key areas that will be explored throughout the movement: A and E Major for the themes of the exposition and F# and C# minor during the development. The next new pitch to follow in the main theme is a D which could actually correlate to a quiet and mysterious few bars in D major right before the recapitulation. “The entire first phrase forms an intervallic and motivic sequence whose components and derivations will have pervasive importance for the course of the movement.”<sup>72</sup> The first movement showcases a masterful display of thematic development and lyricism. Both instruments are allowed to display their own virtuosic potential in short cadenzas marked “ad libitum.” In addition, Beethoven writes several long and flowing accompaniment passages that display each instrument's expanse of range across all registers. The movement lasts for at least twelve minutes of the approximately twenty-six minute sonata, which makes this work Beethoven's largest sonata for this duo.

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70. Lewis Lockwood, “Beethoven's op. 69 revisited; The place of the sonata in Beethoven's chamber music,” (Beethoven's Werke fur Klavier and Violoncello: Bericht uber die internationale Fachkonferenz, Bonn. 18-20, 2004), 155.

71. *Ibid.*, 156-7.

72. Paul E. Beaudoin, “Rhetoric as a Heuristic in the first movement of Beethoven's Third Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op.69,” (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2002), 17.

The second movement is a *Scherzo* marked as *Allegro molto*. The movement is in 3/4 time and each measure feels more like one beat given the brisk tempo. The main theme starts on the third beat of each measure and is tied across the bar line through the first beat of the following measure. Perhaps then, the joke-like quality of this scherzo is that Beethoven has concealed the normally strong downbeat by placing the emphasis on the third beat. Thus, a misaligned pulse set in the key of A minor creates a slightly more serious tone in this second movement. In staying with the more relaxed, joyful and mild temperament of the overall sonata, Beethoven breaks up the main theme in minor with two Trio sections in A major. Another joke appears leading into the first trio as the cello entrance is delayed an extra measure making the former group of measures an uneven number of five bars (m.105-109) when the hyper-meter has suggested that this movement could be in 4/4 with a triplet feel or even 12/8 time. While the trio does make clear the downbeat, Beethoven again alters the downbeat with short phrases that emphasize beat two as the strong beat.

The bulk of the final movement is an *Allegro vivace* in cut time but it is attached to and preceded by an *Adagio cantabile*. The Adagio is in E major which is arguably Beethoven's "most spiritual key."<sup>73</sup> This slow introduction beautifully suspends time but all too soon evaporates into the finale of before being developed into a full slow movement." Because of this, "it is in a way extremely tantalizing...so beautiful and pithy that Beethoven could have created a whole slow movement out of it...as it stands, it is a gem."<sup>74</sup>

The Adagio preceding the finale is assigned a very important role: with a duration of just

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73. Eric McKee, "E Major and spirituality in Beethoven's instrumental music," (*Beethoven. II: Studien und Interpretationen*, Poland. 2003), 125-143.

74. Elizabeth Cowling, *The Cello*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 130.

18 bars it can neither be regarded as an independent movement nor as an introduction. Instead, it weakens the conventional four movement structure of a *Grand Sonate* in its almost paradox double role. The formal luxury of condensing that part of the movement that is most advantageous for the cantabile sound to a duration of less than 20 bars is only possible due to the omnipresent cantabile atmosphere in the other movements.<sup>75</sup>

The final *Allegro vivace* is thoroughly based on the first subject throughout the entire movement.



The subject itself: C#-A-G#-B-A, is presented in four quarter notes and a dotted half-note. It resembles the initial thematic material presented in the opening of the first movement. Thus, a special coherency is present in this sonata even though Beethoven may have originally sketched out a different idea for this final movement which was later used in his last violin sonata.

Beethoven defined a new genre through this sonata with his liberation of the cello. This liberation is also heard in his chamber works to follow, namely the Op. 70 piano trios and his late quartets. By utilizing the melodic capabilities of the cello even more in his chamber works than did Haydn or Mozart, he created “a stimulating effect of the productive work of the future in the field of cello compositions, which received a considerable accession in regards to sonatas especially.”<sup>76</sup> Aside from the cello's perspective, this work can be explored from other fascinating dimensions just because of Beethoven's genius as a pianist. The great Beethoven historian, Maynard Solomon, in agreement with Lockwood, suggests that this sonata (and the keyboard chamber works soon to follow) is special because, after his time spent composing the

75. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonatas for Violoncello and Piano*, (Wien: Wiener Urtext Edition, 2008), xiv.

76. William Joseph von Wasielewski, *The Violoncello and its History*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), 210.

Fifth and Sixth symphonies: “Beethoven was once again using the piano as his main creative vehicle...perhaps this is why a feeling of 'home-coming' seems to pervade.”<sup>77</sup>

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77. Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2001), 272.

## CHAPTER 3 - MARTINU'S VARIATIONS ON A SLOVAKIAN THEME

Bohuslav Martinů composed music as the main focus of his life. He is regarded as one of the greatest Czech composers of his generation and the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Martinů's music and influence were known internationally during his lifetime due to his travel and residence in multiple countries, including France and the United States. He composed a great quantity of music including six symphonies, six string quartets, fifteen operas and fourteen ballet scores. His nearly four-hundred works include a wide array of chamber literature, works for orchestra, and voice. Martinů was “a composer with a distinctly individual voice and a versatility that led him to excel in every medium.”<sup>78</sup>

Martinů was born in 1890 in the Czech town of Policka. He started playing violin at age seven and was composing by age ten. In 1906, he entered the Prague Conservatory as a violinist for four years before becoming a member of the Czech Philharmonic. Martinů first studied composition with the Czech violinist and composer, Joseph Suk, who himself was greatly inspired by his teacher, Antonin Dvorak. In 1923, Martinů went to Paris to study composition with Albert Roussel “whose muscular, rhythmically vigorous music eventually influenced Martinů's own.”<sup>79</sup> By 1938, WWII forced Martinů and his wife to flee from Paris to Portugal, and then to America by 1941. He lived in America until 1953 working as a teacher and composer and gained “a formidable reputation as one of the most important composers of his time.”<sup>80</sup> Aside from these few years of teaching, composing was Martinů's only source of

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78. Michael Rodman, “Martinů, Bohuslav Jan,” All Music Guide, <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/bohuslav-martinu> (accessed Jan.10, 2014).

79. Ibid.

80. Lucie Berna, *Bohuslav Martinu: A View of His Life & Music*, (Prague: Bohuslav Martinu Institute, 2009), p.3

livelihood which is one reason why he was unusually prolific. “His main source of income was therefore royalties from performances of his work and a share in the profits from sales of scores and recordings of his music.”<sup>81</sup> After World War II, he made trips back to Europe. From 1953-59 his time was divided between France, Italy, and Switzerland where he died in 1959.

Martinů's music is unique and distinct because of his multiple musical influences. In broad terms, his musical language was influenced by the movements of impressionism, expressionism, neoclassicism and jazz. Consequently, Martinů's music “underwent several stylistic transformations” over the course of his career as a composer.<sup>82</sup> All of his works were cataloged by Harry Halbreich, who also divided Martinů's career into four periods relating to the places he lived. These periods are helpful in looking at the correlating composers and styles from which Martinů built his own musical voice. Early in his development while studying in Prague, he was captivated with the music of Claude Debussy. Undoubtedly then “his experience and appreciation of Debussy's music led him to concentrate on timbre.”<sup>83</sup> His own nationalistic roots deepened however, as other native composers like Dvorak and Smetana helped increase his own fondness for Czech folksong. This time in Prague, before departing for Paris, is known as his early period.

In the Paris period (1923-40), Martinů's development is marked by a wide array of musical influence. His encounters with Stravinsky in Paris, in combination with his interest in the new genre of jazz, continued the addition of vigor to the palette of Martinů's rhythmic force.

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81. Lucie Berna, *Bohuslav Martinu: A View of His Life & Music*, (Prague: Bohuslav Martinu Institute, 2009), p.22

82. *Ibid.*, 6.

83. Kichung Bae, “Elgar and Martinu: The cello works and musical characteristics of two remarkable, self-taught, nationalistic composers,” (DMA diss., University of Maryland, 2006), 73.

While in Paris he studied with Roussel in whom “he found proportionality of musical expression, equilibrium of form, taste and order – in short, the virtues of French music that he had always admired.”<sup>84</sup> By 1930, “his constant desire to learn more led him to the music of Corelli, Vivaldi, and Bach, signaling a new concern with rhythmic continuity and contrapuntal technique.”<sup>85</sup> In a pamphlet put out by the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in 2009, Lucia Berna summarizes Martinů's first two periods in that:

He forged his own distinctive musical idiom and his music is recognizable after no more than a few bars. His musical language was derived from the simplicity and melodiousness of Moravian and Bohemian folksong, the timbral inventiveness of Impressionism, the polyphony of the English madrigal, the formal discipline of the Italian musical Baroque and the rhythmic and motoric influences of jazz.<sup>86</sup>

The years spent in America (1941-53) reflect another phase of Martinů's composing which warrants its own period. By this point, it is important to consider that Martinů has already composed about three-hundred works before ever writing a symphony. It is during the first five years of this period that Martinů wrote not only one, but five of his six symphonies, all of which are substantial works lasting between twenty-five and forty minutes each. His sixth symphony was completed in 1953. The symphonies alone certainly “represent a self-contained series of masterpieces,” leading many to consider Martinů one of the greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>87</sup>

Martinů himself wrote a great deal about the craft of music in his diaries during this

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84. Lucie Berna, *Bohuslav Martinu: A View of His Life & Music*, (Prague: Bohuslav Martinu Institute, 2009), p.7.

85. Michael Rodman, “Martinů, Bohuslav Jan,” All Music Guide, <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/bohuslav-martinu> (accessed Jan.10, 2014).

86. Lucie Berna, *Bohuslav Martinu: A View of His Life & Music*, (Prague: Bohuslav Martinu Institute, 2009), p.6.

87. *Ibid.*, 11.



period in America. His thoughts on the creative process provide fascinating insight on his definitions of emotion in music. His biographer, Milos Safranek, has also written a section on Martinů's creative process in his book, *The Man and His Music*. According to Martinů, “artistic creation is the product of the skill to control the interaction between the subconscious, which is the repository of the artist's experiences, and the conscious, which the composer may use to trigger and direct this repository.”<sup>88</sup> He furthermore suggests that interpretive criticism and analysis of music (sensationalism and academicism) often lead listeners and performers to “knowledge that has no relation to the composer's original conception.”<sup>89</sup> Martinů wrote in program notes for his first symphony:

What I maintain as my deepest conviction is the essential nobility of thoughts and things which are quite simple and which, not explained in high-sounding words and abstruse phrases, still hold and ethical and human significance.<sup>90</sup>

This simplicity of thought is actually reflected in the fully-developed hallmark of Martinů's style which consists of “a characteristic slant on neo-classicism,” in which the music is “based on small cells” as he defined it.<sup>91</sup> Within his ideas of smaller-cells an intensity is created by “insistent rhythms, pungent harmonies, and an intricate network of counterpoint.”<sup>92</sup> In one of the better books about Martinů, Brian Large concludes that: harmonically, Martinů's music belongs to the Romantic school, and highlights the importance of his melodic features in that “this

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88. Thomas D Svatos, “Reasserting the centrality of musical craft: Martinu and his American diaries.” *Musical Times* Vol.150, (Summer 2009): 58.

89. *Ibid.*, 56.

90. Milos Safranek, *Bohuslav Martinu: The Man and His Music*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944), 89.

91. Robert Phillip. Liner notes *Eben, Martinu & Smetana Piano Trios*, by The Florestan Trio. Hyperion Records CDA67730. London, 2010. Compact discs.

92. *Ibid.*

achievement of musical unity through continuously developing motifs may well be Martinů's greatest contribution to the art of composition."<sup>93</sup>

Martinů's chamber music output is extensive and employs many types of configurations. Writing to his biographer he said: "In pure chamber music I am always more myself."<sup>94</sup> Another letter from America reads: "I am unable to express the joy I have when I start composing chamber music..."<sup>95</sup> His works for cello include: two concertos (1930 and 45), a Concertino and Sonata da camera with chamber orchestra; three sonatas (1939,41, and 52), the Rossini Variations in 1942, and the Slovakian Variations in 1959. The variations are still great favorites in cello repertoire today.<sup>96</sup> Smaller works for cello include the Four Nocturnes, Six Pastorales, Suite Miniature, and Seven Arabesques.

The *Variations on a Slovakian Theme* (H.378) represent Martinů's last work for cello. This piece was completed quickly in March of 1959 during the final months of his life. The theme he chose was found in an old anthology of 1,000 Slovak folk songs, which is currently out of print.<sup>97</sup> The song title, "Ked'bych já veděla," is translated "If I had known" or "If only I knew." The opening theme acts as a basis for five variations to follow. In this piece, the theme's opening rhythm, an eighth-note followed by a dotted quarter note, reflects the native Czech

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93. Brian Large, *Martinu*. (London: Duckworth: 1975), 144-5.

94. Robert Phillip. Liner notes *Eben, Martinu & Smetana Piano Trios*, by The Florestan Trio. Hyperion Records CDA67730. London, 2010. Compact discs.

95. Lucie Berna, *Bohuslav Martinu: A View of His Life & Music*, (Prague: Bohuslav Martinu Institute, 2009), p.18.

96. Jaroslav Holecek, Liner notes *Martinu, Janacek, Kabelac*, by Tomas Jamkin & Ivo Kahanek. Supraphon SU3928-2. Prague, 2007. Compact discs.

97. Jackson, Rebecca. "Bohemian Soul: Nationalism Inspired by Folk Music (an exploration of Janacek, Kodaly, Martinu, and Smetana)," [www.scchamberplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/concert\\_6.pdf](http://www.scchamberplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/concert_6.pdf) (accessed Jan. 20, 2014).

language or prosody as “the first syllable receives a double accent of length and stress...which plays a role in giving the music its national character.”<sup>98</sup> Martinů masterfully disguises the theme throughout these variations in quite a different fashion from the typical classical-style. Instead of a clear set of traits that vary or reflect the theme, Martinů brings the theme out mostly toward the end of each variation. The theme is however woven throughout the work and is often offset by the syncopation and rhythmic complexity of his writing found in each variation. Except for the third, each variation does contain passages of sixteenth notes which fit squarely into each bar. These places help to stabilize the pulse amongst the surrounding content which often avoids emphasis on the downbeat. Martinů produces a dramatic climax by saving the fastest tempo, loudest dynamics, and high register of the cello for the fifth and final variation. Martinů conveys the great depth in his music through his own words: “The artist is always searching the meaning of life – his own and that of mankind – searching for truth...the artist has only one means of expressing this – by music.”<sup>99</sup>

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98. Pedro de Alcantara, “Old New Worlds,” Pedro de Alcantara, <https://pedro-dealcantara-kcah.squarespace.com/old-new-worlds-program-notes/> (accessed Jan. 20, 2014).

99. Jackson, Rebecca. “Bohemian Soul: Nationalism Inspired by Folk Music (an exploration of Janacek, Kodaly, Martinu, and Smetana),” [www.scchamberplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/concert\\_6.pdf](http://www.scchamberplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/concert_6.pdf) (accessed Jan. 20, 2014).

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