



J S Bach

TRIO SONATAS BWV525-530
for two harpsichords

David Ponsford

David Hill



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Six Trio Sonatas (BWV 525 – 530)

Arranged for two harpsichords by David Ponsford

Sonata 1 in E flat major (BWV 525)

1	1 <i>[Allegro]</i>	2:37
2	2 <i>Adagio</i>	6:34
3	3 <i>Allegro</i>	3:24

Sonata 2 in C minor (BWV 526)

4	1 <i>Vivace</i>	3:29
5	2 <i>Largo</i>	2:50
6	3 <i>Allegro</i>	3:49

Sonata 3 in D minor (BWV 527)

7	1 <i>Andante</i>	5:17
8	2 <i>Adagio e dolce</i>	4:50
9	3 <i>Vivace</i>	3:44

Sonata 4 in E minor (BWV 528)

10	1 <i>Adagio ; Vivace</i>	2:20
11	2 <i>Andante</i>	4:12
12	3 <i>Un poco allegro</i>	2:24

Sonata 5 in C major (BWV 529)

13	<i>1 Allegro</i>	4:47
14	<i>2 Largo</i>	4:17
15	<i>3 Allegro</i>	3:34

Sonata 6 in G major (BWV 530)

16	<i>1 [Vivace]</i>	3:27
17	<i>2 Lente</i>	6:28
18	<i>3 Allegro</i>	3:29

Total playing time 71:32

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Recording & editing: Paul Arden-Taylor
www.dinmore-records.co.uk

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The Sonatas à 2 *Clav. et Pedal* by J. S. Bach

According to Bach's first biographer Johann Nicolaus Forkel in 1802, the Six Sonatas (BWV 525-530) were composed for Bach's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann (b. 1710), and were compiled between 1727 and 1730. Forkel's statement occurs within the section 'Organ Pieces', echoing Bach's Obituary (1754) in which they are described as '*Sechs Trio für die Orgel mit dem obligaten Pedale*', although playing them on a two-manual and pedal clavichord (or even harpsichord) must have been a practical and realistic alternative. The set as a whole gives a good idea of Bach's methods of compiling collections, several movements being arranged from pre-existing works. The first movement of Sonata IV is an arrangement of the eighth movement of Cantata 76, and the second movement of Sonata III was subsequently arranged by Bach for flute, violin and harpsichord for the second movement of the Concerto in A minor (BWV 1044). The Bach scholar Peter Williams went further in considering that only half-a-dozen movements were composed particularly for the Six Sonatas, the rest being arrangements of pre-existing organ and instrumental works. Tonalities were carefully planned with three major and three minor keys, and the collection as a whole is a fine example of Italianate chamber music, demonstrating all that can be done with trios: concerto ritornello in no. VI/1, rondo fugue in IV/3, binary slow and fast movements in I, *da capo* forms in V/1 and III/1, and fugal finales in IV and VI.

The free transfer of pre-existing musical material between different instrumental and vocal media was a feature of Bach's working procedures, although in these days rather less focus has been given to Bach's re-workings than to his original versions in the desire for greater 'authenticity'. Throughout his life, though, there are examples of early versions of music that became extended and re-worked for later collections (particular preludes and fugues from the Well-Tempered Clavier being a good

example). Works for one medium could also be re-arranged and adapted for different instrumental combinations. For example, the violin concertos in E major (BWV 1042), A minor (BWV 1041) and the double violin concerto in D minor (BWV 1043) were subsequently arranged as harpsichord concertos, but transposed to keys one tone lower. The D minor harpsichord concerto (BWV 1052), itself considered to be an arrangement of a lost violin concerto, was also rearranged as an obbligato organ sinfonia in Cantata 146. Brandenburg Concerto no. 3, for nine string parts plus *basso continuo*, was given added oboes and horns for the version found in Cantata 174, and the Prelude from the solo violin Partita in E major (BWV 1006) was completely re-arranged as the Sinfonia in D major for organ obbligato, three trumpets, timpani, oboes and strings in Cantata 29. A full list of Bach's own arrangements and reworkings is beyond the scope of these notes, but there is no doubt that pre-existing musical material was often refashioned (and often extended) for different instruments and contexts, much like a master-craftsman who never wastes any of his materials but re-works them as a consequence of greater imagination, intellectual perspicacity, and a desire to exploit the maximum potential inherent in any piece of musical structure. The value of such arrangements for us is that they allow greater insights into a composer's compositional processes, and which have the potential for presenting new insights and different characters that might not be evident in the original pieces. They also have the potential to give audiences a fresh vision to works that were previously considered to be 'familiar'.

My justification for arranging these works for two harpsichords derives from the preface to François Couperin's *L'apothéose de Lully* (1725) in which he describes the manner in which he often played trio sonatas on two harpsichords:

Trios . . . can be played on two harpsichords . . . I play them with my family and pupils with very happy success, namely, by playing the first

treble part and the bass on one of the harpsichords; and the second treble part and the same bass on the other harpsichord tuned to the same pitch.

Now, it is highly unlikely that Couperin knew Bach's Organ Trio Sonatas, but one of Couperin's musical missions was to render equal status to Italian and French styles, and many of his trio movements are written in Italian style, particularly that of Corelli. Likewise, Bach's trio sonatas are thoroughly Italian in style, being essays in the three-movement *sonata da chiesa* developed from Corelli. Hence, for me, the experiment of arranging Bach's Organ Trio Sonatas (BWV 525-530) was too tempting to resist. Furthermore, with two harpsichords whose compasses extend down to bottom FF, a fifth lower than the organ, opportunities are presented for playing the bass down an octave, at both 8-foot and 16-foot pitches, and both the harpsichordists' right hands have the potential to fill in some continuo chords when opportunities arise. The result is a transformation of these famous trio sonatas, giving them a character that is neither better nor worse than interpretations on the organ, but very different and no less exciting.

David Ponsford 2020

The instruments played on this recording were both based on particular historical instruments: the harpsichord by Jean Claude Goujon (Paris, 1749) made by Andrew Garlick, and a harpsichord by J. H. Harrass (Gross-Breitenbach, early 18th century) made by Huw Saunders. Both instruments have two keyboards, and have the same specification of two 8-foots, one 4-foot and a buff. Pitch: A415. Temperament: Vallotti



David Ponsford is an organist, harpsichordist, musicologist and conductor, and an authority on keyboard music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He held the Greenwood Exhibition at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and was extremely fortunate to be able to study organ with Peter Hurford, Lionel Rogg and Piet Kee, and harpsichord with Kenneth Gilbert and Gustav Leonhardt. His first post after graduating from Cambridge was Assistant Organist at Wells Cathedral. Later, he studied for a Ph.D on performance practice in French Baroque organ music with Professor Peter Williams. For 17 years he delivered courses in Performance Practice and Notation & Editing at Cardiff University, as well as conducting the University Chamber Orchestra

and the University Choir. He also taught at Bristol University and has given several series of lectures at Madingley Hall, Cambridge.

David Ponsford has an extensive discography, having recorded all four parts of J. S. Bach's *Clavierübung*, the complete series of Bach violin sonatas with Jacqueline Ross, 'Parthenia' (1612), and the complete Handel recorder sonatas with Alan Davis. Currently he is recording a series of CDs of French Baroque organ music on historical French organs for Nimbus, including the Couperin Masses from La Flèche (Vols. 1 & 2), the Clérambault Suites from Saint-Michel-en-Thiérache (Vol. 3), Nicolas de Grigny's *Livre d'orgue* from Sarlat Cathedral (Vol. 5), and the *Pièces d'orgue* by Louis Marchand from Saint-Antoine l'Abbaye (Vol. 7).

David has been Publications Officer for the British Institute of Organ Studies, and together with Anne Page founded the Cambridge Academy of Organ Studies. Recently, he has given concerts in Singapore, Poland, Germany, New York and Montreal, in addition to Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, the London Oratory, St George's Hanover Square and Trinity College, Cambridge. His edition of Biber's Mystery Sonatas was published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna, in 2007, and his book 'French Organ Music in the Reign of Louis XIV' was published by Cambridge University Press in May 2011, subsequently released in paperback in 2016. His edition of Nicolas de Grigny's *Premier livre d'orgue* was published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna, in 2019. www.DavidPonsford.org

David Hill

Renowned for his fine musicianship, David Hill is widely respected as both a choral and orchestral conductor. His talent has been recognised by his appointments as Musical Director of The Bach Choir, Music Director of Leeds Philharmonic Society, Associate Guest conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor of Yale Schola Cantorum, and International Chair in Choral Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music. He was Chief Conductor of the BBC Singers from September 2007 to September 2017 and is a former Music Director of Southern Sinfonia.

Born in Carlisle and educated at Chetham's School of Music, of which he is now a Governor, he was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists at the remarkably young age of 17. Having been Organ Scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, David Hill returned to hold the post of Director of Music from 2004-2007. His other appointments have included Master of the Music at Winchester Cathedral, Master of the Music at Westminster Cathedral and Artistic Director of the Philharmonia Chorus. He holds an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Southampton for Services to

Music, and in March 2018, he was honoured with the prestigious Royal College of Organists medal, in recognition of distinguished achievement in choral conducting and organ playing.

David Hill has a broad-ranging discography covering repertoire from Thomas Tallis to a number of world premiere recordings. As well as achieving prestigious Grammy and Gramophone Awards, many of his discs have been recommended as Critic's Choices. His ongoing series of English choral music for Naxos has received particular acclaim including being shortlisted for the 2010 Gramophone Awards.



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Hill has appeared with the BBC Symphony and BBC Philharmonic orchestras, London Philharmonic, City of London Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Orchestra and Chorus of Welsh National Opera, the Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North, Ulster Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Omaha Symphony, as well as the Netherlands Radio Choir and RIAS Chamber Choir, Berlin.

In January 2019 David Hill was awarded an MBE for services to music.

Also available on Nimbus Alliance

David Ponsford has recorded a series of recitals on specially selected historic French organs under the title 'French Organ Music from the Golden Age'

Vol. 1: François Couperin NI 6213

Messe pour les couvents, and Pierre Du Mage, *Premier livre d'orgue*.

Organ by Lavasseur/Dangeville (1640/1772), restored 1996, in the Prytanée National Militaire, La Flèche, France.

Vol. 2: François Couperin NI6225

Messe pour les paroisses, and Charpentier, *Messe pour les instruments* (1674), transcribed for organ by David Ponsford.

Organ by Lavasseur/Dangeville (1640/1772), restored 1996, in the Prytanée National Militaire, La Flèche, France.

Vol. 3: André Raison, Messe du premier ton (1688) & Louis-Nicolas Clérambault, Suites du premier and du deuxième tons (c1710) NI 6268

Organ by Jean Boizard (1714) in the Abbey of Saint-Michel-en-Thiérache, France.

Vol. 4: Guillaume-Gabriel Nivers NI 6292

Suite du premier ton (1665), *Offerte en fugue et dialogue* (1667) and *Suite du premier ton* (1675); Nicolas-Antoine Lebègue, pieces from *Troisième livre d'orgue* (1685).

Organ by Jean de Joyeuse (1694)/Jean-François Muno (1998) in Auch Cathedral.

Vol. 5: Nicolas de Grigny, Premier livre d'orgue (1699) NI 6342

Plainchant sung by L'école de Nivers with Philip Humphries (serpent).

Organ by Jean-François Lépine (1752)/Bertrand Cattiaux (2005) in Sarlat Cathedral.

Vol. 6 : Jacques Boyvin, NI 6358

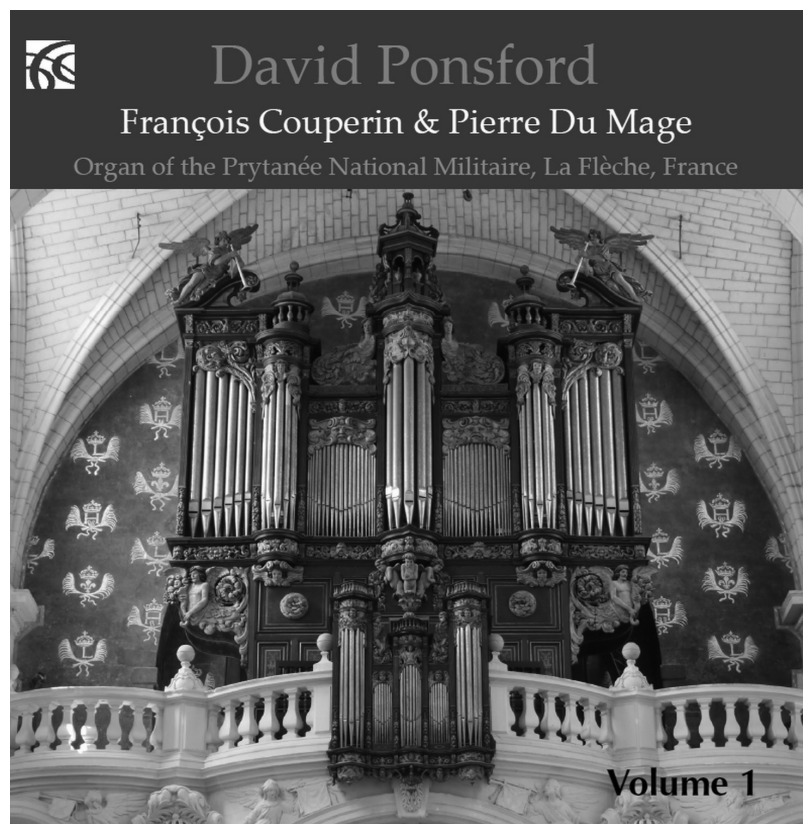
Suites from the *Premier* and *Second livres d'orgue* (1690, 1700).

Organ in Saint-Michel, Bolbec, by Guillaume Lesselier (1631), restored by Jean-Loup Boisseau and Bertrand Cattiaux (1998).

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Marchand, *Premier Livre*, *Deuxième Livre* (exc), *Troisième Livre* (exc), *5^e Livre*
Guilain, *Suite du premier ton*, *Suite du second ton*

Organ by Samson Scherrer/Bernard Aubertin, Saint-Antoine l'Abbaye (1748/1992)



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David Ponsford & David Hill

JS Bach - Six Organ Trio Sonatas BWV 525 - 530

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Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

1-3	Sonata 1 in E-flat major	12:35
4-6	Sonata 2 in C minor	10:08
7-9	Sonata 3 in D minor	13:51
10-12	Sonata 4 in E minor	8:56
13-15	Sonata 5 in C major	12:38
16-18	Sonata 6 in G major	13:24

Total playing time 71:32

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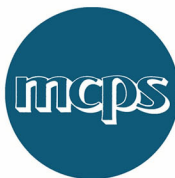
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