

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: **BACH TO BASICS: A PERFORMANCE
STUDY OF THE SUITES FOR SOLO CELLO
BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH,
BWV 1007-1012**

Adele Hall Carter, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2006

Directed By: **Professor of Cello, Evelyn Elsing, School of
Music**

This dissertation project focuses on J.S. Bach's Six Suites and explores the ideology of the Suites as etudes versus concert pieces. It is my belief that the evolution of the rank of the Suites in a cellist's repertoire today represents more than just historical coincidence. My premise is that the true genius of the Suites lies in their dual role as both efficient teaching pieces and superior performance works. Consequently, the maximum use of Bach's Six Suites as pedagogical material heightens both technical ability and deeper appreciation of the art. The dual nature of the Suites must always be emphasized: not only do these pieces provide innumerable opportunities for building cello technique, but they also offer material for learning the fundamentals of melody, harmony, dynamics, phrasing and texture. It is widely accepted among academic musicians that Bach's keyboard music serves as perfect

compositions -- the model for music theory, music form and music counterpoint. I argue that we should employ the Cello Suites to this same end.

The order in which the Suites are presented was deliberately chosen to highlight the contrasts in the pieces. Because the technical demands of each suite grow progressively from the previous one, they were performed non-consecutively in order to balance the difficulty and depth of each recital. The first compact disc consists of the Third Suite in C Major and Fifth Suite in C minor (with *scordatura* tuning), emphasizing the parallel keys. The Second Suite in D Minor and the Fourth Suite in E-flat Major comprises the compact disc. Finally, in the third compact disc, the First Suite in G Major and the Sixth Suite in D Major (composed for the five-string cello piccola, but played here on a four-string cello) highlights the progression of the Suites.

**BACH TO BASICS: A PERFORMANCE STUDY OF THE SUITES FOR SOLO
CELLO BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, BWV 1007-1012**

By

Adele Hall Carter

**Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
2006**

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Chapter 1: Compact Disc 1

DMA Recital One

Adele Carter, Cello

Live Recording, December 11, 2005: Ulrich Recital Hall, University of Maryland

[1]-[6] Suite No. 3 in C major, BWV 1009

[7]-[12] Suite No. 5 in C minor, BWV 1011

Chapter 2: Compact Disc 2

DMA Recital Two

Adele Carter, Cello

Live Recording, April 18, 2006: Ulrich Recital Hall, University of Maryland

[1]-[6] Suite No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1008

[7]-[12] Suite No. 4 in E-flat major, BWV 1010

Chapter 3: Compact Disc 3

DMA Recital Three

Adele Carter, Cello

Live Recording, October 8, 2006: Gildehorn Recital Hall, University of Maryland

[1]-[6] Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007

[7]-[12] Suite No. 6 in D major, BWV 1012

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