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## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BACH AND CASSADÓ D MINOR SUITES

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CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BACH AND CASSADÓ D MINOR CELLO SUITES

by

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B.Mus., Nayang Academy of Fine Arts – Royal College of Music, 2017

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Music

School of Music  
in the Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
May 2021

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BACH AND CASSADÓ D MINOR CELLO SUITES

by

Eunice Koh Kai'En

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Music

in the field of Music

Approved by:

Dr. Eric Lenz, Chair

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
April 01, 2021

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## PREFACE

The paper will also be accompanied by program notes to the final recital performed on March 13, 2021, with research included in the appendix.

J.S. Bach Suite for Cello No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1008

- Prelude
- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Menuet I, Menuet II
- Gigue

Ottorino Respighi Adagio con Variazioni

Claude Debussy Sonata for Cello and Piano, L. 135

- i. Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto
- ii. Sérénade: Modérément animé
- iii. Final: Animé, léger et nerveux

Gaspar Cassadó Suite for Cello

- i. Preludio – Fantasia
- ii. Sardana (Danza)
- iii. Intermezzo e Danza Finale

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## CHAPTER 1

### BACH TO CASSADÓ

Many people are probably aware of Bach's significance as a composer in the history of Western music. Some might even associate Bach with his famed Cello Suite No. 1, but not many people are acquainted with Cassadó and his contributions to music history, especially for the cello. Bach is perhaps best known for his sacred works, chorales, oratorio, or concertos. Cellists generally associate Bach with his six suites for solo cello, BWV 1007-1012 or the gamba sonatas, BWV 1027-1029. Unlike his sacred works which were set to text, the unaccompanied cello suites were based on dances influenced by the French courts. There are not many accounts of French influence written about Bach's compositions, however, there was a prevailing presence of French culture where Bach lived and composed. Bach would have encountered French music, dance and theatre while he was a student in Lüneburg, Michaelisschule, between 1700 – 1702.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, there was a “mixed style” happening in the German courts as French and Italian musicians were hired, bringing influences from the different cultures to the music development in Germany. The Cello Suites, (1717 – 1723), had titles of the French dances. Sarabandes, minuets, gagues and gavottes were frequently performed where Bach lived. The subsequent chapter will contain a deeper discussion of the various French dances.

Moving from Bach's time to the 20th century, Gaspar Cassadó was born into a musical Barcelonian family in 1897. His father, Joaquim, was a renowned organist and composer, and played an important role in the first steps of Cassadó's music education. Their family raised Cassadó with deep Catholic faith and beliefs and he was often involved in the

1. Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach* (United States: Indiana University Press, 1991), 3.

church choir. When Cassadó was about 10, his family's move to Paris led to a major growth in Cassadó's career as a composer and his recognition as one of the greatest cellists of the 20th century. Cassadó studied with the prominent cellist, Pablo Casals. The Bach cello suites, famously championed by Casals, played a huge part in Cassadó's lessons. His technical advancement in his lessons with Casals helped him to develop a freedom in his compositions, especially evident in his Suite for Solo Cello, composed in 1926. Cassadó recorded the unaccompanied Bach Suites, yet, he never recorded his Suite for Solo Cello. The piece was only popularized when one of the great cellists, János Starker, performed and recorded it in 1988.<sup>2</sup> Cassadó's student, Marçal Cervera, mentioned that he believes that Cassadó studied with Ravel, but no physical source is available regarding this piece of information.<sup>3</sup> Cassadó's many influences shaped his musical language around Spanish and French nationalism, where strong Spanish folk-like elements are evident in his Suite for Solo Cello, on top of the few references and some parallels to Bach's Cello Suites and its French dance movements.

Cassadó was also very experimental in nature. Apart from expanding his technique on the cello, he made strides in improving the sound capacity for the cello. The limited capabilities of gut strings had Cassadó looking for options to experiment with materials used on the cello. He was the first cellist to use metal strings in a concert and even tried using metal bow hair, altering the bass bar, creating adjustable fingerboard, tailpiece with steel frame to allow freedom

2. János Starker, "Cassadó: Suite for Unaccompanied Cello," 1988, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5Sq\\_tJG8G4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5Sq_tJG8G4).

3. Gabrielle Kaufman, "Gaspar Cassadó: A study of Catalan Cello Arrangements and Cello Performance Style" (PhD diss., Birmingham City University, 2013), 6.

of adjustments.<sup>4</sup> His originality was not always accepted favourably, as it altered the sound of the cello. However, his ideas for bigger sound could be traced in his Suite for Solo Cello, for example, consecutive quadruple-stops and extreme dynamics written in the last phrase of the finale. Cassadó dedicated a significant part of his career to transcribing and arranging music of various instrumentation which also influenced his personal compositions expressing some traits of neo-classicism. He transcribed the Mozart Horn Concerto No. 3, K. 447 and re-orchestrated it in D major instead of the original key of E-flat major and did the same with Weber Clarinet Concerto No. 2. Other transcriptions include works from Boccherini, Borodin, Chopin, Debussy, Dvorak, Faure, Liszt, Muffat, Popper, Tchaikovsky. Cassadó also orchestrated Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata for Cello and Piano as a cello concerto with additional musical material included in the cello solo as well as the orchestra parts. A cadenza is added to the first movement. As we might expect, Cassadó also wrote cadenzas to a few cello concertos namely Schumann Cello Concerto in A minor, Haydn Cello Concerto in D major and Boccherini Cello Concerto in B-flat major.

Recordings played a huge role in Cassadó's career as well. The re-orchestrated Schubert Arpeggione was one of the first few recordings that survived from 1929. Throughout the entire span of his career, Cassadó continuously recorded music and collaborated often with his wife, a pianist, Chieko Hara, especially in the last seven to eight years of his life.

The 1920s and early 1930s were an interesting time for Cassadó's career. On top of his performing, recording and teaching career, he was constantly composing and expanding the cello repertoire, including works for solo guitar, three string quartets and a piano trio. Apart from being known for his Suite for Solo Cello, Cassadó also composed a cello concerto and

4. Kaufman, 11-12.

two cello sonatas. Sonata *nello stile antico spagnolo* was written in 1924. It is a three-movement work – *Introduzione e Allegro*, *Grave* and the uncommon finale movement, *Danza con Variazioni*. The sonata in A minor was written in 1925 in four movements – *Rapsodia*, *Aragonesa*, *Saeta* and *Pasodoble*. *Rapsodia*, is a rhapsody where tunes are stitched together. *Aragonesa* a historic culture which absorbed traditional folklore from Celtic, French, Moors and Romans, commonly performs music with bagpipes, flutes, drums and tambourines playing in the style of *Jota*. *Saeta*, which literally translates to arrow, is a form of religious Spanish music, evoking strong emotions and it is an Andalusian lamentation sung during religious processions on Good Friday. The music is sombre and laments the death of Christ. *Pasodoble* translates to two-step, a quick tempo of Spanish military march which is often used in dance. Both sonatas were written with Spanish influences and these influences are evident in his Suite for Solo Cello as well as his other compositions. His Cello Concerto was dedicated to Casals and premiered by Cassadó with Casals conducting in 1926. This work also draws from Spanish folk music influence, represented in the opening cello solo (*Quasi recit*) with a flamenco-like gesture, which will also be heard in his Suite for Solo Cello.

After the 1930s, Cassadó's focus shifted to short, virtuosic show pieces with titles such as *Partitia* (1935), *Requiebros* (1934), *Morgenlied* (1957), *Rapsodia del sur*. Composed with folk tunes in mind, Cassado also played these pieces as encores in recital.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE DANCING BACH SUITES

The popularity of French and Italian dances grew in Germany during the Baroque period when the courts had employed French and Italian musicians. Dance played a huge role in the courts and social settings. French style dancing was amplified in Louis XIV's reign and the dance culture in courts carried around Europe. French dance instructors were also hired in German courts to teach the various dance movements to court attendees.<sup>5</sup> Court dancing reflected social status, etiquette, grace and respect to the *Roi Soleil* (the Sun King), Louis XIV. Music played an important role in court dancing throughout the seventeenth century. Compared to music from preceding eras, music in the seventeenth century presented a growth in solo instrumental music, and composers wrote more virtuosic instrumental passages. French composers such as Lully and Couperin are known as masters who solidified the style of the French Baroque. Their contemporary, J.S. Bach, was influenced by the French dance styles, especially in his employment as a *Kapellmeister* in Cöthen. There, he observed many court dances and composed the cello suites from 1717 to 1723. There is not an autograph of the manuscript, thus the exact year of composition of these suites is unclear. The earliest extant facsimile of the manuscript is from his second wife (married 1721), Anna Magdalena, a soprano also employed by the court of Cöthen.

Before the composition of Bach's Six Suites, BWV 1007-1012, the cello was rarely used as an unaccompanied solo instrument. It would play the supporting basso continuo or an obbligato to dance movements and music and participate in the continuo section with the harpsichord or the lute. Its popularity grew among composers in the Baroque period by virtue

5. Audrey Hebson, "Dance and Its Importance in Bach's Suites for Solo Cello." *Musical Offerings* vol. 1, no. 2, article 2 (2010): 56.

of its resonant nature. Bach saw the capabilities of the cello and brought it to the foreground by composing a series of dance suites for the unaccompanied cello – piecing together a prelude, allemande, courante, sarabande, optional dances (bourrées, gavottes or minuets), and gigue. Bach incorporated the idea of dances into his cello suites by including the various dance styles from the French, Italian and German dances. Though not written specifically to accompany dances, they were composed with the spirit of dance styles. Each dance has a distinct tempo and character. Allemandes are generally serious and stately German dances. Courantes, or correntes common to all six suites are Italian dances, with the exception of the courante in Suite No. 5. It is in the French dance style – slower and darker, showcasing a contrasting quality to the lively Italian correntes. Sarabandes are written in the French dance style and are generally slower. Suites No. 3 and 4 include French bourrées; Suites No. 5 and 6 feature French gavottes; and Suites No. 1 and 2 have French minutes which were popular for social court events. Lastly, the giges are lively English dances imported to France in the mid-17th century and widely used for social occasions in the French courts. French dance music could be identified by stepwise melodic movement in a narrow pitch range. There are clear musical phrases, rhythmic structures, rhythmic characteristics and pulses that indicate the idea of dance. Musical phrases should always be stylized with inflections, giving emphasis to the downbeats to represent the stronger or heavier dance steps. Lastly, Preludes are not dances, but they serve as an introduction to the key and character of the suites.

All the six suites were written in major keys with the exception of Suite No.2 and Suite No. 5, and in these minor keys, Bach still manages to exhibit the various dance styles through rhythmic impulses. To incorporate the idea of dance, while maintaining the grandeur and grace of the courtly dances, Bach uses rhythmic ideas such as a strong upbeat in his allemandes,

courantes, bourrées, gavottes and giges. The sarabandes and minuets do not have the upbeat rhythmic idea, yet, Bach manages to accentuate the idea of dance by the triple time signature and a long-short rhythmic character. According to Meredith Little, ‘rhythm’ creates organization, shape and form.<sup>6</sup> Tempo and meter holds an important role for the style, character and interpretation of the dances. Tempo markings do not appear the dance suites as it was conventional to play the dance movements stylistically in tempo, depending on the dance type. Tempo considerations is of utmost importance to dancers to effectively emote the character of each movement. In the context of Suite No. 2, here are the tempi of the dance suites from fast to slow: Gigue, Minuet, Courante, Allemande, Sarabande.<sup>7</sup>

Giges are lively and spritely dance styles, written in triple time. The phrases tend to be a combination of one, two, or four-bar phrases and both strains are often in imitative.<sup>8</sup> Hemiolas were written into the Gigue of Suite No. 2 (mm. 37-39, 41-45, 47) and the Anna Magdalena Bach’s facsimile also includes phrase markings which suggest the groupings. Performers have the option to group the hemiolas by various bowings to accentuate the three-in-two pattern.



Fig. 1: Bach Suite No. 2, Gigue, mm. 33-48<sup>9</sup>

6. Little and Jenne, 16.

7. Little and Jenne, 20.

8. Little and Jenne, 148.

9. Source: [https://www.jsbachcellosuites.com/\\_media/bach-cello-suite-am-bach-colour-manuscript.pdf](https://www.jsbachcellosuites.com/_media/bach-cello-suite-am-bach-colour-manuscript.pdf)

Among all the Baroque dances, the most popular one would be the Minuets – the title as a movement prevailed through the Classical sonatas and symphonies. Minuets were known for their poise and nobility and were known among diverse social classes from the common folk to the aristocrats. It was popularized in the 1660s in the French court by Lully’s extensive minuet compositions and by the 1700s, the minuets made it to the courts of Germany as it continued to be appreciated as social dances over Europe. Minuets are lively and spirited and commonly written in 3/8 or 6/8 time. There are three ways to consider phrasing and perpetuate the style of noble French dance: strong first and third beat of each measure, strong first beat and ‘lifting’ second and third beat, or, a strong first beat and an upbeat of the next measure. Eighth notes are also played with *notes inégales*, a characteristic to the French minuets.<sup>10</sup> Minuet I in Suite No. 2 is written in D minor and features the heavier phrasing of strong first and third beat of each measure could be considered. In contrast, Minuet II is in D major. To maintain an uplifting, lightness of Minuet II, one could consider the strong first beat and ‘lifting’ second and third beat. It is typical for Bach’s minuets to contrast in style and key, but with the repeats in both strains, the performer can consider *notes inégales* on the repeats to enhance the French style of the minuets.<sup>11</sup>

Courantes, which literally translates to ‘running’ is a French dance which Little described as “serious, solemn, noble and grand, hopeful, majestic and earnest.”<sup>12</sup> Typically, French courantes are written in 3/2 time. These characteristics shows the French dance style of Suite No. 5. Conversely, the other 5 courantes are Italian courantes, or known as correntes; they have a

10. Little and Jenne, 71.

11. Ibid., 77.

12. Ibid., 115.



faster tempo than the French courantes. Most correntes, also translates to ‘running,’ were written with a consistent flow of eighth or sixteenth notes with irregular phrasing marked by the harmonic development. Manuscripts, facsimiles and editions of Bach Cello Suites have them labelled as Courantes creating a discrepancy between both French and Italian styles. Suite No. 2 has an Italian Corrente, and it should be considered when determining tempo. This Corrente has both strains beginning with a strong upbeat and they have irregular phrase lengths imitatively. Both begin with a one-bar phrase, expanding into a four-bar, followed by a seven-bar phrase and ending with a four-bar phrase.

Tracing its origins to Germany, the allemandes were popularized by the French courts. And hence, the title ‘allemande’ which is a literal translation in French for German. Commonly written in duple meter, the allemande is a vibrant dance where coupled dancers interlace arms and dance back and forth. Being influenced by the French courts, the allemande would probably have taken on French dance music influences – stepwise melodic movement in a narrow pitch range. Focusing on Suite No. 2, the Allemande is written with strong upbeats in all the phrases throughout the movement and the phrasing tends to flow toward the third beat of the measure, anchoring on the dotted eighth note before springing off into the sixteenth notes thereafter. The melodic line is almost constantly moving in a stepwise motion with only the last measure of the Allemande with a huge two octave leap for the Ds and ending with a broken D minor chord.

Sarabandes trace their roots to Spanish folk dances accompanied by singing and instruments, mainly castanets and guitar. The dances were passionate and fiery, the music was mainly chordal. As it made its way through Europe, the French “tamed” the sarabandes, making them appear “calm, serious and sometimes tender, but ordered, balanced and sustained,”<sup>13</sup> in the French courts. Sarabandes are often noble, gallant and assertive, but evoking

melancholy. At certain moments, the dance suspends for an instant before returning to the flow, gripping the attention of the listener, allowing some time and space for what we know today as *tempo rubato*. Another characteristic of sarabandes is the way the phrases build to a point of emphasis. Each phrase lasts for 12 beats and tension is built up to a stress point on the 10th beat before fading away towards the 12th beat, and the cycle repeats again.<sup>14</sup> Second beats are emphasized in sarabandes and in Suite No. 2, Bach uses *agréments* and dissonance to highlight the importance of the second beat.

The dances in Suite No. 2 are written in binary form. Allemande, Courante and Sarabande begins with tonic, D minor, shifting into the dominant and it always returns to D minor at the end of the dance movement. Menuets I and II are each individually in binary form. When played in *da capo*, the pair of Menuets are in ternary form. Gigue, similarly, begins with D minor, however, this time in the B section, it moves into the relative F major before making its way back to D minor as a closing statement of the suite.

Ornamentations magnify the stylistic approach to Bach's music. Jerome Carrington explained that musicians in Bach's time "understood the style and execution of ornaments. They understood how trills should be played and where additional trills not recorded by the composer might be appropriate."<sup>15</sup> Musicians today approach ornamentations through the study of manuscripts, score editions, scholarly resources and recordings. The first cellist to record the Bach Cello Suites was Pablo Casals.

13. Little and Jenne, 92.

14. Little and Jenne, 96.

15. Jerome Carrington, *Trills in the Bach Cello Suites* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2009), 23.

He found the music in a Barcelona bookstore in 1890 and recorded between 1936 to 1939.<sup>16</sup> Casals's biographies describe his passion for the Bach Cello Suites, and he begins every day by playing some Bach on the piano. His interest had led him to study the conventional Bach trills in his early musical education. His study of ornamentations was based on "rigorous analysis, instinct and intuition."<sup>17</sup> Trills were played with an upper neighbour note before the beat with a few that begin on the main note – decision made through understanding the melodic and harmonic function. Many modern cellists look to Casals for his recordings, especially for he was the first cellist to record any repertoire. His musical decisions were meticulously chosen to best represent the composer's intention. Casals's performance practices were shared through recordings and his students, including Cassadó.

Bach's Cello Suites allowed the cello to emerge from the basso continuo section and portraying the dance styles in the spotlight. Throughout his time in Cöthen, where Prince Leopold and the courts were investing in the arts; Bach was interacting with talented musicians and cellists that were technically capable of performing the Unaccompanied Cello Suites. Although the gamba sonatas were written later in Bach's life between late 1730s to early 1740s in Leipzig, he was surely influenced by Prince Leopold, as the Prince played the viola da gamba. The gamba sonatas have also become important repertoire for cellists today. Since Bach, many other composers have composed for the unaccompanied cello – including Cassadó, who wrote for solo cello after studying the Bach Suites with his mentor, Pablo Casals.

16. Pablo Casals, "Pablo Casals Cellist Biography." <http://pablocaslas.com>.

17. Carrington, 19.

## CHAPTER 3

### CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BACH AND CASSADÓ

Gaspar Cassadó (1897 – 1966) and his teacher, Pablo Casals (1876 – 1973), are known to this day as the two most prominent cellists in the “Catalan Cello School.”<sup>18</sup> Both cellists share a cultural heritage that played a significant role in their careers. Though Catalonia had influence on their arts from Spain, their development was considered independent from the other Spanish regions. *Modernisme*, the Catalan Modernism, introduced the development and expression in architecture, literature and arts. It has a closer connection to Paris and *avant-gardism*.<sup>19</sup> It has a distinct difference to *Modernismo*, a literary movement in Spain and Latin America focusing on the impact of arts on culture. Arturo Torres-Rioseco mentioned, “We must make art the basic element in our culture; the appreciation of beauty is a promise that we will arrive at the understanding of justice.”<sup>20</sup> *Modernismo* was a revival of Romanticism and encouraged the growth of literary arts, development in music. Both movements happened in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Casals left for Paris in 1899 as cello performance and education were not thriving in Catalonia. Young Cassadó met Casals around 1907, where Paris was a flourishing hub of musical influences from Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky and even composers from Spain such as Isaac Albéniz and Manuel De Falla. Young Cassadó would have absorbed the aesthetics of French impressionism, Russian music, ballets, neo-classicism, and Spanish nationalistic music. On top of his extensive performing and recording career, Casals had a small cello studio, developed his own idiomatic cello techniques.

18. Kaufman, 25.

19. Kaufman, 26.

20. Arturo Torres-Rioseco, *Aspects of Spanish-American Literature*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1963), 35.

Bow techniques, left hand agility, extensive vibrato and use of portamentos formed a huge part of Cassadó's lessons, leading to his ability to compose virtuosic cello repertoire.

Cassadó's early exposure to composing started with his father and the pursuit of composition transitioned to transcribing music when Cassadó decided to focus on performing and recording. He transcribed about 40 pieces for cello, from various composers such as Bach, Vivaldi, Boccherini, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Debussy. He was probably one of the few composers to compose for solo cello since the Bach Suites two hundred years earlier.

Bach Suites were staples in Cassadó lessons with Casals. The suites were thoroughly studied by Casals and he developed his modern traditional method of performing the Bach Cello Suites. Cassadó recorded the Bach Suites in 1957.<sup>21</sup> His technical development enhanced his ability to compose challenging and demanding show pieces for the cello. Cassadó was also very specific with his markings for articulations, bowings and virtuosic passages.

Composed in 1926, the Suite for Solo Cello was affectionately dedicated to Francesco von Mendelssohn, a German cellist and art collector whose family momentarily lived with Cassadó around 1917. The first movement, *Preludio – Fantasia*, represents the central region of Spain, Castilla-La Mancha and it is best known for the setting of the novel, *Don Quixote*. The second movement, *Sardana (Danza)*, represents Catalonia and the final movement, *Intermezzo e Danza Finale* represents the southern region of Andalusia. Cassadó referenced Bach Cello Suites here by beginning his Solo Suite with a Prelude, followed by dance movements. The *Preludio* expresses the Spanish musical style on top of the concept of dance in Bach Cello Suites.

21. Gaspar Cassadó, cellist, "Bach, J.S.: Cello Suites Nos. 1-6, BWV 1007-1012," recorded 1957. [https://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item\\_code=CDX2-5522](https://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=CDX2-5522).

A sense of *zarabanda*, or sarabande could be heard with the music leading and phrasing toward the second beats of the 3/4 measure. A student of Cassadó, Marçal Cervera recounts that the interpretation of the *Preludio* “concerns the two versions of the first theme, one *forte* and one *dolce*, seen as representing two literary figures from old Castille: Don Quijote and his beloved Dulcinea.”<sup>22</sup> The valiant Don Quixote (measures 1 to 10), with dramatic dynamic surges, Spanish chords and gestures contrasting with Dulcinea’s mystical and impressionist colours (measure 11).



Fig. 2: Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello, *Preludio – Fantasia*, mm. 1-5<sup>23</sup>

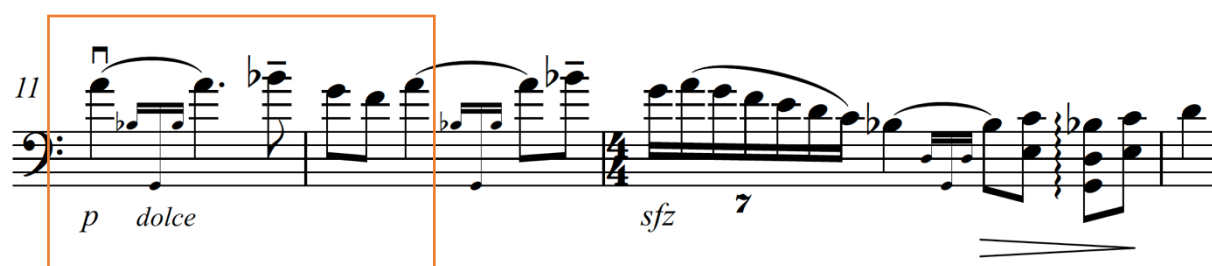


Fig. 3: Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello, *Preludio – Fantasia*, mm. 11-13<sup>24</sup>

22. Kaufman, 190.

23. *Source*: Universal Edition of Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello.

24. *Ibid.*

The *dolce* theme that represents Dulcinea, seem to quote the flute solo of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*.<sup>25</sup>



Fig. 4: Ravel *Daphnis et Chloé*, Flute Excerpt, mm. 178-183.<sup>26</sup>

Ravel composed this ballet between 1909 to 1912, coinciding with Cassadó's time in Paris. Cervera believes that Cassadó studied composition with De Falla and Ravel, with only hints from his close reference to *Daphnis et Chloé* in the first movement.<sup>27</sup>

*Sardana*, a dance that is unique to the Catalonians, expresses jest through people dancing in a circle while holding hands and jumps happen when the music shifts. *Sardanas* were accompanied with a music ensemble consisting of wind instruments and double basses called *cobla*. The introduction of the *Sardana* was written with high natural harmonics and its role is to imitate the *flaviol*, a Catalan woodwind instrument, and it calls the dancers or participants of the *Sardana* to the square. *Tenora* is also another instrument often used in *coblas*. It is a double-reed instrument that belongs to the family of shawms.

25. Kaufman, 21.

26. *Source*: The Carnegie Hall 2014 Flute Excerpts.

27. Kaufman, 6.

Following section after the call of the *flaviol*, the 2/4 section breaks into a rustic folk dance with specific terraced dynamic markings grouped in two measures, seemingly to represent the inward and outward movement of the dance circle. The *Sardana* moves in the key of D major and moves into a transitional section of *poco meno (marc. il canto)* where the key shifts into a D Dorian mode. The cello plays the *tenora* sounding melodic line and accompanies with rhythmic pedal points, constantly playing D for eight measures before the introduction the E-flat into the ninth measure of what it seems like an ambiguity of key. The change in colour and dynamic to *pianissimo* maintains common-tone chords with the tonal centre of the D Dorian. The little jaunt returns back to Tempo I, *allegro giusto* in D major.

*Intermezzo e Danza Finale* is a *jota* which is a genre of dance and music from Spain, popular in places including Andalusia where the *Intermezzo* is set to. It emits the passion and spirit of dance through the Spanish-guitar flamboyance and Phrygian mode, commonly used in flamenco and folk music. The *Intermezzo* in this movement is represented by the opening *Lento ma non troppo* section, separating the flamboyant rhythmic dance energy between the previous *Sardana* movement from the energetic *Danza Finale*. The rhythmic gestures imitate exuberant castanets, and the descending four-note pattern represents a common gesture of Spanish music, heard in the pizzicato in the opening *Lento ma non troppo* and the arco *Allegro marcato* sections of this movement.





Fig. 5: Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello, *Intermezzo e Danza Finale*, mm. 5-6.<sup>28</sup>



Fig. 6: Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello, *Intermezzo e Danza Finale*, mm. 38-41.<sup>29</sup>

The entire movement consists of three thematic ideas that alternate with each other. First theme, *Lento ma non troppo* begins with an F-sharp Phrygian in recitativo style showcasing a flamboyant Spanish gesture. Dramatic flamboyant gesture is also demonstrated with vast dynamic changes and the octave shifts.



Fig. 7: Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello, *Intermezzo e Danza Finale*, mm. 1-4.<sup>30</sup>

28. *Source*: Universal Edition of Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

Second theme, *Allegretto tranquillo*, is a steadily sounding dance written in 5/4 time. *Allegro marcato* marks the third theme with the castanet sounding rhythms, driven in a gigue-like dance style with the triple meter and one, two or four bar phrasing, seemingly similar in temperament to the Gigue in Bach's Suite No. 2.

Although Cassadó did not directly quote from Bach's Solo Cello Suites, the extensive study he did with Casals has propelled his composition of the Suite for Solo Cello. Both suites are connected through their idea of dance with an introduction of a D minor prelude followed by a series of dance movements. Both suites express a Sarabande like gesture with the tension emphasized on the second beat.

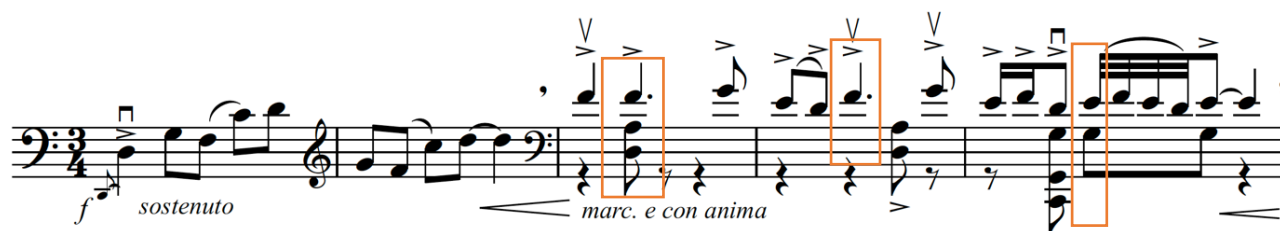


Fig. 8: Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello, *Preludio – Fantasia*, mm. 3-5<sup>31</sup>



Fig. 9: Bach Cello Suite No. 2, Prelude, mm. 1-4<sup>32</sup>

31. *Source*: Universal Edition of Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello.

32. *Source*: Bärenreiter Edition of Bach Suites, BWV 1008.



Fig. 10 – Bach Cello Suite No. 2, Sarabande mm. 1-2

As outlined in the figures above, the shadow of the sarabande of Suite No. 2 can be seen in the prelude of the suite. Being heavily influenced by the Bach Suites, the *preludio* of Cassadó's Suite for Solo Cello also outlines the shadow of Bach's prelude, expressing the sarabande-like quality. His writing for solo cello looked back at Bach Cello Suites while advancing in his compositional technique, incorporating modern influences of his time and connecting to the Spanish heritage.

Preparing and performing the Bach Suite No. 2 and Cassadó Suite for Solo Cello has brought attention to the parallels that both D minor solo suites possess. Researching on the various dance styles of Bach's suites helped develop a stylistic performance of Suite No. 2. With that understanding and the research of Cassadó's background and culture, it shaped the presentation of the Cassadó Suite by highlighting the gestures that he had intended for the Suite for Solo Cello, while incorporating some ideas from the root of his practice, the Bach Cello Suites.

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## APPENDIX

### Program Notes to Graduation Recital

#### Suite No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1008 (1717-1723) Johann Sebastian Bach

Bach composed his six Cello Suites while he lived in Cöthen, influenced by an amplification of social and court dances during the reign of Louis XIV in France. However, the intent of the suites was not to accompany dance. He elevated the cello from supporting roles like continuo or obbligato, bringing it to the foreground through a series of dances styles - allemande, courante, sarabande, minuets (Suites 1 and 2), bourrées (Suites 3 and 4) or gavottes (Suites 5 and 6) and gigue.

Though not a dance, the Prelude is a welcoming introduction to the key and ideas of the suite. This Prelude begins in D minor with a broken triad. Rhythmic gestures that emphasize the second beat, evoking a sense of Sarabande-like melancholy. The Allemande, a dance style from Germany, is a stately, serious dance with coupled dancers interlacing arms, dancing back and forth. The Courante has a consistent flow of eighth and sixteenth notes, though frequent leaps in range mimic jumping dance motions. The Sarabande traces its roots to Spanish folk music characterized by passionate and fiery dances frequently accompanied by singing and instruments, such as castanets and guitar. The music was mainly chordal. As it made its way through Europe, the French “tamed” the sarabande, making it appear calm, serious and sometimes tender. The most popular dance type to prevail as a standard movement in Classical sonatas and symphonies was the Minuet. They were popular among multiple social classes, from folk to the aristocrats for its lively and spirited character. The double minuets typically contrast in key and character. The Gigue is a spritely rhythmic English dance important especially to the French courts.

**Adagio con variazioni (1921)**  
**Ottorino Respighi**

Respighi is probably most remembered for his tone poems, *The Fountains of Rome* (1916), *Pines of Rome* (1924) and *Roman Festivals* (1928), in which the composer represents the joyful revival of symphonic works in Italy. Before Respighi, Italian composers from previous musical eras such as Monteverdi, Corelli, Vivaldi, Clementi, Boccherini, Albinoni and Marcello composed instrumental works until the focus shifted to opera in the early nineteenth century.

Around the time when Respighi was born in Bologna, Verdi and Puccini dominated Italian music with operas. By the time Respighi was composing, around the age of 13, he turned to the European teachings of Strauss and Debussy. Respighi studied violin, viola and composition, striking a balance between the older Italian styles and modernism. After several years performing in Russia (1900-1913), Respighi studied composition briefly with Rimsky-Korsakov before moving to Rome, primarily composing symphony, opera, ballet and chamber works.

In 1902, Respighi composed his Cello Concerto in E minor, however, it was never published. Instead, he adapted the *adagio* movement as a standalone composition: *Adagio con variazioni*. Biographer of Respighi, Pierluigi Alverà believes that Respighi's "musical expression is formed by rhythm." In this work, Respighi expands the theme with variations in rhythm, from the dotted quarter and eighth note theme to rhythmic diminution of eighth and sixteenth notes heard in the first variation. Based on the theme's rhythmic motive, the second variation expands the cello's sonority through grandiose chordal writing. The harmony progresses from G major to minor for the third variation with virtuosic string crossings and rhythmic changes in the cello part while the orchestra plays the same theme. Fourth variation moves from G to B minor and

again, the harmony and rhythm shifts in this *quasi recitativo*, cadenza-like section before returning to B major in the fifth and sixth variations. The main theme returns in the orchestra before its final statement by the cello two octaves higher in its soprano range.

Knowing that he looked towards Strauss and Debussy, Respighi may have been inspired by Strauss's *Don Quixote* (1897), which was also a work in variation form scored for solo cello and orchestra. *Adagio con variazioni* was definitely one of the pivotal compositions for Respighi in his search for the Italian symphonic sonority.

**Sonata for Cello and Piano, L. 135 (1915)**  
**Claude Debussy**

Debussy had intended to write six sonatas in his stay by a seaside town, Pourville, but in addition to cancer, World War I (1914 – 1918) had left Debussy in profound emotional distress, and he left behind only three sonatas: Sonata for Cello and Piano in 1915 and in the same year, Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp. In 1917, he wrote Sonata for Violin and Piano.

Sonata for Cello and Piano is presented with symmetrical phrases which is one of the traits of classical music. However, in a departure from the regular fast-slow-fast three movement sonata, this sonata is written in three character movements with expressive titles and fluctuations in tempo, articulations and tone colour throughout the sonata. It is also one of shortest cello sonatas. The second and third movements are connected attacca, which was not common for cello sonatas. Biographies suggest that Debussy had the idea of naming this sonata “Pierrot Angry at the Moon.” Cellist Louis Rosoor, claimed to receive a note from Debussy, mentioning, “Pierrot wakes up with a start and shakes off his stupor. He rushes off to sing a serenade to his beloved [the moon] who, despite his supplications, remains unmoved. To comfort himself in his failure he sings a song of liberty.” Supremacy and nationalism were dominating in various

European countries and there was pressure for artists to express artistic nationalism. Modes and Eastern scales provided new tone colors and variety to the tonal systems that dominated the common practice era. New harmonies and rhythms emerged in the 1900s. Modes, Chromaticism, Javanese Gamelan, poetry became part of the building blocks to Debussy's musical language.

*Prologue* begins with play in modality between Aeolian and Dorian. Modal back and forth sets the motifs and thematic ideas for this movement. Shortly after, Debussy shifts it into E-flat minor and E-flat Dorian. There are occasions of parallel harmonies creating polytonal clash between piano and cello. The *Prologue's* final gesture resolves the movement's modal interplay with a pianissimo Picardy third.

*Sérénade* is Debussy's quirky way of playing with tonality once again. The expression marking *fantasque et léger*, "whimsical and light," is demonstrated through the extensive pizzicato, jazz- and guitar-like melodies and chords, harmonics, frenzied tempo and dynamic changes. Again, conflicting simultaneous wrestle between tonality is present in this movement.

The last movement has expression markings *Animé, léger et nerveux*, "lively, light and nervous." This movement's nervousness is driven from the beginning with the ostinato in the piano, and the consecutive B and C-sharp that can be heard, which ties back to the ambiguity of the key or mode from the first movement. Debussy includes the pentatonic scale as thematic material, guitar-like strumming, extended techniques such as playing on the bridge and the fingerboard throughout. The keys of the third movement reflects a symmetrical arch form (ABCBA). It begins with D minor and leads into F-sharp minor, following with a middle section *lento, molto rubato con morbidezza* "slow, take time with sensuality," in B-flat minor, before returning to the F-sharp minor and ending the entire sonata with D minor.



**Suite for Solo Cello (1926)**  
**Gaspar Cassadó**

Recognized as one of the most prominent cellists of the 20th century, Catalan cellist Cassadó was a performer, composer and transcriber. He had a very experimental nature and was the first cellist to use metal strings on his cello in a concert to expand the sonority of the cello. In 1907, his family moved from Catalonia to Paris, where Cassadó experienced a flourishing hub of musical influence from Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, Albéniz and De Falla. Cassadó studied with renowned cellist, Pablo Casals, who was also the first cellist to record the Bach Cello Suites. An extensive part of Cassadó's lessons included the study of Bach's Cello Suites, inspiring Cassadó to write his own Suite for Solo Cello.

Cassadó presents the suite similar to Bach – a prelude, followed by two dance movements. The first movement represents the central region of Spain, Castilla-La Mancha, best known for the setting of the novel, *Don Quixote*. Cassadó's student recounted that the prelude consists of two literary figures, Don Quixote and his beloved Dulcinea. The first theme that represents Don Quixote consists of dramatic dynamic surges and presents sarabande characteristics where the beat is emphasized on the second beat of the measure. The second theme that represents Dulcinea has mystical and impressionist colours which seem to reference the flute solo of Ravel's *Daphis et Chloé*.

*Sardana (Danza)*, represents Catalonia with a dance unique to the region, expressing its jest through people dancing in a circle while holding hands and jumping. *Sardanas* were accompanied with a music ensemble consisting of wind instruments and double basses called *cobla*. The introduction of this *Sardana* is written with high natural harmonics in order to imitate the *flaviol*, a Catalan woodwind instrument, and it calls the dancers or participants of the

*Sardana* to the square. After the introduction, the music breaks into a rustic folk dance in D major with a middle section with rhythmic pedal tones of D Dorian mode.

*Intermezzo e Danza Finale* is a *jota*, a genre of dance and music from Spain, popular in places including Andalusia where the *Intermezzo* is representing. It emits the passion and spirit of dance through the Spanish-guitar flamboyance and Phrygian mode, commonly used in flamenco and folk music. The rhythmic gestures imitate the exuberant castanets and the descending four-note pattern is also a gesture of Spanish music.

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