

Dancing Cello Suites



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Cello

Performance practice

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to explore the many differing opinions and available options when playing early music, in particular, the music of J.S Bach. This research focuses on Bach's cello suite No.1 in G-major. The numerous possibilities in interpretation of Bach's music were the motivation behind gaining knowledge about historically informed ways of playing. I was also interested in exploring the relationship between dance and music during the baroque period. Therefore, my research specifically examines how I can apply the characters of baroque dance into my performance of Bach cello suite no.1. Although the Bach suites were not intended to accompany dance, features such as tempo, gestures of dance choreography, and characters of the dances have provided me with important insight in my playing. These changes are also due in part to the connections I have made with some notable experts in the field such as Anner Bylsma, Tormod Dalen, Lucia Swarts, as well as studying literature on the topic, and by listening to selected recordings. This research aims to help and develop my own personal style of playing Bach, with a further goal of inspiring and sharing this knowledge with other cellists.

The story of my research

Motivation

There are many different opinions about how to play early music from the baroque period. The amount of different ways of interpretations motivated me to discover and get knowledge about historically informed ways of playing. In particular, I wanted to discover Bach's cello suite no.1 in G-major. The six cello suites by Bach are fundamental in the cello repertoire, and I felt choices in elements for my interpretation were enormous and complex since there is almost no information written in the score, we don't even have any original material from the composer. Interpretations by famous cellists and teachers from my early age have given me many ideas and impressions, but I found it difficult to know what to base my own choices upon. My confusion motivated me to gain a deeper understanding of the music in a historically informed context. Based on this knowledge I wanted to develop my own personal and independent style of Bach playing, with a modern instrument and a modern bow.

Bach's cello suites are written in dance forms, and we know the relationship between dance and music during the baroque period was close. Even though the Bach suites are not intended to accompany dance, there are reasons to believe that interpretations of Bach's cello suites were influenced by the dance because of the strong relation between dance and music. I found this an interesting point of view and the curiosity led me to my research question.

Research Question

«How can I apply the characters of dances into my performance of Bach cello suite no.1?»

To truly come closer to historically informed ways of interpretation, I think an understanding of the characters in the music and the dances are an important factor. The characters of dances include aspects such as the dance forms, choreography and gestures of the baroque dances as well as the tempo, harmony, and articulation has an important role.

Goals

My main goal with my research is to develop my own personal style of Bach playing, with an artistically convincing performance. I am aiming for a result which is based on historical sources, historically informed interpretations and my own personal choices.

A further goal is to inspire the audience, musicians and other cellists with a contribution of an interpretation of Bach's cellos suites which is unique and different from the 20th-century performance tradition.

Discoveries and development of the Sarabande

I chose to do the research on the first Cello suite by J.S Bach as starting point of all the six cello suites by Bach. I chose to focus on three movements from the first suite: The *Sarabande*, *Menuet 1&2*, and the *Courante*. A research of three movements seemed to be realistic within a time limit of two years, and these movements have variety in form, structure and characters, in addition, they are dance-like movements which can be shown to rely upon choreographic models.

I started my research with making a video reference recording of all three movements, to document my starting point. Then I divided my research into three case studies, one for each movement.

My first case study was about the *Sarabande*. My goal was to get insight and knowledge about characters of the movement, choreographic gestures of the dance and historically informed ways of baroque interpretation. I received valuable information after organized feedback from my AR coach, Job ter Haar and my main teacher, Jeroen Den Herder, on my zero point recording. One of the main points from the feedback was that I should have a faster tempo according to the dance because in dance music the correct tempo is essential to find the character of the dance. Then I decided to search through historical sources to find the tempo. In reliable sources about the tempo in early music by J.Quantz¹ from 1752 and K. Miehling², both well-known writers on performance practice, I found indications of the Sarabande which were twice as fast as the tempo I was using. Since my goal was to get an historically informed performance, I applied a faster tempo into my playing which gave the music a totally new and different character. The historical tempo of the dances has been important discoveries for finding the right character of each movement throughout the whole research.

To get a deeper understanding of the characteristics, I searched for historical descriptions of the Sarabande. Job ter Haar generously gave me a complete source from 1739 by J.Mattheson³, which was a famous writer on performance practice. The character of the Sarabande is described as proud and majestic which fits very well together with the historical tempo and later in my research process I discovered how well these descriptions also fit with the choreography of the dance.

To learn and discover the relationship between the dance and Bach's cello suites, made me contact baroque expert and cellist Tormod Dalen, who did an artistic research specifically about choreographic gestures in Bach's cello suites. I interviewed him about tempo, character and style of the Sarabande, which gave me answers that confirmed the information about character and tempo I already had found. I also asked the same questions to baroque cellist Job ter Haar, which also gave support to my findings. When I contacted Tormod Dalen, he gave me access to his research "Zum spielen zum tantzen"⁴. With this source of information, I made some big discoveries throughout the whole research process. A very important factor in his research was the cooperation between dance and playing. He studied and learned the dances himself, and he played a lot together with baroque dancers. Access to his research led me to videos of dance steps typically for the Sarabande with baroque dancer Karin Modigh. To see the movements and gestures from the dance really changed my feeling of the character and especially the feeling of the emphasis on the second beat. I also received access to his own interpretation of the cello suites which has been great inspiration for all three movements in my research. In addition, I also received a lot of help with technical issues according to the characters of the Sarabande from my main teacher Jeroen Den Herder.

Important developments in the first intervention cycle about the Sarabande were applying historical tempo, and keeping the historical character descriptions in mind, with a deeper understanding of the choreography, as well as inspiration from recordings made me secure to apply and develop choices to my performance in elements such as articulation, sound, phrasings and bowings appropriate for the characters. It was very interesting to see how well the information from many different sources and aspects went so well together.

I made a 2nd reference recording of the Sarabande in the end of the process with interventions based on my data collection and personal choices. I was quite surprised by the big differences in my playing from my zero point recording. I never thought I would play a sarabande this fast and that my playing could change this much before I started with my research.

1: Quantz, J.J. (1752). *On Playing the Flute* (E.R. Reilly, Trans.). New York, NY: Schirmer Books.

2: Miehling, Klaus (1993). *Das Tempo in der Musik von Barock und Vorklassik*. Wilhelmshaven: Noetzel, Heinrichshofen-Bucher. 3: Mattheson, Johann (1739), *der vollkommene Capellmeister*, Hamburg 1939 4: Dalen, Tormod (2012). «Zum Spielen und zum Tantzen» A Kinaesthetic Exploration of the Bach Cello Suites through Studies in Baroque Choreography.

Discoveries and development of the The Menuet

As I found a useful and appealing method to do research about the Sarabande, I followed the same procedure for the case study of the *Menuet*.

I searched for options about tempos for this Menuet and I found valuable information through historical sources about the tempo by Quantz¹ and Miehlings², listening to baroque expert's interpretations and results of Ph.d research about tempo in baroque music and dance from Dept. of Musicology at Ghent University³. The information I found confirmed each other and that made me secure in finding the right tempo of the Menuet, which also was much faster. I got an insight of characters in the Menuet from historical character descriptions by J. Mattheson and character descriptions of the choreography by J. Sutton⁴ which was helpful because it gave me knowledge about the character I was looking for in my interpretation.

I found a video of a dance step typically for the Menuet in the research by Tormod Dalen⁵, and observations I made gave me a clear idea of how I could apply it into my own playing, which had an important role in the final outcome in how I phrase and structure the rhythm of the music. Due to a research about the relationship between music and dance from Dept. of Musicology at Ghent University, I got insight on what I can learn from the gestures of the dance, with interesting explanations. This source of information gave ideas of how to combine and apply observations from the choreography into my own playing.

During this period where I was focusing on the Menuet, I had an inspiring meeting with one of the world's living cello legends who's specialized in Bach and Baroque music. His name is Anner Bylsma, and it was an honor to meet him. We talked about aspects of Bach playing such as rhetoric, the sound of a voice and the virtuosity of bowing. Applying his methods and focus on storytelling have been important steps for the final result of all three movements in my research.

Other meetings which gave me ideas I applied in my interpretation was listening to a masterclass with Pieter Wispelwey where I received new tools to discover, analyze and interpretive Bach's cello music. Also in this period, I had lessons with my main teacher Jeroen den Herder, where we worked on cello techniques and sound colors in order to bring out different characters in the music.

I got great inspiration by listening to the recording of Tormod Dalen. It was really inspiring to hear how danceable his interpretation sounded like, so I noticed how he used different elements such as articulation, sound, and phrasing in order to apply a better flow in my own playing.

As I received feedback from baroque experts Job ter Haar and my main teacher Jeroen den Herder on my zero point recording of the Menuet, my aim was to look for longer lines and bigger differences between important and unimportant notes, in order to make it more danceable. When I was applying ideas into my practice, I already knew techniques and common rules of performance practice in baroque music which I had great use of when I made choices for my performance in order to bring out contrasts and characters I wanted to apply.

In my **2nd recording** of the Menuet, there were big differences from my first recording. The contrasts were bigger than expected and during the research process, the new interpretation came gradually so I didn't notice the big differences before I compared the two recordings. The final version has a better flow with the dance with a much more lively character.

1: Quantz, J.J. (1752). *On Playing the Flute* (E.R. Reilly, Trans.). New York, NY: Schirmer Books.
 2: Miehlings, Klaus (1993). *Das Tempo in der Musik von Barock und Vorklassik*. Wilhelmshaven: Noetzel, Heinrichshofen-Bucher. 3: Coorevits, Esther & Moelants, Dirk (2015). *Tempo in baroque music and dance*. Belgium: PEM Dept. of Musicology, Ghent University. 4: Sutton, Julia. 1985. *The Minuet: An Elegant Phoenix*. Dance Chronicle 8, no. 3/4:119–52. 5: Dalen, Tormod (2012). «Zum Spielen und zum Tantzen» A Kinaesthetic Exploration of the Bach Cello Suites through Studies in Baroque Choreography.

Discoveries and development of the Courante

My first goal for the third case study of the *Courante* was to achieve a more lively and wild character and bigger contrasts in dynamics, articulation and characters of harmony in order to make longer lines and to make the music more interesting, based on my own reflections and organized feedback from baroque experts Job ter Haar and Jeroen den Herder on my **zero point reference recording**.

My first step of this case study, like the previous ones, was to search for the historical tempo of the *Courante*. After collecting information from Quantz, Miehl, baroque interpreters Tormod Dalen and Job ter Haar and in addition the research from the university of Ghent about tempo in baroque music and dance, the results didn't confirm each other as much as the previous case studies. So then I searched for a deeper understanding and explanation to find the right tempo of the type of *Courante* in Bach's cello suite no. 1. Valuable information was found in Miehl's book about tempo in baroque music because I found out that the German type of *Courante*, which is the occasion of Bach cello suite no 1, has a faster tempo than a French type of *Courante*, which explains the different options I found of tempo marks. So then I decided to apply a much faster tempo for *Courante* into my practice than I had before, according to the historical tempo, which felt right to get a wild and lively character.

Further in the process of collecting data on the *Courante*, there came up a different aspect of the character of the *Courante*. Information and observations of the character, from different points of view, made me confused on which tempo I actually should choose for the character. Because I played the *Courante* for baroque cellist Lucia Swarts and she explained the meaning of the character in this *Courante*, where a necessity of a fast tempo is not as relevant as keeping the music moving forward. Also, historical descriptions by Mattheson(1739) supported the same idea, which can give options for a slower tempo. In addition to these character description I made observations of the choreography of a dance step from the *Courante* (*Videos from "Zum spielen zum tanzen by Tormod Dalen"*) that were rather elegant and calm movements. My conclusion in the end of this intervention cycle was to choose a tempo in between my old and the historical tempo which combined the two different aspects and views on the character.

During the lesson with Lucia Swarts I received and applied important bow and left-hand techniques, which were useful for all the three movements of my research. We worked specifically on different types of articulations, dynamics and contact points. Discoveries from the lesson helped me to achieve longer lines and bigger contrasts in the music.

Important discoveries, also in this case study, was made by listening to historically informed interpretations, and especially the recording by baroque cellist Tormod Dalen was inspiring. His recording gave me a clear idea of what the interpretation sounds like when it is played together with baroque dancers and I applied some of his ideas such as phrasings and historically lower tuning into my interpretation.

The decisions I made for the **2nd reference recording** closely relates to the feedback I received from experts together with the discoveries I made. In order to bring out different characters, I made my choices in elements such as articulation, harmonies, phrasings, bowings and sound colors. There were clearly big differences in characters between the first and second recording.

Reflection on the result

The biggest changes in my performance are that I have developed bigger contrasts in characters in my performance. My performance of the three movements Sarabande, Courante and Menuet 1&2 is now much more lively, full of changes between important and unimportant notes in the phrases, different types of articulation and dynamics in comparison with my playing from the beginning of my research. I feel I have a story to tell with my new interpretation and a continuous flow of the dance.

The discoveries I made about the characters of the dances and the historically informed tempo has made me secure in my new way of interpretation. I feel I have a better understanding and independent reason for why I am playing the way I do. My experience with a faster historical tempo was that choices of bigger contrasts and longer lines came more naturally, and phrasing became more logical to me, which was more difficult with a slower tempo.

I feel I have developed a style of playing that is personal and my own, and at the same time within the style of historical performance practice. It is very interesting to see how much my performance has changed from the first recordings, and I felt I got surprisingly fast used to the big differences in tempos. Before I started my research I could never imagine that the outcome in my performance would develop as much as it did. I am very satisfied with the result.

Part 2: Presentation and description of the result

My final result is a personal and historically informed interpretation of:

J.S. Bach: Cello Suite no.1 in G-major
Courante
Sarabande
Menuet 1 & 2

The audiovisual result of my research: <https://soundcloud.com/artistic-research>

Please see the final result in the attached USB.

In this chapter I have documented my final result, explaining its content and meaning, in order to make it transmittable to others. You will find a description of the elements I use in my performance, and how and where I use these elements in each movement.

Indication list of the elements I have researched:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • Historical Tempo | = H.T |
| • Character | = C. |
| • Choreography and gestures of the dance | = C.G |
| • Phrasing | = P. |
| • Articulation | = A. |
| • Dynamics | = D. |
| • Sound Quality | = S.Q |
| • Harmony/Tonality | = H/T |
| • Vibrato | = V. |
| • Bowing | = B. |
| • Ornamentation | = O. |
| • Manuscript | = M. |
| • Historical lower tuning | = H.L.T |

Specifically, descriptions of how I use these elements follows for each movement.

SARABANDE – Bach cello suite no.1 in G-minor

How I use these elements in general throughout the movement:

H.T: 70 bpm with tempo flexibility- Applied from sources by Quantz, Miehlings and Tormod Dalen. A personal choice is made a bit slower than 80 bpm, in order to fit with the character I want:

C: **Proud, majestic, serious, friendly and elegant, with dignity and passion.** Applied from character descriptions by Mattheson, Job ter Haar, Tormod Dalen and the choreography of typical dance steps from the Sarabande; “Coupé à deux mouvements” and “Pas grave”.

H.L.T: A half tone lower than 442 hz, aprox: 416 hz,

B: Please see the annotated score of the Sarabande for bowings and slurs. A small diminuendo is played at end of slurs.

Fingerings: I keep first position as much as possible, and I don't avoid open strings, because it gives more resonance and an open sound.

P: The emphasis is always on the second beat. The timing of the emphasis is made forward and up to the second beat, with resistance on the second beat, and then the third beat is timed tiny bit late. Which is the same timing of the choreographic gesture “coupe á de movement” of the Sarabande. The phrasing of important and unimportant notes is made upon the structure and harmony of the piece.

M: Slurs from the manuscript by Anna Magdalena Bach.

S.Q: I have a soft, friendly and open sound with resonance, not too hard. I have relaxed fingers in the bow hand which gives better resonance. In order to get more resonance, I don't leave contact with the string in string crossings, but I make sure the sound has resonance before I play the next string. Which is a method I applied from Anner Bylsma, Job ter Haar and Tormod Dalen.

A: I am starting the beginning of every note with articulation and diminuendo in the end of the bow. Variations on types of articulation are made according to the importance of each character of the note. The control of each type of articulation comes from the fingers, especially the first finger and a relaxed and flexible wrist of the bow hand. Weight on the arm and a calm elbow. I don't want the articulation to be too hard. I never leave contact with the string, except from spiccato.

D: The dynamics follow the register of the notes. The higher register of the notes, makes stronger dynamic. Forte is closer to the bridge, and piano is played closer to the fingerboard.

H/T: Special harmonies, like leading notes to new tonality, dissonances are emphasized to bring out different characters. Minor chords are played sad, with more tension and low thirds, than major chords which have more open, soft and optimistic sound. Dominants are played more strong and important than the Tonic in the end of phrases. This is because there is extra tension in the dominant chord, before the release comes in the tonic.

This Sarabande follows a basic 4-bar structure, often with a cadenza on the third beat of the fourth bar. Bach keeps strictly to 4+4:4+4. On the rhythmic level, the emphasis on the two first beats of the bar is present throughout. The harmonies are simple. Tonic, Dominant, Subdominant, Tonic with some dissonances, leading notes and minor chords.

Annotated score of *Sarabande – J.S Bach Cello Suite no.1 in G-major*

8

SARABANDE

5

8

11

14

Description of each element follows chronological order from beginning to the end of the movement:

C.G “*Coupé à deux mouvements*” and “*pas grave*”. I am following the phrasing in arm and leg gestures where the emphasis is on the second beat: I place the bow in the middle of the bow in between the bridge and the fingerboard before I play. I play the first chord light and with crescendo towards the second beat, like an up-beat. The second chord is emphasized with resistance in the dance, so I break the chord arpeggio and most of the emphasis on the top note - with fast bow speed towards the bridge on the C and back to the fingerboard. Then the last note is timed a tiny bit late. I break the chords with smooth care because of the elegant gestures, not pressed, the weight in my arm is following from the bottom to the top note.

A: I don't leave the string between the first and second beat, to avoid a gap between the first and second chord, because the movement in the choreography is constantly moving forward.

V: A small and intense use of vibrato on the C, because I want the top note to be more beautiful. A vibrato which is within style of baroque playing.

D: Crescendo to the second beat, diminuendo to the end of the bar.

A: The D is played articulated, from the string, with pressure and then release the fingers when the bow starts to move.

D.S: Diminuendo and soft sound.

H/T: Extra tension on the dissonance on second beat.

C: Proud, manly and majestic character: I play these two chords strongly with more intensity with loader sound and rough articulation. I brake the chords with arpeggio.

H/T: Here is a dissonance, which I think needs more tension. I play the low third I bit lower to get the dissonance stronger, soundwise I play closer to the bridge to make it stronger.

H/T: Leading note, which I play loader, in order to bring out the minor tonality with sad character.

S.Q: Bar 11-12 I play softer sound because of the minor tonality.

H/T: The Dominant is played stronger in dynamic than tonic in the end.

S.Q1: Tension in sound, the bow is closer to the bridge.

S.Q2: Soft in sound, the bow is closer to the fingerboard.

H/T: Leading note, which I play stronger.

S.Q: I bring out the resonance in the bass here.

Annotated score of the **Menuet 1&2 – J.S Bach Cello Suite no.1 in G-major**

Indication list in the annotated score:

O = important notes in the phrases. I = division of phrasings and sequences

How I use these elements in general throughout the Menuet I & II:

H.T: 150 bpm – Applied from sources from Quantz and Miehlings.

C: **Menuet 1: Lively, cheerful, lively, elegant Menuet 2:** Same as menuet 1, with more serious character. Which I applied from the character descriptions of Mattheson and the character of the dance step “the minuet step”.

H.L.T: Approx: 416 hz

C.G: The choreography of “The minuet step”, last for two bars of music. I therefore do groupings of two bars, with an accentuation of the beginning every second bar. This is, however, not to say as a rule for the whole movement, but for most of those places where it fits with the structure of the music.

B: Please see the annotated score of the Menuet for bowing and slurs. I use a small amount of the bow stroke, rather close to the frog. A small diminuendo is played in the end of slurs.

Fingerings: I keep the first position as much as possible, and I don’t avoid open strings, because it gives more resonance and an open sound.

S.Q: I have a clear and open sound with resonance. I have relaxed fingers in the bow hand which gives better resonance.

A: I am starting the beginning of every note with articulation. Variations on types of articulation are made according to the importance and character of the note. The control of each type of articulation comes from the fingers, especially the first finger, and from a relaxed wrist, weight in the right arm and a camly elbow. I never leave contact with the string. Types of articulations in the Menuet: staccato, spiccato, legato, détaché.

D: The dynamics follows the register of the notes. The higher register, the stronger dynamic. The dynamics are building up in sequences. (Also applied from feedback from Job ter Haar)

H/T: Special harmonies, like leading notes to new tonality, dissonances are emphasized to bring out different characters. Minor chords are played sad, with more tension and low thirds, than major chords which have more open, soft and optimistic sound.

P: The division of phrases:

Menuet I: Bar 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, 13-16 ½, 16 ½ -20, 21-24

Smaller sequences: 16 ½ -18, 19-20, 21, 22, 23-24

Menuet II: Bar 1-4, 4-8, 9-16, 17-20, 21-24

Smaller sequences: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8,9-10, 11-12, 13, 14, 15-16, 17-18, 19-20

In each bar the first one is most important, the second less and the last note is the weakest.

Description of each element follows chronological order from beginning to the end of the movement:

Menuet 1:

P: First phrase is from 1-4 where bar 2-3 are passing notes. This is the like an introduction and presenting its theme.

A: Rough articulation in the three first notes, to make a lively and optimistic opening. From bar 2-3 I play legato with softer sound closer to the fingerboard.

C: Extrovert and proud character of the chord, played with stronger dynamic.

P: Second phrase is like an answer to the first phrase with a conclusion in bar 8.

A: Clear articulation in each note, especially the first one: To make a lively character and point out the conclusion in the end of the phrase.

P: Here starts the story.

P: A small comma between the first and second phrase.

C.G: The first three notes which are slurred, are like a falling arm gesture, I apply it with falling dynamic.

D: In each following sequence the dynamic rises for each step.

B: I play separate bows on the first three notes because they are representing the motif from the beginning of the menuet.

A: The articulation in the conclusion is a mix between staccato and détaché. It means that they are played separately, but the bow is not lifting the string. The most accentuated notes are on the first and second beat.

MENUET II

Handwritten musical score for Menuet II. The score is written on four staves. It includes various performance markings such as 'P.C.6', 'A.', 'S.Q', 'H/T', 'P', 'mp', 'mf', 'P', 'V', 'S.Q', and 'A.'. The piece ends with the instruction 'Menuet I da Capo'.

H/T: Minor tonality which makes a more serious character than Menuet I.

B: Slower bow than menuet in order to make a more serious character.

D: **Menuet II** is more piano because of the more serious character in minor.

S.Q: Softer sound because of the minor tonality and a more mysterious character.

C.G: The phrasing is according to the choreography of "the menuet step". With two-bar groupings. I accentuate every second bar in the whole menuet, except from bar 13-14, which one sequence in each bar in part of a longer phrase to bar 16.

A.: The jumping notes in bar two are played détaché. They are almost played legato, but I separate every note. The bow stroke is horizontal, close to the fingerboard.

S.Q: Soft sound with air, played close to the fingerboard with détaché articulation.

H/T: I play the F# importantly because it is a leading note and dominant to Tonic.

P: I phrase the following sequences differently. The first one is like a sentence, the second one is like a question and the last four bars is like a wise conclusion.

V.: I play a small vibrato on the D, in order to point out the question mark of the phrase.

S.Q: Same sound quality as in bar 3-4, soft with air and détaché in articulation.

A: A small spiccato is played before the last bar.

Annotated score of the Courante – J.S. Bach Cello Suite no.1 in G-major

COURANTE *Pleasantly*

A.

C.G.

C. A. wild/big sound

A.

tr charmingly

p C.G.

D. cresc...

H/T.

A.

P. f sad minor

tension on dissonance

H/T.

2 1 3 4

27

S.Q.

base notes more important

wild

H/T B.

P. cresc...

nonjouable

39

f C.

f A.

Indication list in the annotated score:

O = important notes in the phrases. I = division of phrasings and sequences

How I use these elements in general throughout the Courante:

H.T: 105 bpm – The historical tempo of this German type of Courante is 120bpm, (*Quantz & Miehling*). My personal choice is a bit slower, in order to fit with the character I want.

C: Courante literally means: “*Running*” which gives a “keep moving forward” feeling. The characters are pleasantly, charmingly, sweet hopefulness, wild & virtuosic and folksy which I applied from the descriptions by *Mattheson*, 1739, Lucia Swarts and Tormod Dalen

H.L.T: In 416 hz

B: Please see the annotated score of the Courante for bows and slurs. I use a small amount of the bow stroke, rather close to the frog in order to make the small notes clear and articulated. A small diminuendo is played in the end of slurs.

Fingerings: I try to keep first position as much as possible, and I don’t avoid open strings, because open strings give a more wild character. Which I applied from several baroque experts, I can mention: Lucia Swarts and Jeroen den Herder.

S.Q: I have a clear and open sound with resonance. I have relaxed fingers in the bow hand which gives better resonance. Different contact points are used to get variation in sound colors. When the sound is open and not pressed, it gives a more charming, happy and elegant character. I make variations in articulation and sound in order to bring out different characters. The choice is made upon feedback from experts.

A: I am starting the beginning of every note with articulation, especially for the courante I am not afraid of rough articulation in order to make the character more wild and extrovert. I never leave contact with the string. I relax the fingers of the right hand after the beginning of the articulation, because this gives more resonance and avoids a pressed sound, especially on the sixteenth notes.

P.: I keep long phrases in order to make the music continue forward with the running feeling. Eight notes are played more important than sixteenth notes. The first of two or three eight notes are played more heavy than the following eight notes. Two and two eight notes = heavy/light

H/T: There are some dissonances and minor tonalities in the Courante, which I play with more tension. Slower bow and contact point closer to the bridge. Please see the annotated score.

D: The dynamics follows the register of the notes. The higher register, the stronger dynamic. Different contact points are used in order to get different dynamics. Closer to the bridge in stronger dynamics, and closer to the fingerboard in softer dynamics.

Description of each element follows chronological order from beginning to the end of the movement:

A: The up-beat and the first beat are played with fast bow and rough articulation in order to make a wild character. The following sixteenths are played softer legato, in order to make the music move forward. This contrast in articulation between eight notes and sixteenths follows throughout the movement.

C.: The accent is heavier on the second beat in this bar, because the loud sound of an open C-string is helping the character to be more wild.

A.: I don’t leave the string when crossing from the C-string to the A-string, and I apply the technique I learned from Lucia Swarts. It gives better control of the articulation in the beginning of slurred sixteenths, and I avoid a gap so the music can continue forward.

C.G: The gestures of the dance of the courante are calm and charming, therefore I play the sixteenths with a charming and elegant character. I don’t want them to be rushed, so I keep a calm and steady rhythm.

A.: This is the cadenza of the first phrase. The intervals between each note are huge, so I play them extra accentuated with rough articulation, especially the second and third beat. I play them with faster bow in order to make a wilder character.

C.G: I made this bar into only two slurs, this choice is made upon the choreographic gesture of the dance. There are two arm gestures in the bar, the first goes up and the second one is a falling gesture. I follow the arm gestures together and with the phrasing of the music, so I applied two slurs in the bar instead of three.

D.: The crescendo is made here because the upper melody is going upwards in register.

H/T: There is a leading note on the trill, which needs extra tension in sound.

A: I use spiccato in articulation here, in order to make a charming character.

P.: The timing between the up beat and first beat has a little resistance, because of the movement from the dance.

H/T.: Because of the minor tonality I play the three first notes with more tension in sound to point out the sad and introvert character.

H/T.: The dissonance on D# are played with more tension, and I play it a bit lower intonation in order to bring out the dissonance.

S.Q.: Close to the fingerboard, horizontal bow stroke.

H/T: The first note of each group of sixteens is representing the tonality, so I play those notes with more importance.

B: Technically I keep the bow as straight as possible. The movement comes from the fingers, not from the arm, which makes better control and I avoid too much movement which will be disturbing during the string crossings.

P.: The important notes are the beginning of each section of sixteenths. They are representing the melody line, the other notes are unimportant.

D.: The dynamical climax of the piece is building up here.

C.: The character in the end of the piece is extrovert, enjoyable and with strong dynamic.

A.: Contact with the string before playing the three last notes to make a rough and scratchy articulation, in order to make a wild character.

Part 3: My reflection on the result and process

Reflection on my artistic result

Before I started with my research, I didn't know what I could expect for the result, my goal was to get a great interpretation with a strong personal voice based on historically informed ways of playing, but I couldn't imagine what the process and result could give me as a musician. The further I came in the process I realised that my performance had changed surprisingly fast to become something completely different from my first recordings, and actually much better than I expected. I feel I have a result which mastered the combination of knowledge about historically informed interpretation and at the same time I have gained my own style of playing Bach, which was my big goal.

As I think my performance has become much more alive, organic, speaking and with stronger characters I am very satisfied with the result. I feel my music has a much more interesting story to tell which is an approach to music I really like. I think the new approach I gained to discover and develop Bach's music, will not only help me in further studies of Bach cello suites, but also to understand and make choices of other repertoire and styles I will perform in my coming professional life.

My research is about how I can apply the characters of dances into my performance, and many people would automatically think it is natural to work together with baroque dancers within a topic like this. I have received different advice whether it would be helpful or not, from the Artistic Research coaches. As I came further in the process it became more clear to me that it allows more freedom in the music without dance, and it allows more tempo flexibility which is helpful to bring out different characters. The tempo needs to be more strictly with dancers, so I would be more limited in my choices if the music should be appropriate together with dancers. My goal was in principal to get an independent and personal performance, which I felt I found without working with dancers. I think the importance of this topic lies in a deeper understanding of the characters of the dances, and not whether the music is supposed to accompany dance or not. Even though, I would not deny the interest of exploring a physical way of playing in collaboration between dance and music, sometime in the future.

The outcome of my artistic research can hopefully be significant for other musicians, especially for cellists. The methods I applied can be useful for other cellists and musicians who wants to do a similar research. Even though the interest is not of a research point of view, I believe my performance is interesting and hopefully inspirational for others, especially since my performance contributes with an interpretation of the Bach suites which is quite unusual for today's tradition. I hope my research can contribute to new reflections and patterns for interpretation of the cello suites. For instance, an interesting reflection would be the use of historical tempi, which are much faster than modern performance tradition. A lot of people think that a fast tempo would ruin the freedom in music, but my experience is totally opposite. I feel that the characters are much more lively and stronger with the new tempo, with clearer phrasings.

Reflection on my research process.

My research question as a base has been the same throughout the research. Several aspects to focus on within characters of the dances has changed sometimes in the process; whether I should focus more on the choreography or other aspects. Altogether I feel my research question has been good, and it has not been too problematic because my main goal has always been very clear, and that helped me to make the right steps and decisions for choosing what to focus on during the process. The division of case studies with different steps worked out really well for me. I felt I used a good structure which gradually gave a deeper insight of the topic as I came further in the process. The case studies are chronologically explained in this report in order to make a good structure, but some steps and discoveries in one case study were made in the process of another case study, because of similarities of sources and a continuing practice of all movements.

In such a big topic as I had for my research, there will always be many more aspects to explore and I will continue exploring this topic for the rest of my life, but I feel I achieved a new knowledge which is in-depth of what can be expected in the limited time for this research. During the baroque period, the rhetoric aspect was important, and I feel my performance is in the depth of an idea of the art of speaking. How to phrase a sentence and how to articulate words was important both in music and in speeches. I think the rhetoric aspect of my performance has become much more clear. The discoveries I made in the process of my research really gives meaning to this way of thinking. The bigger differences and variations in my playing help to bring out different characters in the dance movements.

Many of my changes in my performance happened gradually and unconsciously also. I learned and experienced how strong impact a feeling of the character has to make my interpretation convincing and true for listeners. My cello technique has been influenced during the process, in an efficient way. Especially the flexibility in bow technique and articulation has become more fluent and I feel more free.

Conclusion

Working with the research has totally changed my understanding and my approach to the Bach cello suites, which I will certainly continue with in the future. I feel I have grown as a musician and performer. I am more aware, conscious and critical about many aspects of interpretation, which will help me in the rest of my artistic life.

In conclusion, I would say I am very happy and satisfied about how my performance has become much more artistically convincing with an impression of “danceability”.

Part 4: The intervention cycles

The 1st intervention cycle

In the 1st intervention cycle I did a case study of the Sarabande from J.S. Bach Cello suite no.1 in G – major.

I divided my 1st intervention cycle into 6 steps:

- Zero point reference recording and feedback
- Data collection
- Interventions
- Second reference recording
- Reflection on the result
- Feedback

Zero point reference recording

J. S. Bach: Cello suite no.1 in G major – Sarabande – 14/11-2014 at Codarts – University of The Arts

URL: <http://codartsresearch.proboards.com/thread/40/ingeborg-skomedal>

Please see the zero point recordings in the first intervention cycle folder, in the attached USB.

Feedback

Summarized feedback from baroque cellist and AR coach Job ter Haar, my main cello teacher Jeroen den Herder and my own reflections.

My performance should have a bigger variety in character, tempo and tempo flexibility, variety of articulation, variety of sound production and ornamentation. The characters of the dances are not convincing enough. The goal is to make my performance activate our “dancing instincts”. Even if these pieces are most probably not intended to dance to. The tempo is essential to make the character right, and the tempi should be suitable for the dances. The articulation and tone color could be more varied according to the passion of the moment. Handling of the bow, on/off the string bowing, contact point relative to the frog and relative to the bridge and bow speed, is essential to make variations of articulation. In baroque playing, especially the wrist and fingers are very important for the articulation and I don’t seem to use it enough, especially it can be more active on faster notes. I have a slight tendency to “swell” on longer notes in an uniform way and that disturbs the line and its sticking out in an unnatural way. The sound should resonate to bring out the harmonies. If I tune the cello a half note down I’ll get more variety in sound and more resonance. I tend to isolate the finger of my left hand, which is good for vibrato but less good for resonance. To vary the sound colors I should use the angle of the bow to change contact point between bridge and fingerboard. Technical challenges that could become topical during this process: harmonic thinking in the left hand versus approaching notes individually. To find the most authentic notation is to look at the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach. Jeroen den Herder advised me to use the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach to find different bowings. Here are the bowings more complex and with more variety. To make bigger differences in dynamics I should follow the dynamics in the notation more. When it goes up it is a crescendo, and when a scale goes down the dynamic goes down. When it’s written a cadenza the dominant is always the most important and the last note the most unimportant note. I don’t play many ornaments. Job ter Haar advised me to add them according to the character. Vibrato can be treated as an ornament, so he would recommend using it very deliberately and in context. My trills are not always fast enough and the vibrato is sometimes too wide for baroque music.

Especially with the Sarabande, finding the right character is the key. The general character of the Sarabande is very different from the 20th-century tradition. It can also be wild and passionate. My character in the harmonics could be clearer. When it is minor I could play sad and accentuate the low third more. And when its major I could play more extrovert. I often start too strong when I have a group of four eighth notes towards the second beat. I should play less on the first eighth note and then gradually play more in every note. Compared to the dance tempo this is really very slow. If I would play it in this tempo in the 18th century, there would be only one valid reason: making so many ornaments that the piece would be almost unrecognizable. A written-out example is the allemande of the 6th suite, that should be played much slower than the normal allemande tempo, because of the written out ornamentation. In the last beat of the phrases, I should play softer so the dominant gets more attention.

Data collection

List of strategies I used to collect data and information about the Sarabande:

- Literature
- Lessons
- Interviews
- Recordings
- Video
- Manuscript

Literature – historical sources of tempo of the Sarabande

I used historical informed sources to search for tempo and character descriptions of the Sarabande. I read books such as «Das Tempo in der Barock und Vorklassik», 1993, by Klaus Miehling which is a good and complete source on tempos in baroque music and «On playing the Flute», 1752, by J. Quantz.

J.J Quantz (1697 – 1773) was a German flutist and composer. His book «On playing the flute» is a valuable source of performance practice where the tempo descriptions and systems from 1752 are well documented. The tempo of the Sarabande should be **80 bpm = quarter note** according to Quantz system. This system is about using the human pulse to rate the tempo. This means that the tempo mark is not absolute but gives us an indication of the tempo.

Klaus Miehling (1963 -) is a German author of many books on historical performance practice. According to the tempo descriptions he gives based on historical information about the tempo, the Sarabande can be played in 72-133 bpm. The value of the note is important to find the tempo. The higher value of note the higher tempo. From a 3/4 type of Sarabande which is the case for the Sarabande in Bach's cello suite no. 1, the tempo is 80 per quarter note. Miehling also uses Quantz as a reference.

Historical descriptions of characters in the Sarabande

Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) was a German composer, singer and music theorist. He was a famous writer on performance practice of the German baroque. In the book «Der vollkommene Capellmeister», Hamburg 1739 by Mattheson, I found specific character descriptions of the Sarabande, which gave me interesting insight.:

“This has no other emotion to express but ambition, it permits no running notes because the grandezza abhors such and maintains its seriousness”. He described the characters of the Sarabande as «Proud» and «Majestic» and as a serious dance with passion.

Klaus Miehling gives character descriptions of the Sarabande in his book «Das Tempo in der Musik von Barock und Vorklassik». He describes the Sarabande as a «Slow and serious» dance and «ein Spanischer, gravitetischer langzamer Tantz» - Walther, 1732.

Choreographic gestures from the Sarabande

Please see the video here: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/103350/103356> (*Zum spielen, zum tantzen*” by Tormod Dalen.

The dance step “*coupé à deux mouvements*” and “*pas grave*”, typically for the Sarabande, is transferable to the rhythmical structure of the Sarabande. The baroque dancer Karin Modigh is demonstrating the step, she is regarded as one of the best baroque dancers in Europe. Following are observations of the choreographic gestures described:

- There is an upward and forward movement with accelerando to the second beat which implicates the emphasis on the second beat, where the movement on the second beat has resistance. Every bar of Sarabande except the cadenzas have the same rhythm so the movement of arm and leg gesture is, therefore, transferable to the whole piece.
- It has two vertical bend and rises, and two steps forward. The bend and rise are called “*mouvements*”.
- The leg is going forward on the first beat and is bend in a halfway circle to the side on the second beat, with a straight leg. The gesture of both arms is bending in parallel circles upwards and into the middle on the first beat, with lightness. On the second beat, both arms have wider, leaning to the side and downwards movements, parallel with the leg on the second beat. The bigger movements in arm and leg gestures give an emphasis on the second beat.
- The posture of the body is straight up, where the head on top is balanced with a straight neck. Which gives a majestic, proud, elegant and also serious character.

Following description of a danced Sarabande, is taken from “zum spielen zum tantzen” by Tormod Dalen which originally is taken from a French dictionary published in 1671. The description gives a hint of the character and emotional potential in this dance.

“At first he danced with a totally charming grace, with a serious and circumspect air, with an equal and slow rhythm, and with such a serious and beautiful, free and easy carriage that he had all the majesty of a king, and inspired as much respect as he gave pleasure. Then, standing taller and more assertively, and raising his arms to half height and keeping them partly extended, he performed the most beautiful steps ever invented for the dance. Sometimes he would flow imperceptibly with no apparent movement of his feet and legs, and seemed to glide rather than step. Sometimes, with the most beautiful timing”

Lesson with my main teacher, Jeroen den Herder, 24/3-2015

- Historical lower tuning. He advised me to tune the cello lower, in order to look for different options of tension/release in the sound. The resonance in the instrument will react differently with a lower tuning, which is closer to the tuning systems from the baroque period.
- Dynamics and sound colors. We worked on getting bigger nuances in dynamics, colors and sound. He gave me the idea to make tension and stronger sound on the first beat in bar 13, and release the sound in the second beat, according to the characters of harmony. The difference in resonance will come out better with a lower tuning. We worked on making the second beat in bar 1 with softer sound, not too hard. If I think the chord as an arpeggio it helps me to avoid forcing and pressing the sound.
- Manuscript. He advised me to look at the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach for options of bowings. He gave me the idea of making one bow of the three last 16-notes at the end of each phrase, instead of slur two and two. This is how the bowings looks like and can be analyzed from the manuscript.

Original manuscript direct reprint of the original manuscript of yet an unknown date, by *Anna Magdalena Bach*, Bach's second wife



Recordings

I have listened to selected recordings of the Sarabande by many famous cellists, both modern players and baroque cellists. Among them I can mention: Anner Bylsma, Truls Mørk, Yo-Yo Ma, Pieter Wispelwey, Torleif Thedeen, Job Ter Haar, Tormod Dalen and Heinrich Schiff to compare and get an overview and inspiration of possible ways of interpretation. I made discoveries in differences in tempo, character, articulation, phrasings, bowings and sound, but I applied most ideas from historical interpreters like Tormod Dalen and Job ter Haar into my performance. I found those recordings most useful for my research.

Here are some observations I found inspirational and useful for my interpretation from the recording by Tormod Dalen:

Tempo	Flexibility in tempo, which is moving forward and back according to the structure, harmony and melody lines. The tempo is never completely stable.
Character	I would describe quite serious, noble and majestic. His phrasing brings out many small changes in character.
Dynamics, phrasing and articulation	Clear contrasts in dynamics which follow the register, important / unimportant notes the phrases, articulation and sound quality.
Choreography and gestures	It is interesting to hear his flexibility in playing which has a feeling of movements of gestures. The imagination of gestures & dance beside his playing is not difficult while listening to his interpretation.

Please hear his recordings here: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/103350/103356> (Zum spielen, zum tanzen" by Tormod Dalen.

Interview – with experts

To get more knowledge about the characteristics about the Sarabande, such as tempo and characters of the dance I made some questions to Tormod Dalen. He is currently working in Paris in different early music ensembles and as a teacher at the conservatory of Paris. He did an Artistic research about the relationship between choreographic gestures and Bach's cello suites at the Norwegian Academy of Music. Title: "Zum Spielen und zum Tantzen". I interviewed the same questions to Job ter Haar, a regarded baroque expert and cellist from the Netherlands. Following is a summary of the interview.

1.What type of Sarabande is this in your opinion, and what are the implications for your performance?

T.D: "It really depends on what you mean by 'type of Sarabande'. It is not a Spanish 16th century Zarabanda, nor an early 17th century English Sarabande, but a fairly typical Sarabande after French early 17th century models, neither particularly grave nor tendre. It has a regular 1-2-3 type rhythm with quite some embellishments, and the phrase structure is regular throughout. I therefore approach it as a danced Sarabande making sure the underlying structure becomes clear".

J.t.H: "This is for me a typical example of the German type, which is often in 3 / 4. The implications of this for my performance is that I take the Quantz tempo as a basis. (For the Sarabandes of the 5th and 6th suite I take French tempi, because I think these are of the French type). I think the German Sarabande has a moderate tempo, it is neither a slow or a fast movement".

2.In which tempo would you play the Sarabande in Bach's cello suite no.1? What do you think is the appropriate tempo according to the character of the dance?

J.t.H: "I take Quantz' tempo as a basis but I play this Sarabande a bit slower than those of the 2nd and 3rd suite (which are of the same type), because this Sarabande has some 32nd notes. I usually end up around Q = 76."

T.D: "In keeping with the above observation, the point of departure will be the dance tempo according to historical sources: ca. 68-80. This is not to say, however that the final tempo will be within this range. Rather, it serves as a 'reality check' to figure out the different levels of reading:

- Structure (or form)
- Harmony (and harmonic rhythm)
- Melody (simplest possible)
- Chords with arpeggio, passing notes or embellishments (often mistaken for melody)."

3. How would you describe the character in the Sarabande?

T.D: "G major is often used for pastoral music, and I have always seen a 'folksy' character in this suite, at least in the courante, menuets and gigue. The Sarabande should be rather simple without pathos, with a certain bucolic charm that doesn't exclude a hint of melancholy (or rather nostalgia?)."

J.t.H: "The character of the Sarabande is usually strong, proud and "manly", as is this one, but this one is also relatively is rather friendly and begin because of the tonality and the somewhat frivolous 32nd notes."

4. How many bars of phrasing are there in the choreography of the dance, and are there some essential gestures from the choreography I can transfer and apply to my interpretation? For instance: heavy beats, in phrasing, bowings?

T.D: "The Sarabande follows a basic 4-bar structure, often with a cadenza on the third beat of the fourth bar. The dance may or may not adhere to this structure (there is often an element of counterpoint between music and dance). In the case of this Sarabande, Bach keeps strictly to the scheme with 4+4. On the rhythmic level, the emphasis on the two first beats of the bar is present throughout. It is important to realise that these are not accents per se, but a kind of attraction between the two beats that can best be experienced by practicing the dance step coupé à deux mouvements, with its obligatory arm gestures. The other step that may inform your performance is the pas grave, which will make you realise that one can have important information without an excess of movement."

J.t.H: "I actually don't know a lot about this, so I don't know how many bars the phrases are supposed to be. I did hear that the Sarabande gets more emotional towards the end of the phrases and that I recognize in almost every Bach Sarabande. I have always heard and seen that dancers often "hang in the air" on the 2nd beat. Many people say that the 2nd beat is always heavy, but I think that is not entirely true and sometimes not true at all. It depends on the type of sarabande. The 2nd beat is never really heavy; it can be strong (often the Sarabande has a strong character anyway), but it lifts up more than it presses down. I like to stretch it a bit in time when the harmony is strong. The Sarabande of the 1st suite doesn't have a lot of dissonances on the 2nd beat, so I play it a bit more flowing than for instance the Sarabande of the 3rd suite".

5. What kind of articulation and sound do you think is most suitable for this Sarabande? For instance: type of consonants, and how can the harmonies affect the colors in sound?

T.D: "I'd say no excess of articulation, or rather: none too harsh articulations. Spread the chords well, with the bass note on the beat, use every opportunity to lighten the sound quality without losing contact. Keep the thing moving, the alternation between chords and passing notes makes a variation of texture and density. Of course, these things are better discussed with instrument in hand".

J.t.H: "A royal, big, proud but friendly sound, not hard or harsh. The attacks not sharp or strong, but with enough beginning to awaken the "dancing muscles" in my audience. Since I play this one quite flowing (for a Sarabande) I don't shorten the notes very much. However I do articulate between the first two chords (I retake them). There are no real strong dissonances in this Sarabande so I keep it gentle. In the minor parts it gets a bit sad and sometimes soft".

Categorizing types of Sarabande

There are three different types of Sarabande which are German, French and Italian types. To get an overview of different types of Sarabandes I have listened and compared different types. French and English suites by Bach, Suites by Telemann, Lully, and Couperin. The main discoveries I made were differences in characters. From the research I did, my impression was that the English suites were more serious and melancholic in character than the French suites by Bach which were more elegant in character. Also, I discovered that the second beat is not always the heavy beat. Lully suites were more elegant with dancing character than a more serious version by Telemann.

Connecting answers from Tormod Dalen and Job ter Haar they categorize Bach's cello suite no. 1 as a German suite and a fairly typical Sarabande after French early 17th century models.

Harmony/Structure

This Sarabande follows a basic 4-bar structure, often with a cadence on the third beat of the fourth bar. Bach keeps strictly to 4+4:|4+4. On the rhythmic level, the emphasis on the two first beats of the bar is present throughout. The harmonies are simple. Tonic, Dominant, Subdominant, Tonic with some exceptions and some dissonances, leading notes and minor chords.

(Please look for more details at the annotated score)

Conclusion of data collection

Based on historical sources, historically informed interpretations and choreographic gestures:

Characters: *Majestic, proud, serious, elegant, friendly, noble with dignity and passion*

The tempo: Q = 68-80 bpm

Interventions - Applying data collection

Annotated score of the Sarabande from Cello Suite no.1 by J.S. Bach.

The interventions in my performance were choices based on my data collection, feedback from my zero point recording and my own reflections. I used the data I have collected, read books and articles about performance practice and made discoveries in an Artistic Research about Bach's cello suites and the dances. I interviewed experts, had lessons with my main teacher and I listened to recordings of famous cellist's interpretation. I also studied the choreographic gestures of the Sarabande.

List of choices I made for the new reference recording:

Applying historical tempo and characters

I realised that the descriptions of the characters and historically informed tempo made perfectly sense together. To play in a historically informed faster tempo really gives meaning to the historical character descriptions of the Sarabande. The character becomes much more majestic and proud, which does not work with a slower tempo. Therefore, I applied a faster tempo up to 67 bpm. That means my new tempo is actually over twice as fast as I played it before, which was 32 bpm. I chose a bit slower tempo than 80 bpm because I think it is more suitable for a majestic, proud, passionate and elegant character. If I play it as fast as 80 it feels rushed and not natural to me, for at least not yet. I also find the character serious as it is described by Mattheson, and I think I would lose a lot of this character with a faster tempo. Since my playing is not intended to be danced to, I don't see it necessary to play it strictly in 80 bpm.

Applying characters of the choreographic gestures

“*Coupé à deux mouvements*” and “*pas grave*” – From “Zum spielen zum tantzen” with baroque dancer Karin Modigh

By watching these movements from the dance I understand that the emphasis on the second beat is an upward and forward going movement with a feeling of resistance on the second beat, rather than an accentuation. I apply the dance step in my interpretation by following the movement with crescendo towards the second beat and phrase the dynamic together with the arm and leg gesture in the second beat, with stronger dynamic towards the bridge on the emphasis, and lightness in sound on the end of the emphasis, where the resistance in the movements makes it natural to time the last beat a bit late. I understood the unimportance and lightness of the notes in the first beat of the second bar because it became clear to me that the first beat is like an upbeat to the second beat. The gestures from the dance are elegant and rather slow movements which I transferred by playing the chord on second beat softer and not too hard in articulation. The posture, arm and leg gestures give a clear idea of a majestic and elegant character. This majestic character fits well with the historical descriptions of the character of the Sarabande. It is interesting to see how well the historical tempo and the choreography of the dance fit together. A slower tempo would not fit the choreography.

Characters of harmony

The harmonies and tonality have a lot to say for the character. If it is minor or major, if it is happy or sad. Is it a dissonance that needs more tension? I have experimented with different sounds and articulations according to which harmony it is. For example in this Sarabande, there are some leading-notes and dissonances, which I feel need more tension. When the character is major and gives a majestic character I play it stronger, compared to a minor part which I feel needs a softer sound, to bring out the sad character. After receiving feedback from my main teacher, Jeroen den Herder, I tuned the cello half a note down. With this tuning, I reacted differently on tensions which gave me a new feeling of important and unimportant notes in the phrases. I could clearly feel the differences in the sound when a chord was major or minor and with dissonances or not. The dissonances had more tension and the chords without were more open in sound with resonance and overtones in the bass. Then I decided to play the dissonance stronger to emphasize the tension, and the consonance chords softer in sound.

Articulation and sound

To make the Sarabande more danceable and rhythmical I made the articulation more clear from the beginning of every note. In the first recording, I had a tendency to make a swell in every note. This was because I tried to make the phrasing like with a baroque bow where the phrasing goes towards the middle of the bow. But after listening to recordings of baroque interpretation I heard that the articulation in the beginning of the note is very important. Especially when there are two and two notes in one bow I made a clearer articulation in the beginning of the bow. A way to look at types of articulations is how they relate to letters in the alphabetic. For instance how you pronounce P, K, F, and G can be transferred into articulation. I made bigger variations in articulation between legato and jumping notes in this recording. Jumping notes are more marcato here. This decision is based on basic rules of baroque playing. In general, I kept the sound quite soft because of the majestic and serious character.

Phrasing and dynamics

I make the second beat in every bar important because I follow the emphasis from the choreography of the dance and the structure of the piece makes it natural. I make some variations on how important the second beat is, which is either a chord or a trill or the ending of the phrase. Every phrase ends with a small cadenza, which I find natural to end more soft. When there are two and two notes in one bow there is a diminuendo in phrasing. The value of the note decides whether it is important or not. Small valued notes are less important than long notes.

I perform bigger differences in dynamics in this recording. I follow the register of the notes. The higher register makes stronger dynamic. When a scale goes up it is crescendo and diminuendo when it goes down. This idea is taken from the style of baroque playing. The high register is representing God and the low is closer to Hell.

Bowings: My own and from the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach

Please look at the notated score for my bowings.

I made most of the bowings myself. I find those bowings most comfortable according to my phrasings. Some of the bowings are taken from what I think is written in the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach. For instance in the end of some phrasings three eight notes in one slur instead of two and two. I do it because I want to have bigger variation instead of always phrasing two and two together.

Vibrato

I do not use much vibrato, and much less than on the zero point recording. Some places I do it to make some extra color for those tones I find more important and beautiful. For instance, I do vibrato on long notes when they are on top of arpeggiated chords. After receiving feedback about the use of too wide vibrato, which was too romantic in style, I made my vibrato smaller and more intense this time.

Ornamentation

Since my tempo is faster in this version I have less time to do ornamentation, and I do not find it necessary to do a lot of ornamentation in this Sarabande, I rather would like it simple as it is. In general, I play the trills from the upper note, because it is in the style of baroque music.

Second reference recording

Please see in the first intervention cycle folder, in the attached USB

URL: <https://soundcloud.com/artistic-research>

Reflection on the result

The biggest changes are the tempo and the character. While I was listening to recordings, watching the dance and reading about the Sarabande, much of the interpretation and feeling of the Sarabande came gradually without playing. This version is very different from the first recording and very different from how I imagined the style of Sarabande in the first place, but still I find it natural to play like I do now. I was quite surprised when I heard the result compared with the first recording. I was not aware the huge differences. I think it is very interesting how my interpretation could change this much in so short time. Still I want some improvements. I wish the character could be more convincing and I want to show bigger variations. The sound is maybe a bit flat throughout the piece, and dynamics didn't always come out as much as I felt myself while playing. After listening to my recording I want bigger differences in characters, sounds, dynamics and tension and release. I can be more flexible in tempo to make it flow better, and to show differences in the character, melody and passing notes. I find the vibrato a bit random some places and I can be more conscious where and how I want it. All together I am happy with the result. It has a better dance character now, and I hope it is more convincing to activate our "dancing instinct". The result is a combination of applying the information I learned mixed with my own taste and personal choices for my performance.

Feedback

I received feedback from my AR coach *Job ter Haar* on my second reference recording of the Sarabande.

Comparing this new recording with my reference recording, Job hears a clear difference. He likes the second one much better, and the character of the Sarabande comes out much more. However, it is interesting that this is still clearly the same cellist. It doesn't sound as if I am forcing myself to be something I don't want to be. The biggest difference is the tempo, which is much faster in the second recording. While it is still on the slow side compared to the historical tempo we have from the Sarabande, this is completely convincing for a stylised Sarabande that is clearly not intended to be danced on. The tempo is quite regular, and he can imagine that the performance would be more effective if I could adjust the tempo somewhat to the different characters that emerge in the course of the piece. Especially towards the end of the sentences it could become more exciting. Similarly, there are places (especially dissonance) where I could hold the chords longer. Another obvious difference is the use of vibrato, which is much less in the second recording. As a whole, this is more convincing. However, he is not sure how I picked the notes in which I do use vibrato: He would not feel a strong urge on those notes himself. There is also a big improvement in the way I break the chords. It sounds more natural now. Partly because of the faster tempo, the articulation is also more convincing: In general a bit shorter and with more variation. For a Sarabande he finds the articulation, in general, a bit too soft; it could be more "masculine" (in the 18th-century sense). The dynamics he still finds a bit on the flat side. He thinks bigger differences would help to bring out the different characters, especially if this would be combined with tempo variances. The Sarabande can be prouder, more majestic, and can even have a hint of exhibitionism: I can show off.

The 2nd intervention cycle

In the 2nd intervention cycle I did a case study of the *Menuet 1&2* from J.S. Bach: Cello Suite no.1 in G-major.

The 2nd intervention cycle is divided in 6 steps:

- Zero point recording & feedback
- Data collection
- Interventions
- Second reference recording
- Reflection
- Feedback

Zero point reference recording

J. S. Bach: Cello suite no.1 in G major – Menuet 1 & 2 – 14/11-2014 at Codarts – University of The Arts

URL: <http://codartsresearch.proboards.com/thread/40/ingeborg-skomedal>

Please see the zero point recordings in the second intervention cycle folder, in the attached USB.

Feedback

Here is a summarised feedback from my AR coach Job ter Haar, my main teacher Jeroen den Herder and my own reflections.

The Menuet is one of the more difficult dance forms because there are so many different types. Job ter Haar would recommend to do a survey about possible Menuet forms and their tempos, and try to place this particular one in a category. Is the first or second beat heaviest? Are there differences in character and tempo between Menuet 1 and 2? Menuet 2 could be more sad and Minuet 1 could be more happy. An advice from Jeroen den Herder was that Menuet 1 should have longer lines and bigger differences between important and unimportant notes to make it more danceable and Menuet 2 should have slower bow and a better connection between the notes. In Menuet 2 both Jeroen and Job advised me to not use so much vibrato on the B in the first bar, because it draws too much attention to the second beat, which is weak in a Menuet, and it creates a false feeling of melody instead of inviting to dance. In Menuet 1 there are many of two notes in one bow. I think the first note should be heavier and the second lighter, then it would be more dancing. The sequences can build more up dynamically.

Data Collection

To search for a deeper understanding of stylised interpretation, historical tempo and characters of the Menuet I have used these strategies:

- Literature
- Lessons, meetings and masterclass
- Inspiration from recordings
- Video
- Manuscript

The tempo of the Menuet

In dance music, the correct tempo is essential to find the character of the dance. I searched for options about tempos for this Menuet from J.S. Bach cello suite no 1 in G- major, and I found valuable information from historical sources, listening to interpretations by baroque experts and results of a research about tempo in baroque music and dance from Dept. Of Musicology at Ghent University. The information I found confirmed each other and that made me secure in finding the right tempo of the Menuet. I found out following information:

Historical sources:

- J.J. Quantz¹: 160 bpm
- K. Miehl²: 150 bpm

Historical interpretations:

- Tormod Dalen³, baroque cellist: 150 bpm
- Job ter Haar⁴, baroque cellist: Menuet 1: 160bpm, Menuet 2: 120 bpm – with tempo adjustments and flexibility.

Result of research about tempo in baroque music and dance

- Esther Coorevits & Dirk Moelants⁵: 150 bpm

Historical character descriptions

The character of the dance is also important for the decision about tempo. According to descriptions by Mattheson⁶ specifically about the Menuet goes as following: *“It’s only affect is a moderate cheerfulness”*.

The Menuet step from the choreography is described as *“controlled, ceremonious and graceful”* in the book *“The minuet: An elegant Phoenix”* by Julia Suttons⁷.

These historical character descriptions were helpful to me in my research because it gave me knowledge about the character I was looking for in my interpretation.

“Tempo in baroque music and dance” by Esther Coorevits & Dirk Moelants

I found interesting explanations with insight into what I can learn from the gestures of the dance, in a research about the relationship between dance and music from the Dept. of Musicology at Ghent University:

“If the steps are sliding and with few hops it indicates a serious character and the tempo will, therefore, be performed more slowly than a choreography with many leaps and jumps. The steps tell a lot about the character and how it should be articulated with the instrument. For example a deep and slow movement opposite to a fast and crisp. The character of the dance depends on the tempo of the music.”

1: Quantz, J.J. (1752). *On Playing the Flute* (E.R. Reilly, Trans.). New York, NY: Schirmer Books.
 2: Miehl, Klaus (1993). *Das Tempo in der Musik von Barock und Vorklassik*. Wilhelmshaven: Noetzel, Heinrichshofen-Bucher. 3: Dalen, Tormod (2012). *«Zum Spielen und zum Tantzen» A Kinaesthetic Exploration of the Bach Cello Suites through Studies in Baroque Choreography*. 4: Job ter Haar, 2012, AVROTROS klassiek: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMqViBW5q6g>
 5: Coorevits, Esther & Moelants, Dirk (2015). *Tempo in baroque music and dance*. Belgium: PEM Dept. of Musicology, Ghent University. 6: Mattheson, Johann (1739), *der vollkommene Capellmeister, Hamburg* 7: Sutton, Julia. 1985. *The Minuet: An Elegant Phoenix*. Dance Chronicle 8, no. 3/4:119–52. 3

Video of choreographic gestures from the “Menuet step” or “Pas de menuet”

Please see the video here: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/103350/103356> “Zum spielen, zum tantzen” by Tormod Dalen.

The dancers in the video are the Norwegian baroque dancer Elisabeth Svarstad and the Swedish baroque dancer Karin Modigh. They both are regarded as some of the best baroque dancers in Europe. What I learned through studying and observing the choreographic gestures in the “menuet step”:

- The Menuet step takes six beats, which is two bars of music.
- The rhythm in the dance step forms a hemiola with (2+2+2), which makes a counter rhythm between music and dance, due to music notated in three-quarter time (3+3).
- A complex rhythmical relationship between music and dance.
- Two bar groupings in Menuet music.
- Continuing flow and grace in the movements and at the same time counter rhythms. A playful game of hide-and-seek between music and dance.
- The dancer needs to stay alert to the two-bar groupings of the music.
- The character of the dance gives an impression of relaxed nobility.

Lessons, meetings and masterclass

Meeting with Anner Bylmsa 25/11-2015

Anner Bylmsa is a cello legend specialised in Bach and Baroque music in the Netherlands.

In preparation for the meeting I studied bowings from his newest book: "Droppings - An Exercise Book for the First Three Cello Suites of Johann Sebastian Bach". He made bowings based on the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach, and he believes these bowing and slurs are the closest you can get to the original bowing that Bach himself intended it to be.

"Speak the music". Anner Bylmsa wanted me to speak the music like a speech, like a poem or like how an actor would tell the music without words. What is important in the story, which notes are important, and which notes are in between? How would I tell and articulate the music like a story? This method was very helpful to me and the difference in my playing after speaking it was huge. My phrasing became very convincing, due to bigger contrasts in articulation and dynamics and sound quality.

"The bow is the voice". His thoughts about the bow are as it is like our voice. Practically it means that the bow never leaves the string. He used as an example that up bow is like breathing inwards, and down bow is like breathing out. I did an exercise with changing the bow from the D string to the G string on my cello, starting with up bow on D, and changing to down bow on the G string. The point was to make the shift without stopping the sound. I prepared the shift in slow motion by getting the tone ringing after I left the D string while I was shifting to the G-string. And while the string was ringing I put the weight in my right arm down to the G- string and then let go of the string. Like a magician that prepare the trick before it happens. It was very helpful to me in order to make the sound continue without stopping the phrase. I felt more grounded in the string, with less pressure and with a better control of the sound and overtones, instead of being afraid of losing the sound when crossing from one string to another.

"The virtuosity of bowing". The bowings by Anner Bylmsa have a lot of variety and are much more complicated than most cellists are used to play the bowings in Bach. The bowings are taken from the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach, which can be analysed in different ways. The bowings by Anner Bylmsa give meaning to an idea of details and ornamentation of the Baroque Style, and give the music more virtuosity, excitement, and variation. In my opinion, I think the bowing becomes too complicated for how I want the music, especially when applying historical tempo it becomes too complicated in order to make longer phrasings in the Menuet.

Masterclass with Pieter Wispelwey Bach cello suites, 22/11 - 2015

I was listening to a masterclass with Pieter Wispelwey, where students from the conservatory of Amsterdam were playing the Bach's Cello Suites. Pieter Wispelwey is a Dutch cellist, and he is regarded as one of the world's leading performers and interpreters of baroque music as well as modern music. His reputation of the Bach's Cello Suites is specially regarded.

Here are the most important observations I made and found useful to my research:

- Pieter Wispelwey has a masculine approach to Bach playing, he means that characters in Bach cello suites are never sweet or tender. The masculine approach means a use of fast bow speed and a quite steady rhythm, which makes a huge sound with overtones, especially in the bass. I felt inspired by the sound produce and I liked his style of playing Bach, even though I am not sure if Bach's music can ever be sweet. I think it must be a preference for each cellist to decide what they want.
- He mentions many times that we have to be careful about playing false leading notes, and I could recognise that I play the same patterns as some of the students who were playing. By false leading notes he means that you draw too much attention to a note which actually are not leading notes according to the harmony. For example, a leading note to the Dominant is a false leading note because the dominant is the most important harmony in a cadenza. These observations were helpful to make me more aware of where I should emphasise leading notes or not.

Lesson with Jeroen den Herder 7/11-2015

Jeroen den Herder is my main cello teacher, and is a renowned cellist in the Netherlands and abroad. I played all the three movements from J.S Bach Cello Suite no. 1: Courante, Sarabande and Menuet 1 & 2.

All these statements were my discoveries and thoughts from the lesson:

- My use of contact points can be more varied in order to make bigger contrasts in dynamics.
- A bow technique to change contact point quickly is to bend the wrist towards the bridge/fingerboard and then follow with the elbow.
- He advised me to be more playful in phrasings, and he gave me an inspirational example.
- His sound is open with a lot of overtones and different colors, which is a great inspiration for me.

Comparing recordings

Please see the recordings here: Tormod Dalen: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/103350/103356> (from *Zum spielen, zum tantzen*), Job ter Haar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMqViBW5q6g>

The recordings I found most useful for my research was the historical interpretations by Tormod Dalen and Job ter Haar. Here are some observations I found inspirational and useful for my interpretation:

Tormod Dalen:

- Two bar groupings in the music.
- Sixteenths are almost played as grace notes.
- Menuet: An exciting and playful lively character with a feeling of continuing flow. Menuet 2: More melancholic character, which also is a bit slower.
- Clear difference between important and unimportant notes in the phrases. Softer articulation in Menuet two.
- Not so many jumps in articulation, more a feeling changing between of heavy/ light accentuation.
- The dynamics are building up in sequences.

Job ter Haar:

- His use of tempo flexibility is organic, which gave me ideas how I can drag the tempo forward and backward in order to follow different characters. He does bigger tempo flexibilities than Tormod Dalen.
- There are big character differences between Menuet 1 & 2. Menuet 1 is wild and lively and also proud, and Menuet 2 are more mysterious and sad and slower than Menuet 1.
- I can hear the differences in characters of harmonies from Job's recordings clearer because of bigger variety in tempo flexibility.
- Sharper articulation and sound than Tormod Dalen.

Conclusion of data collection:

Character in the menuet: Cheerful, graceful, lively and elegant. Menuet 2: Also mysterious and sad.

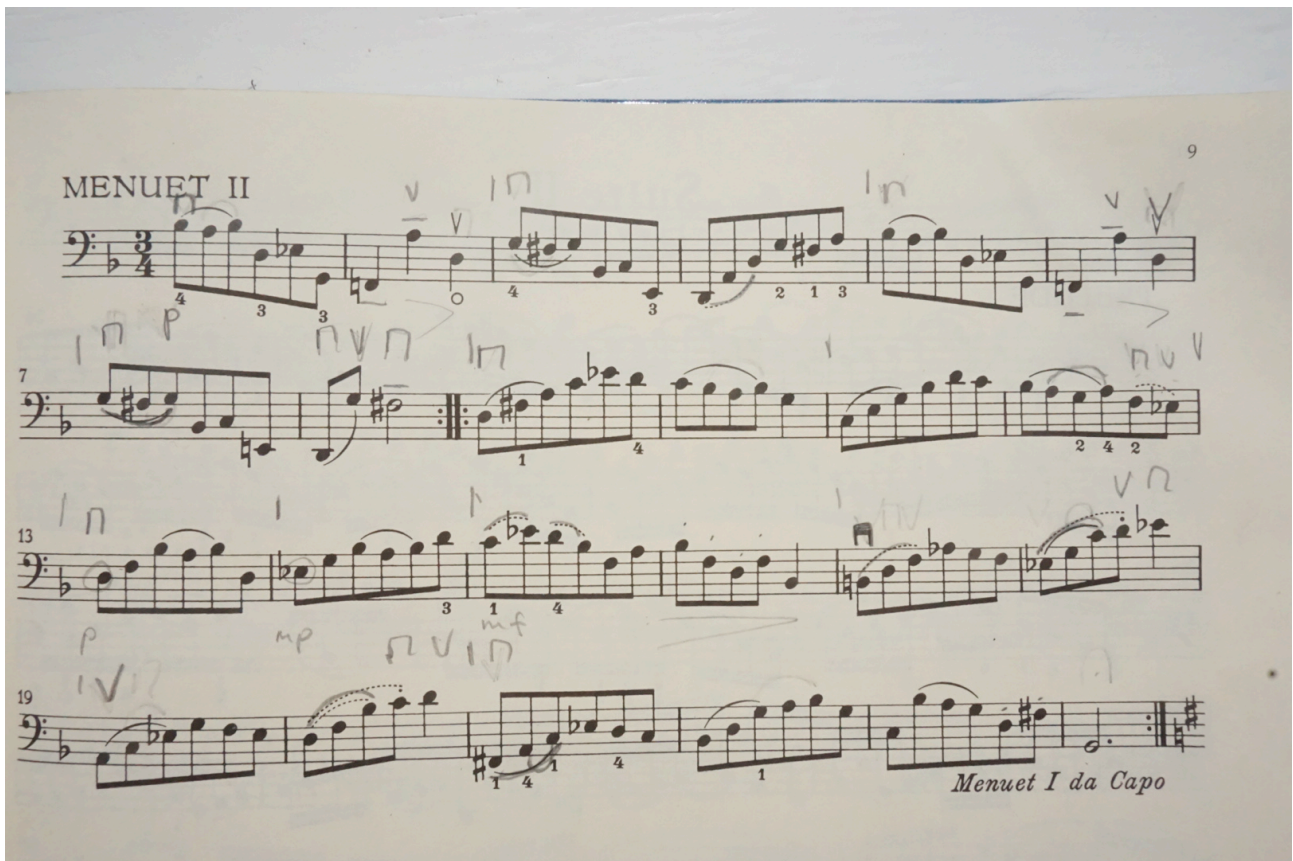
Tempo: Menuet 1: 150-160 bpm, Menuet 2: 120-160 bpm

Interventions - Applying data collection

The interventions are based on my own choices and the feedback from the zero point recording. I used the data I collected, read books and articles about performance practice and made discoveries in an Artistic Research about Bach's cello suites and the dances. I met Anner Bylsma and my main teacher and I listened to recordings of historically informed interpretations. I also studied the choreographic gestures of the Menuet through video performance.

Annotated score of the Menuet I & II from Cello Suite no.1 by J.S. Bach.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Menuet I from Cello Suite no. 1 by J.S. Bach. The score is written in bass clef, 3/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It includes handwritten annotations such as 'MENUET I', 'p soft sound', 'cresc', and various fingering numbers (1, 2, 3, 4). Above the staff, there are handwritten notes: 'O=important notes' and 'I=sequences'. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 5, 10, 15, and 20 marked. The piece ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.



List of choices and implications I made for the new reference recordings:

Applying historical tempo

My thoughts about the Menuet has always been that it is a lively dance. According to the historical sources of the tempo of the Menuet by Quantz and Miehling, the tempo should be around 150-160 bpm. This is much faster than my zero point reference recording in 90 bpm. In the second reference recording of this intervention cycle, I choose to play the Menuet in 150 bpm, because it gives a much more lively character. It is more lively because the tempo is faster, and due to many other aspects of my playing which have been changed. The contrasts are bigger and there are fewer accents. The contrasts between important and unimportant notes in the phrases are bigger, differences in dynamics and types of articulations are more varied. If I play in a slower tempo there will automatically be more accents, and then the music is not so danceable. With the new tempo, I felt choices for bigger contrast and fewer accents came naturally, I got a better understanding of how to phrase the music, it became more logical to me, which I found more difficult with a slower tempo.

Applying Character descriptions

The historical descriptions by Mattheson and characters from the dance were helpful to my interpretation. My experience was that the characters in music changed a lot just by having some words to hold on to. Words like lively, cheerfulness, moderate, controlled and elegant influenced my feeling and it automatically became a huge difference in my playing. When I had the imagination of the character, many of my technical decisions changed because I had a clear imagination of the character.

Applying the “Menuet step” into my interpretation.

After studying the “Menuet step” I realised that it is not necessary to accentuate every bar since the dance step takes six beats, which is two bars of music. I applied two-bar groupings into the music, in order to meet the dance steps in every second bar. The dance step forms a hemiola in 2+2+2 which is different from the music which is in $\frac{3}{4}$. This makes a counter rhythm between dance and music which is playful, so I make accentuation in every second bar in order to receive a continuing flow with the dance and I make bigger differences in articulation, which sometimes can be surprisingly in order to emphasise the hide- and seek game which appears with counter-rhythm between dance and music. Since there are complex rhythmical movements between dance and music, it indicates a fast tempo – which I applied.

Articulation and sound

I applied different articulation for different characters in the Menuet. I wanted to do bigger contrasts in articulation throughout the movement. The first Menuet is lively and cheerful in character so I made a clearer and some places quite hard and rough articulation, in order to make it more characteristic and lively. For example in the first bar of the Menuet I wanted to have a lively opening, so I play the articulation clear from the beginning of three first notes. I find the following notes until the chord with a trill not so important so I play those notes softer in sound. The second Menuet is a bit more melancholic in character because of the minor tonality. Therefore, I do the sound and articulation more soft and closer to the fingerboard in this part. I use a slower bow with more intensity in this part. I also use different colors of sound in sequences in order to make variations.

I play legato in slurs and in stepwise movement and soft spiccato in jumping notes, which is historically informed ways of baroque playing. I use a quite small length of the bow.

My use of bigger differences in articulation and sound makes longer lines to the music. There are fewer accents than before and bigger contrasts between important and unimportant notes. The feedback I got advised me to make longer lines.

Phrasing and dynamics

I applied the method of Anner Bylsma, which was to speak the music. This made me conscious about what I wanted to make important and unimportant for the story and phrasings in the music, and how I wanted to play it. I make the phrases according to the structure and groupings of the notes. The Menuet is for example built up on several sequences. One sequence is either two bars or one bar, and some are four bars. I decided to play the sequences in different ways in order to make variations and different characters so that the music becomes more interesting and not static. I play the first note of each sequence most important, but not always, in order to make variations. It was helpful for me to think some of the sequences as question mark and answers or a conclusion.

I try to keep it, as a rule, to make the first beat in the bar the most important, then the second beat, and the last beat less important. This is a rule I learned from performance practice style of baroque playing. I think the first beat as an impulse to the sequence, like an impulse of dance movement. When I think that the note is starting from an impulse of the first note, the rest of the notes in the sequence becomes light and elegant, instead of giving the whole sequence equal importance.

About the first bar in the Menuet, I have been experimenting whether the first beat or the second beat should be most important. After playing the Menuet in a faster tempo several times, I found out that the three first notes are representing the major tonality, so then it is natural to play them with equal intensity, rather than focus on whether the emphasis should be on the first or second beat. It is the grand opening of the piece, so the first note could be a bit more accentuated than the rest three notes, but my idea is that three first notes are representing the tonality of the piece.

I play Menuet 1 a bit stronger in dynamic than Menuet 2, because of the extrovert and lively character compared to a more sad character in Menuet 2. I am building up the dynamics together with the sequences. If the sequence is going up in the register I play crescendo, if the sequence is falling downwards, I play diminuendo.

Bowing

I didn't apply the bowings of Anner Bylsma because I think they are too complicated for the fast tempo I play in. I think the many changes of bowing would disturb the long phrases I want to have in the music. Instead of applying more slurs, like in Anner Bylsma's version, I cut many slurs for the new recording, in order to make longer lines. In the zero point recording I usually play three bows in every bar, but in the new recording I some places only use one bow a bar. I do this to make the notes less important where I want them to be unimportant. Instead of cutting one phrase into many bowings, I only use one bow, so the sound can be softer. Then I avoid accents where I don't want them. The slurs I made is based on personal taste in order to fit with my phrasings. For example that I make sure to end down bow on important notes. The bowing follows groups of notes as a figure, where the first note of a group is most important. My use of bow speed has changed with a faster tempo compared to the slow version in the first recording. Now I use much less bow because of the fast tempo and I found a good balance point between the middle of the bow and the frog. That means I have more contact with my fingers than my arm, which also gives me better control of the articulation and spiccato.

Harmony

The harmonies and tonalities are simple. There are not many unexpected harmonies, like dissonance or leading notes. In Menuet 1 there is one phrase which is suddenly in minor, in the middle of major tonalities. Then I play the first note of minor part with extra tension, to announce the minor tonality.

Vibrato

I do not use much vibrato. When I do, it is it because it is an important and strong note in the phrase. To get a stylised vibrato I use a small and intense, not too wide vibrato. I don't use much vibrato on the B in the first bar of Menuet 2 anymore because it draws too much attention to the second beat, which is weak in a Menuet, and it creates a false feeling of melody instead of inviting to dance, which I received from feedback from Job ter Haar and Jeroen den Herder.

Historical lower tuning

I tuned my cello a half note down to come closer to tuning systems during the baroque period. During the baroque period, they used different systems of tunings, and it is difficult to say what is historical tuning. But for sure we know that the tuning systems of the baroque period were lower than 442hz, which is common today. The lower tuning gives the instrument a different sound and resonance, which I use because it gives a more convincing impression of stylized baroque with my modern cello and modern bow.

Inspiration from historically informed interpretation

I applied some of Tormod Dalen's ideas into my interpretation, especially the way he does phrasings. Even though I try to do some of the same phrasings as he does, I also have my own idea of the phrasings, so the final result is a mix between taking some of his phrasings together with my own choices.

Result

URL: <https://soundcloud.com/artistic-research>

Please find the recording in the 2nd intervention cycle folder, in the attached USB

Reflection on the result and the process

In my zero point recording I play the phrasings more equal, but now I have bigger contrasts. It is really helpful for me to think that I tell a story while I am playing because then I get more variation and I never play a sentence exactly the same way. I like the new tempo, the longer lines and bigger differences between important and unimportant notes in my playing because it makes the music more vivid and danceable.

My experience with playing the new tempo in the Menuet was that it was hard to reach 150 bpm. I did some recordings which I thought was in 150 but it was much slower. So it was quite a big change for me and I needed some time to get used to the high tempo. In the recording, I hear that it feels a bit rushed and I do some heavy beats on the third beat which I didn't hear while I was playing. I think I can have a more flexible tempo, since I don't believe the tempo marks are absolute, especially without dancers, and tempo flexibility can help to bring out characters better.

Feedback from Job Ter Haar

He likes the character and "danceability". He thinks the phrasing per two bars works really well. There is a clear difference in character between Menuet 1 and Menuet 2, but the character of Menuet 2 to him is a bit on the strong side. A bit more mystery here would be nice, especially for the suite as a whole, because Menuet 2 is the only part with a different tonality. But for dancers, this character is good because you can do it in more or less the same tempo.

He finds the recording a very good artistic result. Possible next steps: find a way to relax within these tempos, which are faster than I was used to. The faster the tempo, the more important that I breathe, relax, phrase, take time. For him this is almost one package: faster tempos and more tempo freedom. At the moment, some passages sound hurried, and this is not because the tempo is too fast, which it never is. It seems that I sometimes don't give the long notes their full length. Also, baroque music can have a lot of rubato, following the changes of characters in the music.

The 3rd intervention cycle

In the 3rd intervention cycle I did a case study of the *Courante* from J.S. Bach: Cello Suite no.1 in G-major.

The third intervention cycle is divided into 6 steps:

- Zero point reference recording & feedback
- Data collection
- Interventions
- Second reference recording
- Reflection
- Feedback

Zero point reference recording

J. S. Bach – Cello suite no.1 in G major – *Courante*

14/11- 2014 at Codarts recorded by Christiaan van Hemert.

URL: <http://codartsresearch.proboards.com/thread/40/ingeborg-skomedal>

Please see in the third intervention cycle folder, in the attached USB.

Feedback

Summarised feedback from Job ter Haar, Jeroen den Herder and my own reflections.

I need a faster tempo and a more virtuosic and wild character. I should look for options in articulation and groupings of the notes and more differences in contact point to make the differences in dynamic bigger. Rougher articulation and a faster bow speed will give the character a more lively sound. It can be bigger differences in the characters between major and minor and bigger differences between important notes and unimportant notes to get clearer structures of the phrases. In general, the sixteenth notes are less important than the eighth notes. The phrases can be longer.

Data collection

List of strategies I used to collect data and information about the Courante:

- Literature
- Lessons, meetings, masterclass
- Recordings
- Video

Tempo of the Courante

Historical sources:

- J.J Quantz¹: 80 bpm
- K. Miehling²: 120 bpm

Historical interpretations:

- Tormod Dalen³, baroque cellist: 100 bpm
- Job ter Haar⁴, baroque cellist: 120 bpm

Result of research about tempo in baroque music and dance:

Esther Coorevits & Dirk Moelants⁵: 90 bpm

The result after searching for the tempo of the Courante is not confirming each other as much as the previous case studies of the Sarabande and the Menuet. So I did a deeper research to find the tempo of the Courante. Valuable information was found in Miehling's book about tempo in baroque music. I found out that the German type of Courante is faster than the French type and this explains the differences I found in tempo marks. Then I had to find out if the Courante in Bach cello suite no.1 is a German or a French type. In the same book by Miehling, I also found that the Courante from Cello Suite no.1 is a German type.

1: Quantz, J.J. (1752). *On Playing the Flute* (E.R. Reilly, Trans.). New York, NY: Schirmer Books.

2: Miehling, Klaus (1993). *Das Tempo in der Musik von Barock und Vorklassik*. Wilhelmshaven:

Noetzel, Heinrichshofen-Bucher. 3: Dalen, Tormod (2012). «Zum Spielen und zum Tantzen» A

Kinaesthetic Exploration of the Bach Cello Suites through Studies in Baroque Choreography. 4: Job

ter Haar, 2012, AVROTROS klassiek: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMqViBW5q6g>

5: Coorevits, Esther & Moelants, Dirk (2015). *Tempo in baroque music and dance*. Belgium: PEM

Dept. of Musicology, Ghent University.

Literature

J. Matthesons character description about the Courante: *"Its passion is hope, lively and virtuosic"* and further:

"It has almost no bounds but seeks to do full justice to its name through endless running, but it is done pleasantly and charmingly". The passion or emotion which should be performed in a courante is sweet hopefulness, for there is something stout-hearted, something longing and also something gratifying in this melody. All of these are things from which hope is composed".

Choreographic gestures from the Courante step "Pas court de courante"

Please see the video here: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/103350/103356> "Zum spielen, zum tantzen" by Tormod Dalen.

In the research by baroque cellist Tormod Dalen, I found some valuable videos of choreographic gestures from the Courante showed by the dances Karin Modigh and Elisabeth Svarstad. Following are statements and observations I made of choreographic gestures of the Courante step "Pas court de courante". (Choreography based on Tubert (1717)). These steps are dominant in all French courante, no Italian or German choreographies after early 17th century survived, according to *"Zum spielen und zum tantzen"* by Tormod Dalen

- Characters in movements: Pleasantly, elegant with dignity & majesty.
- Rather slow gestures.
- It starts with an impression of dignity and ends with a feeling of release on the third beat of the bar.
- A marched step forward while rising before continuing with the gliding step forward.
- Characteristics of the Italian Corrente is described: Rapid, tempo and alternating hops and steps.

Descriptions about the Courante, taken from *"Zum spielen zum tantzen"* gives an impression of the character and emotion in the Courante, it goes as following:

"Rameau (1725) writes: 'it is a very solemn Dance, and gives a more grand and noble Air than other Dances [and it] has always been look'd upon as a very necessary one to learn to dance.' Taubert (1717) confirms: 'it is the hardest, finest, requiring much time, diligence and effort before one can learn [it]', and 'whoever rightly understands and dances it can learn all other dances'."

Lessons, meetings and masterclass

Lucia Swarts - Cello Festival in Zutphen, August 2015

Courante and Sarabande

In the lesson with Lucia Swarts we worked with bow and left hand techniques.

- Articulation. Lucia helped me with getting a clearer articulation in the bow and not leave the string in string crossings and to be fast enough and be ready on the string before I play. She told me that Courante means “running” and therefore, we worked with keeping the phrase going and not make too many short phrases. We worked on different types of articulation in order to make the music more speaking in a rhetoric way. Something that really helped me was to be more conscious about my use of different contact points, in order to make bigger differences in sound, dynamics and articulation.
- Left hand. We worked with holding the left hand in position and stay as much as possible with the fingers on the fingerboard. When all the fingers are on the string it gives more resonance.

Jeroen den Herder, November 2014

- Wild in character and articulation; fast bow speed, don't be afraid of playing ugly.
- Place the bow, with rest and pressure on the string before I play.
- Keep the left hand close to the fingerboard
- Bigger contrasts in dynamics

Recordings

I especially liked Tormod Dalen's recording. Here are some observations I found inspirational for my own performance.

Tormod Dalen:

- Character: Charmingly and elegant – not too rushed
- Sound: Gut strings, I like the quality of his sound
- Dynamics: Clearly following the register, with a lot of variation
- Tuning: A semi note down from 442
- Articulation: He use rough and clear articulation, especially in the bass, and sometimes more soft articulation in the top register, except from dissonance, which has tension. Legato in slurs, with a heavy-light feeling in groupings of two and two notes. Clearer articulation in jumping notes.
- Harmony: He brings out the different harmonies, especially if it is major or minor, dissonances are played with extra tension.
- Bowing: Diminuendo during slurs
- Accentuation is sometimes on the third beat, which makes the character more wild, virtuosic, and lively.

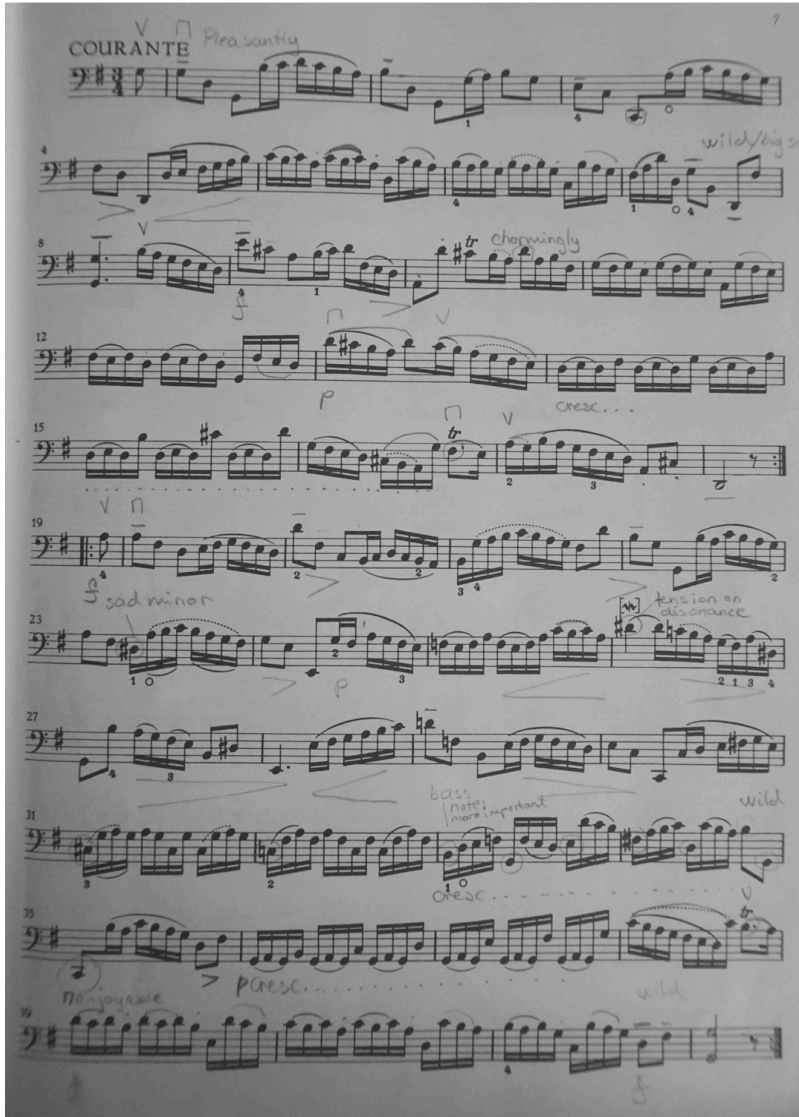
Conclusion of data collection:

Characters: “*Endless running*”- *Lively, virtuosic, pleasantly, charmingly, wild, sweet hopefulness and elegant with dignity and majesty.*

Tempo: 90-120 bpm

Interventions – Applying data collection

Annotated score of the Courante from Cello Suite no.1 by J.S. Bach.



Choices and implications for the second reference recording

To make choices for my performance of the Courante was more difficult for me than the previous case studies. This is because in one way I learned and collect information and feedback about that the Courante should be lively, virtuosic and wild, and the German type of a Courante should be played very fast; in 120 bpm according to historical sources. On the other hand: the descriptions about characters of the Courante by Mattheson and Lucia Swarts tells about a character which is calmly running and with hope. "Endless running, but it is done pleasantly and charmingly". The passion or emotion which should be performed in a courante is sweet hopefulness" – Mattheson. The impression of the character of the dance were also elegant and calm gestures which fit the description by Mattheson and Lucia Swarts. The different tempos from recordings by historical interpreters also made me confused, and I didn't know exactly what to choose.

My conclusion in the end of this intervention cycle was a mixed version with choices based on both aspects of the Courante. I wanted to have a wilder character, but I didn't want it to be too rushed and hectic. The character descriptions and the impression of the dance influenced my feeling of the character so strongly, that it didn't feel it was right to play as fast as 120 bpm, even though this is the historical tempo. It was too fast for the character I wanted. Therefore, I chose to play the tempo in 100 bpm, which is also the same tempo as Tormod Dalen is using, which is based on baroque choreography. Since Courante literally means "running", I chose to play it slower because running is more about making the music continue rather than a fast tempo that can be a bit too stressful to get a pleasantly, charmingly, elegant, and hopeful character.

List of choices in following elements:

Tempo

I chose to play the Courante in 100 bpm. This version of the Courante is slightly faster than my zero point recording. I was actually used to play it in 120 bpm lately, so I really had to concentrate to play it as slow as 100 bpm even though it was just a bit faster than the first recording. I have been experimenting with different tempos, and I ended up with a tempo I think is a good balance between giving wild and enjoyable character and at the same time endless running with charmingly and elegant character.

Applying the choreography of the Courante step "pas court de courante"

I applied my observations making the upbeat to the first beat with dignity and a feeling of resistance, and then a diminuendo on the third eighth note of the bar with a feeling of release. The feeling of release in the ending of the three eighth notes follows throughout the movement. The marched step forward, does I apply into my playing by accentuating the first and second beat which also gives a wilder character. The first beat is important, and I think it as an impulse of a gesture from dance. I keep in mind the characters of the dance which are pleasant, elegant, with dignity and majesty into my phrasings and softer sound.

Articulation and sound

I applied the bow technique which I studied and learned from Lucia Swarts in order to get better articulations. I start from the string and I don't lift the bow in string crossings anymore, which gives me better control of the articulation. I relax my fingers on the bow after I start playing to get more open sound and to avoid to force the sound.

I play legato in slurs, and I articulate jumping notes. In stylised baroque interpretations I learned that smaller value of notes has less importance than higher value of notes, so I decided to play eights notes with more articulation, and sixteenths with a softer sound. This makes bigger contrasts of important and unimportant notes.

I play rougher articulation where I want to have the character wilder and more virtuosic.

I have improved my left-hand technique a lot. I don't lift my fingers from the fingerboard so much anymore, I rather keep them close to the fingerboard and I try to keep the fingers on it's position as long as possible. Especially I have focused on not lifting the hand position when I cross strings with the bow. This helped me to play fast notes faster, and it also gives a better resonance in the instrument.

Phrasings and dynamics

I am more conscious about the use of groupings in phrasing in the second reference recording. I play longer phrases now compared to the first recording because I was conscious about the running element of a Courante. I play bigger contrasts between important and unimportant notes, in order to get a clearer structure of phrasing. In general, I follow the register in dynamics, and I change the contact point more now than before to get bigger contrast. I do some exceptions where I think the bass notes should come out more.

Bowing

I am using most bowing and slurs from the “Barenreiter” edition because they are suitable for my phrasings. Some exceptions are made where I think different groups of notes belongs together.

I use a faster bow speed to get a wilder character, especially on eight notes. In the smaller notes, I use less bow now with better articulation from the fingers instead of my arm. I see a lot better bow technique in the second recording compared to the first.

Historical lower tuning

I tuned my cello a half note down to come closer to how they tuned instruments during the baroque period.

Harmony

I bring out the harmonies more now, in order to bring out different characters. I applied some ideas from the interpretation of Tormod Dalen, and I made some of them. There are some dissonances and minor chords which I play with more tension.

Ornamentation

I play the trill from the upper note. I don't use extra ornamentation which is not written. There are reasons to believe that Bach wrote out ornamentations in his music, compared to how simple melodies and structure of the music often were in this period. Musicians were used to making their own improvisations and ornamentations. In Bachs music many of the ornamentations are "already written out", said Tormod Dalen. Therefore, I don't feel a necessity of playing a lot of ornamentation in his music.

Result

Please see the 3rd intervention cycle folder, in the attached USB

URL: <https://soundcloud.com/artistic-research>

Feedback

Job ter Haar

Despite the somewhat slow tempo (for a German Courante, as this) there is a nice flow, which fits the character. The musical events have been adjusted to the main character, which works well.

Conclusion

In this period, I have developed a broader approach of playing Bach and baroque style. My knowledge of the baroque style has become stronger and I have learned new ways to analyse the music and apply techniques. My personal choices are based on rules in baroque playing, where the freedom is huge and limited at the same time. The freedom lies in how you want to structure the phrasings and groupings of notes, there are so many possibilities because there is almost nothing written in the score of elements as dynamics, phrasings, articulation, and sound. Many of the choices that can be made are not depending on what is right or wrong, but decisions have to be made to make the music interesting and meaningful. In the end, I have made personal choices based on ideas I like from my data collection. I have used Anner Bylsma's bowings, which gave me a totally new way of thinking, even though I didn't end up using it in my performance. My performance has changed many times during this period, and I have been experimenting with different tempos to find the character of the dance I wanted. I have been focusing on searching for historical tempo, used historical sources, listen to recordings of performances when the interpretation is based on baroque choreography. The result of this research has started a neverending process that will continue during the rest of my career as a cellist.

Part 5. Appendices

Network

Jeroen den Herder: Jeroen is my main teacher who will contribute with great musical and technical knowledge about Bach's cello suites.

Job ter Haar: Job is my study coach and a regarded dutch baroque cellist. He has a lot of knowledge and experience about my research topic which is very helpful to me.

Anner Bylsma: Dutch cellist who plays on both modern, and baroque instruments in a historically informed style. Living cello legend and towering figure in the baroque cello movement. He has an important role in my research for a deeper understanding of the music.

Pieter Wispelwey: Famous Dutch cellist, and he is regarded as one of the world's leading performers and interpreters of baroque music as well as modern music. His reputation of the Bach Cello suites is specially regarded.

Tormod Dalen: Norwegian baroque cellist, working in Paris. He did a doctorate on choreographic gestures in Bach's cello suites at the Norwegian Academy of Music. Title: "*Zum Spielen und zum Tantzen*"

Lucia Swarts: Famous Dutch baroque cellist and teacher in den Hague. Her knowledge about musical understanding of the Bach's cello suites and about baroque technique is useful for my research.

Jed Wentz: Dutch baroque flutist, teacher and researcher. Expert in Early Music performance and history of early music. He published articles on music and dance, therefore he can be a good support for my research.

Viola de Hoog: Baroque cellist and teacher in Amsterdam, Utrecht and Bremen. Expert in baroque cello and early music which is helpful for me to applying baroque techniques.

Herre Jan Stegenga: Cello teacher at Codarts with expertise in baroque music and basso continuo.

Elisabeth Svarstad: Norwegian baroque dancer and teacher, regarded as one of Europe's best baroque dancers.

Karen Modigh: Swedish baroque dancer, early dancer and choreographer. Regarded as one of Europe's best baroque dancers.

Guust Francois: Violin maker in Amsterdam with a lot of knowledge about baroque instruments.

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Manuscript

Anna Magdalena Bach – Six Cello Suites for solo cello – by Johann Sebastian Bach

Original manuscript direct reprint of the original manuscript of yet an unknown date, by *Anna Magdalena Bach*, Bach's second wife