

Inspired by Dance

a kinaesthetic exploration of J.S. Bach's cello suites



Norges musikkhøgskole
Lindemansalen

Sunday, 19 August, 19:30

Inspired by Dance

a kinaesthetic exploration of J.S. Bach's cello suites



Dance and choreography:

Karin Modigh, Elizabeth Svarstad and Adrian Navarro

Baroque cello and artistic director:

Tormod Dalen

Choreographic adaptation:

Janne-Camilla Lyster



"Music shows movement without the thing that moves... dance shows us music without the thing that sounds" (Rachel Duerden)

"...it [is] not enough to hear music... it must also be seen." (Igor Stravinsky)

"Dancing should allow people to really hear the music, instead of... not." (Mark Morris)

Program

1st part - The Exploration

- Prélude - suite 1 in G, BWV 1007
- Sarabande - suite 2 in d, BWV 1008
based on a choreography by Tormod Dalen
- Bourrée 1 - suite 3 in C, BWV 1009

2nd part - The Dance Suite

- Allemande - suite 1
- Courante - suite 2
Choreography: Gottfried Taubert (*Rechtschaffender Tantzmeister*, Leipzig 1717)
- Gavottes - suite 6 in D, BWV 1012
Choreographies:
Gavotte 1: Pécour - *Entrée d'Atis* (Ms. Gaudreau, 1712)
Gavotte 2: Karin Modigh, Elizabeth Svarstad & Adrian Navarro
- Menuets - suite 2
Choreographies:
Menuet 1: Pemberton: *An Ecchoe* (1711)
Menuet 2: Karin Modigh & Elizabeth Svarstad
Menuet 1: *Menuet by Mr. Isaac* (1711), *Menuet perform'd by Ms Santlow* (1725)
- Bourrées - suite 4 in Eb, BWV 1010
Choreographies:
Bourrée 1: Elizabeth Svarstad & Adrian Navarro
Bourrée 2: Karin Modigh
- Sarabande - suite 5 in c, BWV 1011
Choreography: Karin Modigh, Adrian Navarro & Elizabeth Svarstad

Choreographic adaptations: Janne-Camilla Lyster

3d part - The Cello Suite

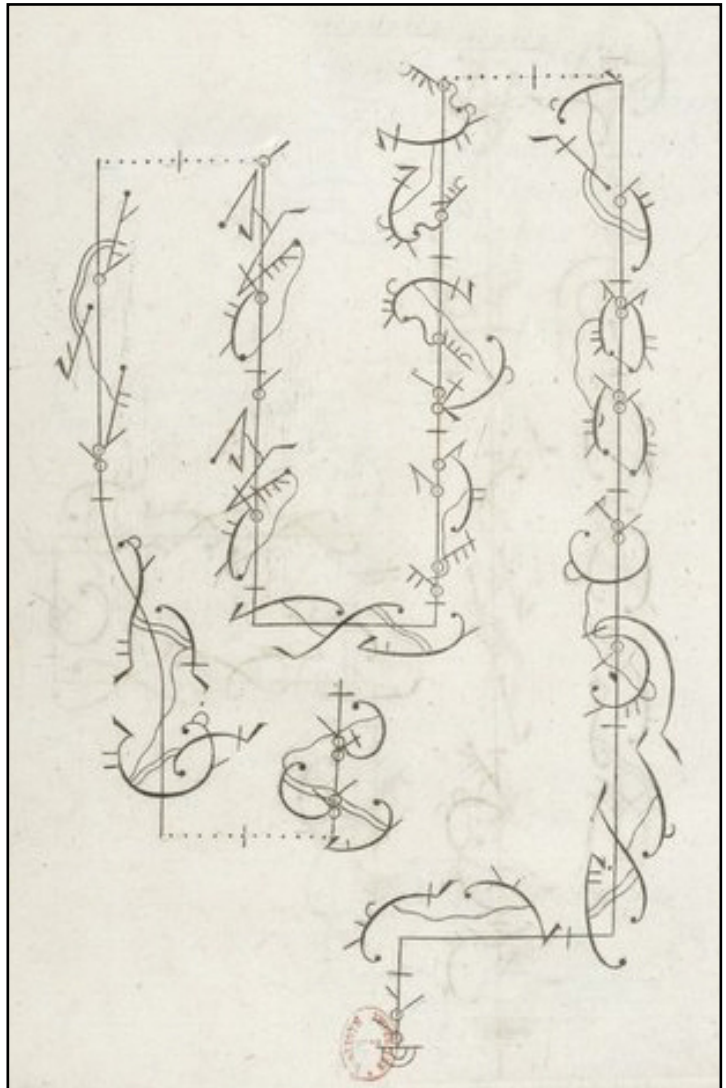
- Suite 2 in d, BWV 1008
Prelude - Allemande - Courante - Sarabande - Menuet - Gigue

Inspired by Dance

Even if J.S. Bach's cello suites were never meant for dancing, their dance titles, derived from French court dance, clearly meant more to the composer than just abstract reference. In Bach's time, dance practice permeated social life both at court and in the city, and it was indispensable for a musician to have an intimate knowledge of the contemporary dance forms. The dances, their movements and gestures were highly present in the physical memory of composer, performer (often the same person) and audience alike, and this inevitably had an influence on performance style. The close connection between music and dance has been all but lost in our modern art music tradition, though it still exists in many cultural traditions worldwide. Feeling that we must be missing something essential in our interpretative tradition of Bach's suites, I have made this connection the subject of my fellowship project.

The goal for my project is to "...explore the relation between dance and instrumental music in the baroque era through a kinaesthetic exploration of J.S. Bach's suites for cello solo", and the main question: "how can the knowledge and practice of baroque dance as described in 18th century sources influence me as a musician of today?"

Over the last three years I have been going to baroque dance classes, studied historical sources, and tried to come to grips both physically and intellectually with the implications for my 'cello playing and my interpretation of the Bach Suites. Tonight's concert is the result of these studies, and my aim is to make perceptible the intimate relationship of the two art forms.



The dances in the second part

Allemande - 1st suite

By the time Bach wrote his cello suites, the Allemande had passed irrevocably from the ballroom into the domain of instrumental music. The Allemande from the first suite has a positive simplicity to it that makes it inviting and open. An *Ouverture* in the original sense of the word.

Courante - 2nd suite

Often described as an Italianate *Corrente*, this movement is actually a subtly disguised French *Courante*. All in semiquavers, it is a ready-made *Double* lacking its *Simple*, that has lead generations of 'cellists to plunge into breathless virtuosity, easily becoming a "wild ride of fast sixteenth notes" as one performer puts it. When alternated with a hypothetical French *Courante* version, Bach's charming *Double* takes on a quite different, elegant and held-back character. The choreography uses two of the Courantes from Gottfried Taubert's *Rechtschaffender Tantzmeister* (Leipzig 1717) complete with their obligatory reverences.

Gavotte 1 and 2 - 6th suite

With the first Gavotte, Elizabeth dances a classical repertoire piece, the "*Entrée pour une femme*" by Pécour from the Gaudreau ms. It offers an instance of elegant counterpoint between dance and music where each medium stands on its own. The second Gavotte is a quite rustic *rondeau*, and it felt natural here to create a "*mini-contredanse*" filled with different sorts of social interaction and exchanges (patterns like *chaîne anglaise*, *moulin*). For the repeat of the first Gavotte everyone joins in the Pécour choreography.

Menuet 1 and 2 - 2nd suite

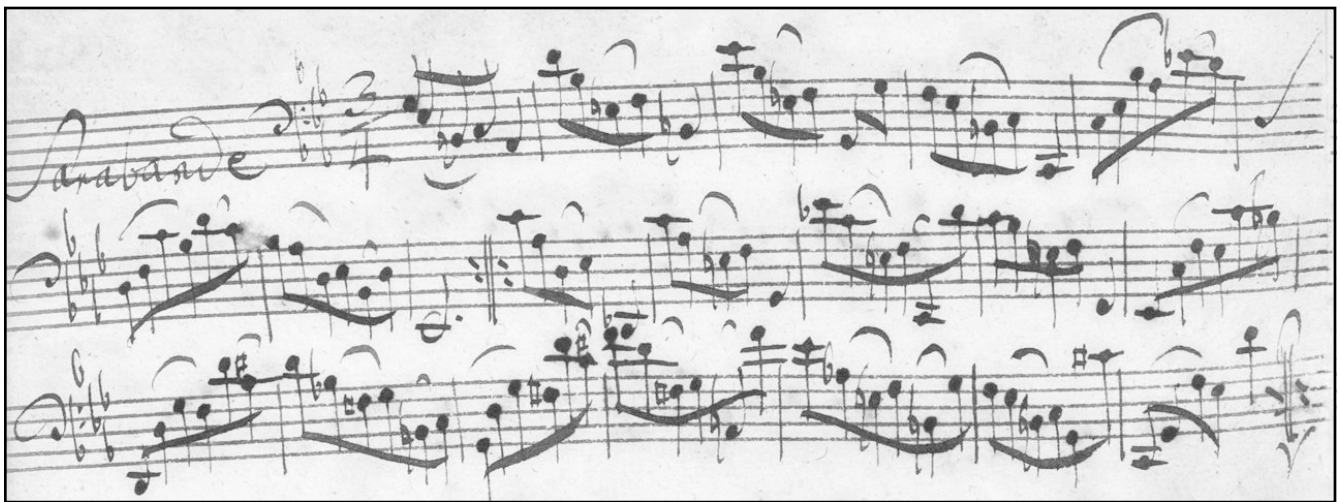
The Menuet was the most popular social dance in Bach's time, and we can be reasonably certain that Bach himself danced the Menuet quite regularly. Usually notated in 3/4-time, it may be surprising to learn that the Menuet dance step actually covers two bars. Dancers always count it in six, making their bars twice as long as the musician's. Baroque dance manuals show the simple, basic structure of the Menuet, and go into painstaking detail about the correct way of performing it. At the same time they give us many different step variations, and encourage advanced dancers to improvise and embellish their dance with as many types of steps as possible (Taubert). After a short, charming *Menuet à trois* by Pemberton for the first Menuet, Elizabeth and Karin have created a *Menuet ordinaire* full of wit and fantasy for the second. The repeat of the first menuet is a solo by Elizabeth based on a *Menuet by Mr Isaac* and Tomlinson's *Menuet danced by Mme Santlow*.

Bourrée 1 and 2 - 4th suite

The first Bourrée is extremely busy for the cellist, with many awkward semiquaver runs, interesting counter-rhythms and echo effects. Playing this movement at a speed approaching a proper Bourrée dance tempo almost turns into a battle between the instrument and its player. This inspired Elizabeth and Adrian to think of something in the theatrical style, and they created a choreography offering a humoristic and playful reading of Bach's music, complete with imitations and asymmetry. The second Bourrée is totally different: simple, held-back, almost minimalistic. For this, Karin created a tongue-in-cheek solo with ornaments galore. Very noble and dignified, it stands almost as a correction to the preceding couple. Coming back for the repeat it is as if they have learnt something. Their dance, while retaining the tempestuous steps, has now gained a more classic and symmetric floor pattern.

Sarabande - 5th suite

This is a bit of a fetish piece for every 'cellist, and it seemed inevitable to propose a choreographic version of it. Straying far from the 'standard' Sarabande pattern, Bach almost makes us forget that it is still a Sarabande. This movement is austere to the extreme, yet charged with emotion. Each dancer takes turns to express their personal reaction to this very special score, using Sarabande character and steps as a point of departure. Here the social interaction ends, and the dancers are like planets – each one in its own orbit, meeting as if by coincidence or by rules of geometry rather than by human relationship.



Karin Modigh received her dance training at the University of Dance in Stockholm before discovering baroque dance in France under the tutelage of Marie-Geneviève Massé, Françoise Denieau, Irène Ginger and Béatrice Massin. With her own company, *Nordic Baroque Dancers*, she has orchestrated Franco-Swedish collaborative projects for *Stockholm Early Music Festival* and the *Drottningholm Palace Theatre*. She is a member of *Compagnie l'Eventail* (Fr), *Corpo Barocco* (Be) and *Boston Early Music Festival Dance Ensemble* (US). Karin holds a dance teacher diploma and has been teaching baroque dance at the Ballet Academy and the University Colleges of Dance, Music, and Opera in Stockholm.
www.karinmodigh.eu

Elizabeth Svarstad is a dancer, choreographer and teacher of Baroque dance. She studied at the Norwegian Ballet School and has a Nordic master's degree in dance from the *Trondheim University* (NTNU). From this autumn she is a PhD student in dance at the NTNU. She has been involved in dance productions and concerts with *Concerts Norway*, *Norwegian Baroque Orchestra*, *The Norwegian Wind Ensemble*, *Concerto Copenhagen*, *The Norwegian Royal Court*, *Akershus Fortress*, *Linderud Gård* and *Oslo Ladegård*.
www.elizabethsvarstad.no

Adrian Navarro graduated from the *Akademie des Tanzes* in Mannheim, Germany and has been dancing with *Aalto ballett theater Essen*, the *Gothenburg Ballet*, *Karlsruhe Ballet* and *Royal Swedish Ballet*, working with choreographers such as Patrice Bart, Mats Ek, Christian Spuck, Jorma Uotinen and Peter Wright. As a baroque dancer, he cooperates with companies such as *L'Eventail* (Marie-Généviève Massé), *Corpo Barocco* (Sigrid T'Hooft) and *Nordic Baroque Dancers* (Karin Modigh). Since 2009 Adrian Navarro is based in Berlin working as a freelance dancer, choreographer and arts manager.
www.adriannavarro.net

A graduate of the *Norwegian Academy of Music*, **Tormod Dalen** specialised in historically informed performance practice at the *Koninklijk Conservatorium* of The Hague and Brussels. Professor of baroque cello at the *Conservatoire national régional* of Toulouse in France, he performs with ensembles such as *Le Concert Spirituel*, *Le Poème Harmonique*, *Les Ambassadeurs*, *Arte dei Suonatori*...
www.tormoddalen.net

Janne-Camilla Lyster is a graduate of the *Oslo National Academy of the Arts*. She works as a dancer, choreographer and writer. She was awarded the government's work grant for younger, newly-established artists 2008-2010 and the *Norwegian Dance Artists'* grant for dancers 2011.
www.jannecamillalyster.no



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