

J.S. BACH

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CLASSICAL GUITAR



*Both Standard Notation
and Tablature Included*

*Arranged, Transcribed and
Fingered by Brian Hayes*

J.S. BACH

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CLASSICAL GUITAR

Edited and Arranged by Brian Hayes

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Contents

iv A Personal Note

v Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

vi About the Transcriptions

Standard Notation

1 Prelude from Cello Suite No.1 (BWV 1007)

11 Bourrée in E minor (BWV 996)

16 Bourrée in E minor Swing

Inspired by the interpretation of Jethro Tull

22 Allemande from Lute Suite in E minor (BWV 996)

31 Prelude in C Major (BWV 846)

Arranged for Guitar Duet

46 Prelude in D minor (BWV 999)

55 Presto from Sonata No. 1 in G Minor (BWV 1001)

Notation with Tablature

5 Prelude from Cello Suite No.1 (BWV 1007)

13 Bourrée in E minor (BWV 996)

18 Bourrée in E minor Swing

Inspired by the interpretation of Jethro Tull

26 Allemande from Lute Suite in E minor (BWV 996)

36 Prelude in C Major (BWV 846)

Arranged for Guitar Duet

50 Prelude in D minor (BWV 999)

61 Presto from Sonata No. 1 in G Minor (BWV 1001)

A PERSONAL NOTE

Roughly thirty-two years ago, while delivering pizzas as a college student, I happened to run into a former roommate on a quiet residential street. He handed me two pieces of sheet music and said, “Hey man, check this out, this is classical guitar.” Those two pieces were Bach’s *Bourrée in E Minor* and Tárrega’s *Adelita*. They became my first exposure to classical guitar and ultimately helped set me on a path that would lead to a lifetime of performing, teaching, arranging, and publishing music. This collection is dedicated to the memory of the people who unknowingly opened that door for me.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685 –1750)

“Nicht Bach, sondern Meer sollte er heißen.”
(“*Not brook, but ocean should he be called.*”)

— Ludwig van Beethoven

Johann Sebastian Bach is widely regarded as one of the greatest composers in the history of Western music. During his lifetime, he was renowned as an organist, teacher, and musical director, but his compositions would eventually secure his place among the most influential figures in music history. His works for keyboard, orchestra, chamber ensembles, and voice continue to inspire performers, composers, and educators nearly three centuries after his death.

Bach was the youngest child of the city musician Johann Ambrosius Bach. After being orphaned at the age of ten, he lived for five years with his eldest brother, who continued his musical education. In 1723, Bach accepted the position of Thomaskantor in Leipzig, where he served as director of church music and instructor at the St. Thomas School. His duties included training students, directing ensembles, and providing music for several churches, responsibilities he maintained until his death in 1750.



In the final months of his life, Bach underwent eye surgery performed by the British surgeon John Taylor, whose methods were later widely criticized. Bach died in Leipzig on July 28, 1750, at the age of sixty-five. Four of his twenty children—Wilhelm Friedemann, Carl Philipp Emanuel, Johann Christoph Friedrich, and Johann Christian—went on to become notable composers in their own right.

ABOUT THE TRANSCRIPTIONS

Prelude from Cello Suite No. 1. One of Bach's most recognizable works, the *Prelude from Cello Suite No. 1* has long been a favorite among guitarists. The fingerings presented in this edition were chosen based on the playing of leading concert artists such as Ana Vidović and John Williams.

Bourrée in E Minor. Among Bach's most frequently performed works on the guitar, *Bourrée in E Minor* has long been a staple of the classical guitar repertoire. Its familiarity has occasionally led some musicians to dismiss it as merely a beginner's piece. However, a convincing performance at tempo, complete with clean articulation, tasteful ornamentation, and careful attention to phrasing, presents challenges that continue to engage players at all levels. The enduring popularity of the piece extends well beyond the classical guitar world, influencing artists as diverse as Jethro Tull and Paul McCartney, who has cited the Bourrée as an influence on *Blackbird*. The fingerings presented in this edition are my own and were chosen only after careful comparison with the interpretations of several leading performers.

Bourrée in E minor Swing. This swing-inspired adaptation of *Bourrée in E Minor* was inspired by the interpretation popularized by Jethro Tull. After hearing the piece performed in this style, I quickly realized that the same approach could be successfully adapted to solo classical guitar and subsequently added it to my own repertoire. In performance, I often present the original *Bourrée in E Minor* immediately followed by this arrangement, using the transition as a musical bridge between the Baroque repertoire and more contemporary selections. In this way, the arrangement serves as a natural stepping stone from Bach to modern fingerstyle works.

Allemande from Lute Suite in E minor. I was first introduced to *Allemande* after hearing a student perform the piece. Struck by its lyrical beauty and expressive character, I was inspired to add it to my own repertoire. The fingerings presented in this edition were developed through careful study of John Williams' recorded interpretation, with particular attention given to preserving the smooth voice leading and musical flow that make this work so compelling.

Prelude in C Major. This guitar duet arrangement of *Prelude in C Major* was inspired by a performance by the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet. Hearing the four guitarists divide the arpeggiated texture among themselves while maintaining the illusion of a single instrument revealed a new dimension of the piece. It soon became apparent that a similar effect could be achieved with only two guitars. Unlike many solo guitar arrangements, this version preserves the ringing dissonances created by the overlapping voices—particularly the minor and major second intervals—which, to my ear, contribute significantly to the expressive beauty of the work. To further enhance the musical dialogue, the two guitarists periodically exchange roles throughout the arrangement, with the frequency of these exchanges increasing as the piece approaches its conclusion.

Presto. The *Presto* from Sonata No. 1 in G Minor is one of Bach's most virtuosic works to find its way into the guitar repertoire. My introduction to the piece came many years ago through an electric guitar arrangement of the A section published in a guitar magazine, which my brother frequently performed. It was not until years later, after hearing Ana Vidović's complete performance, that I discovered the remainder of the work and decided to add it to my own repertoire. The fingerings presented in this edition were developed through close study and comparison of performances by several leading concert artists, with Ana Vidović's interpretation serving as a primary reference.

Prelude in C Major (BWV 846)

Arranged for Guitar Duet

Inspired by the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet arrangement

Sample Page - Standard Notation

Arranged for Guitar Duet by Brian Hayes

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

⑥ = C

♩ = 78

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

C *p* ③

Dm/C

G7/B

C

Am/C

D/C

Prelude in C Major (BWV 846)

Arranged for Guitar Duet

Inspired by the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet arrangement

Same Passage - Tablature Version Also Included

Arranged for Guitar Duet by Brian Hayes

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

⑥ = C

♩ = 78

C *p* ③

Dm/C

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

10⁹ 10⁹ 10⁷ 10⁷

12¹³ 12¹³ 12¹³ 12¹³ 14¹⁵ 14¹⁵ 14¹⁵ 14¹⁵

Presto

From Sonata #1 in G minor (BWV 1001)

Sample Page

Transcribed and fingered by Brian Hayes

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

② ③ 1/2 C III

m a m i m i m a m i m i m a m i m i p i m a i m

T 8 6 8 7 8 7 3 3 3 3 5 5 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 3 1 0 0 3 3

A

B

5 1/2 C II ③ 1/2 C III

a m i m i m i p i m a m a m i m i m i p i m a m

p

3 3 1 3 2 0 4 5 4 2 3 2 5 4 3 5 3 2 5 5 5 3 3

0

9 ① ③

a i p i m a m i p i m a m i p i m p m i m a i

6 3 4 5 4 3 5 6 7 8 7 6 3 4 5 7 5 4 3 2 3 5 5

This collection presents seven works by Johann Sebastian Bach for classical guitar, edited, transcribed, arranged, and fingered by Brian Hayes, including a guitar duet version of the famous Prelude in C Major, and the original Bourrée in E Minor alongside a swing-inspired adaptation.

Prelude from Cello Suite No.1 (BWV 1007)

Bourrée in E minor (BWV 996)

Bourrée in E minor Swing
Inspired by the interpretation of Jethro Tull

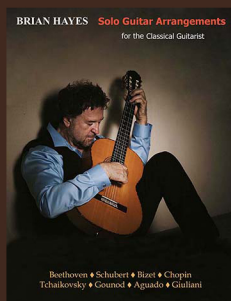
Allemande (BWV 996)

Prelude in C Major (BWV 846)
Arranged for Guitar Duet

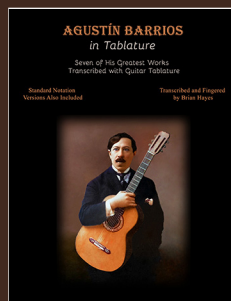
Prelude in D minor (BWV 999)

Presto from Sonata No. 1 in G Minor (BWV 1001)

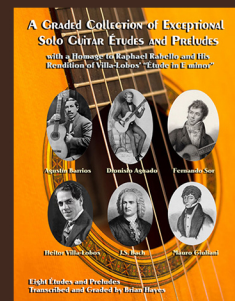
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