ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: "BACH IN A NEW LIGHT"

REIMAGINING THREE KEYBOARD

PARTITAS FOR DOUBLE REED QUARTET

Lydia Rose Consilvio, Doctor of Musical Arts

in Oboe Performance, 2020

Dissertation directed by: Professor of Oboe, Mark Hill, School of Music

My project is an arrangement and recording of Johann Sebastian Bach's Keyboard Partitas Nos. 1, 3, and 4 (BWV 825, 827, and 828) for two oboes, English horn, and bassoon. I used the Bach Gesellschaft score to create the arrangement as new pieces of chamber music in the double reed repertoire, and professionally recorded this music for eventual commercial distribution. The on-campus recital on November 1, 2019 included all three arrangements. For both the recital and recording, I played the first oboe part alongside University of Maryland faculty members Mark Hill on second oboe, Joseph Grimmer on bassoon, and recent UMD DMA graduate Michael Homme on English horn. We call ourselves the Terpsichore Double Reed Consort.

My arrangements of these partitas from keyboard to double reed quartet allow the genius of Bach's music to be appreciated in a new light. Phrases can be shaped and differentiated with dynamics that are not possible on the original harpsichord. Pitches that could not be sustained on the keyboard can now be held for their full value, the resulting harmonies creating beautiful new sonorities. Additionally, Bach's magnificent contrapuntal writing, which is sometimes buried in the singular timbre of the keyboard, can now be divided among four instruments, allowing the distinct voices Bach writes (sometimes even within one line) to be clearly heard and differentiated. These arrangements present a fresh and enhanced embodiment of these great works that add depth, shape, and color, allowing listeners an opportunity to hear them in a new way.

"BACH IN A NEW LIGHT" REIMAGINING THREE KEYBOARD PARTITAS FOR DOUBLE REED QUARTET

by

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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 in Oboe Performance

2020

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Dedication

To my mum, dad, sisters Hope and Annabel, brother-in-law Travis, and my first niece who is about to enter the world.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the instrumentalists who contributed their time, energy, talent, and insight to making the recording and arrangements a success. It has been a pleasure working and performing alongside these musicians: University of Maryland Professor Mark Hill on oboe, UMD Professor Joseph Grimmer on bassoon, and recent UMD DMA graduate Michael Homme on English horn who, along with myself, make up the Terpsichore Double Reed Consort.

I would also like to thank Kenneth Slowik for his expertise in coaching sessions, helping me edit and adjust the arrangements, and producing us in the booth for the recording session of Partita No. 1. I would like to thank James Ross for his enthusiastic contribution as a producer in the booth for Partitas Nos. 3 and 4. I would like to thank Antonino d'Urzo for his fine recording and editing skills. I would also like to thank the members of my committee for their input and guidance along the way, particularly from Dr. Eric Kutz. Additionally, I would like to thank Elizabeth Massey for her help with editing and formatting this document.

Finally, I would like to give an extra special thanks to my teacher Professor Mark Hill for being so supportive of this project, believing in me and in the power of these arrangements, and for dedicating so much time working with me to find ways to improve the project. This includes playing through the arrangements together in the early stages, as well as editing the recording sessions with Antonino. The amount of expertise involved in this project is astounding, and I am so grateful for each and every person who contributed and encouraged us along the way. Thank you all for your support!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) was the culminating figure of the Baroque period. His music is recognized widely for the genius of its artful complexity, its formal and harmonic brilliance, and its emotional depth. This is partially due to Bach's groundbreaking mastery of counterpoint, following strict rules and formulas to create astoundingly complex music, genius in both its horizontal and vertical artistry. Additionally, Bach created his own structures, systems, and symbolism. Anthony Newman, performer and specialist of the Baroque period and particularly of J.S. Bach, shows that there is musical evidence of Bach using numerical symbolism even to sign his name in music as a trademark of sorts. ¹

Elaborating on that use of structure, Bach tended to write sets of pieces in varying genres in groups of six. Newman speculates that Bach used numbers to achieve order, logic, and perfection in his art.² The number six may be a reference to the six days of the Creation story.³ To name a few examples, Bach wrote six Brandenburg Concerti (BWV 1046–1051), six organ trio sonatas (BWV 825–830), six violin suites (BWV 1001–1006), six cello suites (BWV 1007–1012), and among his nineteen suites for keyboard, he wrote six English suites (BWV 806–811), six French suites (BWV 812–817), and six Partitas (BWV 825–830). In fact, Bach's six partitas were originally intended to be seven partitas and we do not know why the seventh partita was not published.⁴ Once again referencing Bach's use of order and

¹ Anthony Newman, *Bach and the Baroque* (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1995), 182.

² Newman, *Bach and the Baroque*, 195.

³ Newman, Bach and the Baroque, 195.

⁴ Christoph Wolff, *Bach: Essays on His Life and Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 189.

logic, biographer Christophe Wolff explains that Bach intended each of the seven partitas to be ordered by alternating upward and downward intervals in sequential order, as shown in figure 1.⁵

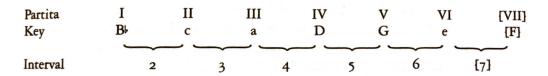


Figure 1. J.S. Bach's plan for structuring his Partita compositions *Source:* Christoph Wolff, *Bach: Essays on His Life and Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 189.

In 1726, when Bach was 41 years old, he had only recently assumed the post as cantor and music director at the Church of St. Thomas in Leipzig, a position previously held by organist Johann Kuhnau. That same year, Bach wrote Partita No. 1 in BbMajor, BWV 825, for the birthday of Emanuel Ludwig, the prince of Anhalt-Cothen, who sadly passed away at the age of two.6 In 1731, Bach published the six partitas as a part of his comprehensive publication project, Clavier-Übung.7 Bach borrowed the name "Clavier-Übung" (meaning "keyboard exercise") from Kuhnau, who is thought to have been the first to use the term to publish a collection of organ compositions.8 Bach used the term "partita" to mean 'suite,' or a collection of musical pieces, to describe his six partitas and their contents.9

⁵ Wolff, *Bach*, 189.

⁶ Valenti, Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach, 1-3.

⁷ Fernando Valenti, *A Performer's Guide to the Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 1–3.

⁸ Wolff, Bach, 190.

⁹ David Fuller and Cliff Eisen, "Partita," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, accessed April 12, 2020, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000020982?rskey=UIRYCq)

Bach's keyboard partitas—or suites—are comprised primarily of movements based on Renaissance dance forms, such as the allemande, courante, sarabande, burlesca, minuet, and gigue. Each is influenced by the step pattern of that particular dance. Based on Baroque specialist Anthony Newman's observations in Bach and the Baroque, the allemande is often the first movement of a Baroque dance suite, sometimes preceded by a prelude or large-scale orchestral-style movement. 10 Most allemandes are in duple meter have a moderate tempo with dotted rhythms that are associated with formal occasions. 11 The courante is another moderately slow dance involving leaps from the dancers. It is in triple meter and similarly in binary form. The sarabande is a slow and steady dance in triple meter, often with a sensual connotation. The principal feature of the gentle sarabande is its rhythmic stress of quarter note then half note, or half note then quarter note, meaning there is usually an emphasis on the second beat in triple meter. 12 The burlesca is a comic movement often in triple meter. The minuet is a graceful, sprightly, and extremely popular dance, often with two-measure phrases in triple meter. 13 The gigue is a fast and light dance using triplet rhythms (evocative of limericks in poetry) and in Bach's case, tend to be imitative. Bach's Partita No. 4 also includes an Aria, which is not a dance but instead implies a lyrical vocal song. Bach freely interpreted the aria genre and gave the aria in Partita No. 4 a more "raucous" melody than was traditional. 14

¹⁰ Newman, Bach and the Baroque, 139.

¹¹ Newman, Bach and the Baroque, 139.

¹² Newman, Bach and the Baroque, 141.

¹³ Newman, Bach and the Baroque, 142.

¹⁴ Valenti, Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach, 81.

I chose to arrange Partitas Nos. 1, 3, and 4 (BWV 825, 827, and 828) for double reed quartet for two main reasons: (1) Bach's writing fits within the range represented by this combination of double reed instruments (two oboes, English horn, and bassoon), and (2) the counterpoint between voices (usually two or three) that Bach used can be spread evenly across four wind instruments. I wanted to ensure that each instrument had involved and interesting parts, while also being mindful of the challenges of breathing and endurance for each player (something about which a keyboard player would not be concerned).

On a personal note, I wanted to explore Bach deeply, as I believe him to be the greatest composer of all time. I was inspired by virtuoso Chris Thile's transcriptions of Bach on the mandolin, understanding that Bach's music is not necessarily meant for formal concert halls but also for foot-stomping gatherings. The music of J.S. Bach is extremely versatile, sometimes "earthy" and "evoking a certain peasant joviality." As Valenti suggests about the Aria in Bach's Partita No. 4, "People should try to think of Papa Bach holding a stein of beer in his hand and bellowing some rustic tune in the company of his family and friends." I appreciate that the Terpsichore Double Reed Consort was able to perform my arrangements at Maryland Meadworks in October 2019 to capture the down-home spirit of Bach's music.

According to Anthony Newman, "most people agree that the music of Bach can be performed on any instrument, by anybody, and that some musical impact is

¹⁵ Chris Thile, "Genre Hopping with Chris Thile," Wall Street Journal, August 23, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXDL6_3gFu0.

¹⁶ Valenti, Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach, 81.

¹⁷ Valenti, Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach, 81.

always felt."18 The malleable qualities of Bach's writing allow for his music to be successfully transcribed and arranged for other instrumentation. My arrangements of his partitas from keyboard to double reed quartet (two oboes, English horn, and bassoon) allow Bach's music to be heard and appreciated in a new way, displaying Bach's compositional ingenuity even more obviously than the original work for two main reasons. First, the double reed consort can provide dynamic shaping that is inherently impossible on the harpsichord. This is because pitches that could not be sustained on the keyboard can now be held and shaped, the dissonances and resolutions creating previously unheard textures. Second, the two- and three-part writing can now be divided among four instruments, allowing Bach's contrapuntal voices and phrases to be heard more clearly and separately than on the monochromatic timbre of a keyboard. This new incarnation of these long-familiar works presents them in a new light that expands the range of shaping and coloristic possibilities inherent in the music but difficult or impossible to realize on harpsichord.

¹⁸ Newman, Bach and the Baroque, 243.

Chapter 2: Dynamic Shaping and the Ability to Sustain Pitches

These three partitas were written originally for harpsichord, a non-sustaining instrument. Once the key is plucked, the sound dissipates quickly. Phrases cannot be shaped by crescendi and diminuendi (although terraced dynamics can be made by playing various passages on separate manuals on the instrument). These limitations lead performances on the harpsichord to be expressive in other ways—mainly with ornamentation, limited variation in articulation and note length, and rhythmic freedom. Examples of this kind of expression can be heard in the harpsichord recordings by Ton Koopman and Trevor Pinnock.¹⁹

Newman discusses how music originally written for Baroque instruments, such as the harpsichord, is adapted by performers on modern instruments, such as the piano. In the Baroque era, strong beats and measures were emphasized by playing them louder on instruments with dynamic variety (like the violin) or by stretching them in time on instruments without dynamic variety (like the harpsichord). When interpreting Baroque music on the modern piano, performers could either pretend there is no dynamic range on the modern piano—to imitate the harpsichord—and use rhythmic alterations exclusively, or make full use of the dynamic range of the piano and avoid rhythmic alterations. Newman argues that neither of these options is particularly satisfying and offers the suggestion of combining the two ideas for a

¹⁹ Johann Sebastian Bach, Johann Sebastian Bach: Six Partitas for Harpsichord, (Clavier Übung I), BWV 825–830, with Ton Koopman (harpsichord), recorded 2012, Challenge Classics 72574, 2012, CD; Johann Sebastian Bach, Six Partitas, BWV 825–830, with Trevor Pinnock (harpsichord), Haenssler Classic, 2000, CD.

²⁰ Newman, *Bach and the Baroque*, 245.

sweet balance of the modern piano's dynamic range while making use of the improvisatory rhythmic freedom and expression of the Baroque.

With the advent of the pianoforte in 1790 (after J.S. Bach's time), a more sustained sound via use of the damper pedal, a much broader range of touch and articulation, and the potential for crescendi and diminuendi gave Bach's music a chance to be played with a wider interpretive palette. The now well-known piano recordings by Glenn Gould, Charles Owen, Piotr Anderszewski, Andrew Rangell, and performances of these partitas were a step towards imagining these pieces without the limitations of the harpsichord.²¹ The double reed quartet takes dynamic variety one step further than the piano; wind instruments can sustain pitches indefinitely and crescendo and diminuendo throughout a single note. This dynamic shaping allows Bach's writing to be heard even more clearly than the original work for Baroque keyboard.

An example of this kind of sustaining can be seen in figure 2. There is beautiful dissonance in Bach's writing that is not heard clearly due to the decay of the keyboard, but which sounds gratifying with the dynamic intensification of wind instruments. In the arrangement for double reed quartet (fig. 3), the dissonance is more audible due to the dynamic intensification of wind instruments. Notice the D in oboe 1 against the C# in oboe 2 at the beginning of measure 15; on the keyboard, the

²¹ Johann Sebastian Bach, *Glenn Gould Plays Bach's Partitas BWV 825-830*, with Glenn Gould, piano, Chapel Music, 2015, CD; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Bach: The Six Keyboard Partitas*, with Charles Owen (piano), recorded December 17–19, 2015, April 16–17, 2016, June 4–5, 2016, Avie 2366, 2017, CD; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Bach Partitas 1, 3, 6*, with Piotr Anderszewski (piano), recorded November 2001, Virgin Classics 5.45526.2, 2002, CD; Johann Sebastian Bach, *The Six Partitas for Keyboard, BWV 825–830*, with Andrew Rangell, piano, recorded 2000, Dorian 93242, 2001, CD.

C# would have decayed and barely been audible at the entrance of the half-step dissonant D against it. However, the oboes can crescendo toward the dissonance and come away as it resolves to create a more musically satisfying ebb and flow.

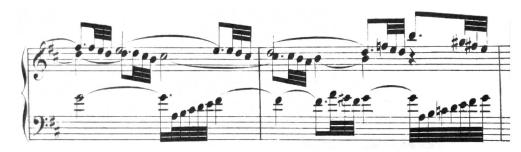


Figure 2. Partita No. 4, Overture mm. 14–15 Source: Johann Sebastian Bach, Clavierübung Part 1, in Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition (New York: Dover, 1970), 166.



Figure 3. Partita No. 4, Overture mm. 14–15 *Source:* Lydia Rose Consilvio, *J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet* (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).

Chapter 3: Instrumentation of Bach's Counterpoint

Separation of Voices and Phrases

Voices

While there is generally a two- and three-part texture in these partitas, there are often two implied voices within at least one of those lines. This makes for a great opportunity to split those voices between instruments, therefore highlighting the genius of Bach's writing. For instance, figure 4 shows the right hand of the keyboard playing two voices, the top melodic voice being the ascending D-Eb-Fin measure 5, and the lower melodic voice being the descending Ab-G-Fin the same measure.



Figure 4. Partita No. 1, Minuet mm. 1–7

Source: Johann Sebastian Bach, Clavierübung Part 1, in Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition (New York: Dover, 1970), 137.

Those lines are divided between oboe 1 and oboe 2 in the double reed quartet arrangement (fig. 5), creating a charming musical exchange between the two voices.



Figure 5. Partita No. 1, Minuet mm. 1–9 *Source:* Lydia Rose Consilvio, *J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet* (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).

Phrases

In addition to a division of voices, my arrangements also feature a separation of phrases between instruments. The opening of the minuet in fig. 5 is a musical sentence with the "basic idea" repeated after two measures. Oboe 1 presents the idea first, making a statement of its own. Oboe 2 then shares a supportive thought in response to the basic idea that oboe 1 presented. This exchange creates a musical conversation, outlining the phrases more overtly than the original work for a singular instrument.

Another example of a musical conversation is the fugal gigue of Partita No. 3 (fig. 6). The right hand begins with a two-measure phrase, then continues while the left hand enters with the same opening phrase in a different key area.



Figure 6. Partita No. 3, Gigue mm. 1–7 *Source:* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Clavierübung Part 1*, in *Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition* (New York: Dover, 1970), 164.

While there already is a difference in pitch and key area between these two similar lines, the double reed arrangement (fig. 7) provides a timbral difference as well. The English horn begins the fugue, and the bassoon imitates the line, clearly outlining start of a new voice with their timbral differences.





Figure 7. Partita No. 3, Gigue mm. 1–4 *Source:* Lydia Rose Consilvio, *J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet* (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).

Modifications to Original Score

Performance Practice

I made every effort to remain as true to Bach's original writing as possible using the Bach Gesellschaft, indicating in the score any major editorial changes. For instance, the Bach Gesellschaft has written-out dotted eighth-sixteenth notes in the left hand of the Courante in Partita No. 1 as demonstrated in figure 8.



Figure 8. Partita No. 1, Courante mm. 1-4

Source: Johann Sebastian Bach, Clavierübung Part 1, in Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition (New York: Dover, 1970), 134.

However, performance practice dictates that the sixteenth notes should be played simultaneously with the triplet eighth note figures in the right hand.²² Based on a performer's suggestion for ease of reading the part, in my arrangements I made the change from simple meter 3/4 triplets to compound meter 9/8 eighth notes as seen in figure 9. I also aligned the triplets in my score, providing a visual cue for the historical performance practice, and indicated these changes in my editorial notes.



Figure 9. Partita No. 1, Corrente mm. 1–3

Source: Lydia Rose Consilvio, J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).

²² Valenti, Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach, 12.

Texture

While not always indicated in the original score for keyboard, I chose to layer the ends of many movements with doubling or tripling to embrace the concept of "organic dynamics" that Bach implements in his own writing.²³ This is the building of textures and addition of voices, which broadens the sound and implies greater dynamics with more intensity and a sense of finality. A prime example of this is the last measure and the final three eighth notes in the penultimate measure of the Prelude in Partita No. 1, seen in figure 10.



Figure 10. Partita No. 1, Prelude mm. 17–21 *Source:* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Clavierübung Part 1*, in *Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition* (New York: Dover, 1970), 131.

The six-note texture at the end is much thicker than the three-voice texture that pervades most of the movement.

Figure 11 shows an example of my own "organic dynamics" in the Scherzo of Partita No. 3, compared to the two-voice texture in the original score for keyboard

²³ Valenti, Keyboard Partitas of J.S. Bach, 9.

(fig. 12). In my arrangement (fig. 11), I decided to build the texture toward the end of the movement by giving the melodic material to the upper three woodwinds. This choice also embraces the nasal reedy quality of the arrangement, the unison double reeds almost resembling the sound of a bagpipe.

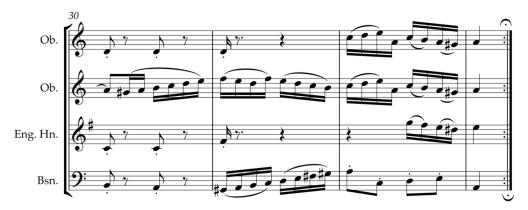


Figure 11. Partita No. 3, Scherzo mm. 30–33 *Source:* Lydia Rose Consilvio, *J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet* (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).



Figure 12. Partita No. 3, Scherzo mm. 30–33 *Source:* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Clavierübung Part 1*, in *Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition* (New York: Dover, 1970), 163.

It is not uncommon for oboes to be heard in unison in works by J.S. Bach. Figure 13 contains an example of this from his cantata *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, BWV 191. Oboe 1 is the fifth line of the score, and oboe 2 is in the sixth line of the score. Notice their rhythmic and melodic unison during an energetic section of the piece.



Figure 13. *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, BWV 191, p. 13 *Source:* "International Music Score Library Project," *International Music Score Library Project* (Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe, March 4, 2007), http://ks4.imslp.net/files/imglnks/usimg/e/e0/IMSLP04183-Bach_-_BGA_-_BWV_191.pdf).

Another example of a texture in the original keyboard composition that was impossible to duplicate in the double reed arrangement is the last chord of the Prelude in Partita No. 1 (fig. 10). In my arrangement (fig. 14), I kept the essential voices of root, third, and fifth, doubling the root only once in my arrangement. I also spread out the chord out across the octaves, placing the English horn F (written C) down an octave in efforts to capture the expansiveness of the original keyboard chord.

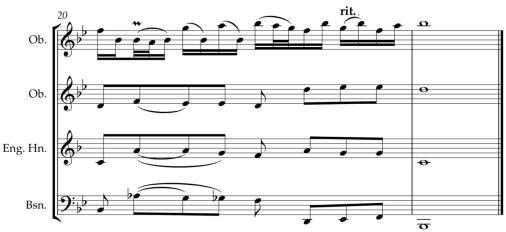


Figure 14. Partita No. 1, Prelude mm. 20–21 Source: Lydia Rose Consilvio, *J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet* (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).

Range

There were a few places I encountered problems with notes extending beyond the double reed range. For instance, in the Scherzo of Partita No. 3 (shown in measure 30 of figs. 11 and 12), not only were there not enough instruments between the four of us to cover the voices, but the ones we could cover would not be in the proper octave (the lowest note on the oboe being B\bar{3}). In my arrangement, it was not possible for the melody to remain in the highest voice as it is in the Bach Gesellschaft. However, the range and thickness of this texture were not essential to

capturing the overall jocular character of the Scherzo in the eighth notes of measure 30.

A slightly more complicated example of a place I needed to diverge from the voicing of the Bach Gesellschaft in figure 15 is shown in figure 16. Notice the D in beat 2 in the right hand of measure 12; In the quartet arrangement (fig. 16), the two oboes and English horn already have moving parts and cannot not play the D without interrupting the line, and the bassoon is holding a pedal note. I decided to move this D down several octaves to the bassoon, breaking up the pedal note and giving the bassoon more motion. The movement from A down to D and back to A creates a plagal (IV–I) cadence and has become one of my favorite moments in the arrangement. I added the lower octave for the bassoon the second time through because I thought it was even more gratifying to be heard this way, special enough that it should only be heard the second time around. This note is unusual because it actually goes beyond the range of the bassoon and is not heard often. The bassoonist needs to place an extension at the top of the bell to make the instrument longer and lower in order to play this low A. It is one of a few other moments in the arrangement that calls for the low A, adding an extremely satisfying power and depth to the music.



Figure 15. Partita No. 4, Sarabande mm. 11–12 *Source:* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Clavierübung Part 1*, in *Johann Sebastian Bach: Keyboard Music—The Bach Gesellschaft Edition* (New York: Dover, 1970), 179.

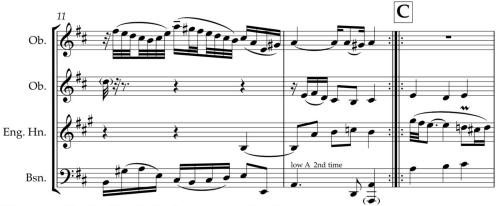


Figure 16. Partita No. 4, Sarabande mm. 11–13

Source: Lydia Rose Consilvio, J.S. Bach Keyboard Partitas Arranged for Double Reed Quartet (Washington, D.C.: Lydia Rose Consilvio, 2020).

Articulation Choices

Another artistic decision I needed to consider while making these arrangements was the matter of slurs and articulation. It would sound mechanical to have most everything tongued on wind instruments, as might be interpreted from Bach's score. The choice of slurs and articulation were often left up to the performer during the Baroque period and not necessarily notated; I indicated the slurring and articulations in my score as editorial suggestions in my editorial notes. After some trial and error with the ensemble, I decided on slur groupings and articulation patterns that would serve both the music and our instruments best. For instance, the articulation in oboe 1 in the beginning of the Courante of Partita No. 1 (fig. 9; compare to original composition in fig. 8) provides variety and direction to the melodic line, while the articulated notes in the bassoon and English horn provide clarity and structure.

Chapter 4: Capturing the Baroque Spirit

Reusing Musical Material

One common practice of the Baroque is the reuse of musical material in different compositions or for different instruments, and my arrangements are in keeping with that tradition. Bach himself often reused some of his own music in altered instrumentation in later compositions. For instance, his Concerto for Oboe and Violin, BWV 1060a, and his A Major Concerto for Oboe D'amore, BWV 1055, are generally believed to be two of a number of pieces that were later reworked as harpsichord concerti. Bach's *Art of Fugue* does not even indicate specific instrumentation, and it has since been played by many different solo instruments and ensembles. In another recent example of reusing musical material, the great oboist Heinz Holliger arranged and recorded Bach's organ trio sonatas, BWV 525–530, for oboe, viola, and continuo.

While I have found a few transcriptions and arrangements of Bach's six partitas in my research, my arrangements are unique for their double reed instrumentation, retention of the original key signatures, completeness of the entire partitas, and range that matches that of the original keyboard works. The low basso continuo is covered by the bassoon, and the melodic treble passages are covered by the oboe, with the English horn oscillating between the two roles. One arrangement I found is for three recorders (alto, tenor, and bass) which does not cover the expansive range of the original work. This arranger also transposed the work to C Major rather

²⁴ Keith Anderson, program notes for *Oboe d'Amore Concertos by J.S. Bach and Telemann*, with Thomas Stacy (oboe d'amore) and the Toronto Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Kevin Mallon, recorded August 27–30, 2007, Naxos 8.570735, 2008, CD.

than retaining the original key of B\(\text{Major}, \) likely to fit the range of the instruments better. This recorder arrangement of the two-minute Prelude of Partita No. 1 is one of several other arrangements and transcriptions I have found of individual movements rather than a complete partita. Others include a transcription of the Gigue from Partita No. 1 for harp—in E\(\text{Major} \) mather than the original B\(\text{Major} \)—and the Overture of Partita No. 4 arranged for orchestra, as well as an arrangement of the Gigue from Partita No. 6 for woodwind quintet. See the partita No. 6 for woodwind quintet.

The most complete arrangements I have found similar to my own are a violin and cello duet of the complete Partitas Nos. 2 and 3 in their original keys.²⁷ While this instrumentation is compelling, there were likely far less artistic decisions involved in creating these transcriptions because the string instruments have the ability to play multiple notes at once. This simplifies the decision about who will play what, and the score for this arrangement looks almost identical to the original keyboard score between the treble and bass clefs. String instruments are also able to play the continuous musical passages uninhibited by the need to breathe. A wind player would not be able to execute these partitas successfully without space to breathe. I accounted for this limitation of the breath in musical ways, creating a compelling separation of the inner voices and a conversational exchange of phrases in my arrangements. As

²⁵ Johann Sebastian Bach, *Prelude, Keyboard Partita No. 1 in BhMajor, BWV 825*, arr. for ATB recorder by R. D. Tennent, *IMSLP* (2011).

²⁶ Johann Sebastian Bach, *Partita No. 1 in BhMajor, BWV 825*, arr. for harp by Tiny Béon (Paris: Louis Rouhier, ca. 1908), *IMSLP*; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Partita in D Major, BWV 828*, arr. for orchestra by Thomas A. Schneider, *IMSLP* (2011); Johann Sebastian Bach, *Gigue, Partita No. 6 in E Minor, BWV 830*, arr. for woodwind quintet by Josh Mitteldorf (Josh Mitteldorf, 2019), *IMSLP*.

²⁷ Johann Sebastian Bach, *Partita in C minor, BWV 826*, Arr. for cello and violin by Russ Bartoli (Russ Bartoli, 2018), *IMSLP*.

previously explained, this part-writing is one of the main reasons my arrangements display Bach's clever counterpoint so clearly.

Double Reed Choir

The double reed instrumentation for my arrangements is reflective of Bach's affinity for the sound of the double reed choir. In addition to being incredibly prolific in his utilization of the oboe in his cantatas, concerti, oratorios, and orchestral suites, Bach loved and often used the color of the double reed choir in some of his most poignant music. Prime examples of this can be seen in Bach's St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244, and in his "Christmas Oratorio," BWV 248 (fig. 17). In this excerpt from the second cantata, Bach isolates the two oboes d'amour (in the third and forth lines of the score) and oboes da caccia (in the fifth and sixth lines of the score) to play as a double reed choir in measures 9–10.



Figure 17. Second Cantata from Bach's "Christmas Oratorio," mm. 8–11 *Source:* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Und es waren Hirten in derselben Gegend,* "Weihnachtsoratorium," BWV 248, ed. Wilhelm Rust (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1856), IMSLP.

Additionally, the original Renaissance dances that Bach used as inspiration for the keyboard partitas were typically played by consorts, small instrumental ensembles.²⁸ The choice of a double reed consort for my arrangements harkens back to the partitas' Renaissance roots. Therefore, my instrumentation captures both the original medium for the dance sets but also the Baroque taste and style of J.S. Bach.

²⁸ Warwick Edwards, "Consort," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, accessed April 13, 2020, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000006322.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

My double reed arrangements help to highlight the genius of J.S. Bach. The separation of voices and phrases outlines the perfect puzzle of Bach's composition. The double reed instruments' ability to sustain and shape dynamics allows harmonies to rise to the surface that otherwise only decayed. The double reed sound is clear, crisp, and has a vulnerable singing quality to it. Bach loved the oboe sound, and I believe he would have enjoyed hearing his keyboard compositions played in this way. These double reed arrangements communicate Bach's intentions clearly, presenting Bach in a new light.

Appendix A

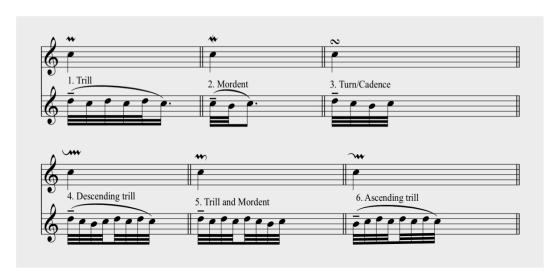
Double Reed Quartet (Two Oboes, English Horn, and Bassoon)

J.S. Bach arr. Lydia Rose Consilvio

Partita No. 1 in B-flat major, BWV 825

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Guide to Playing Ornaments



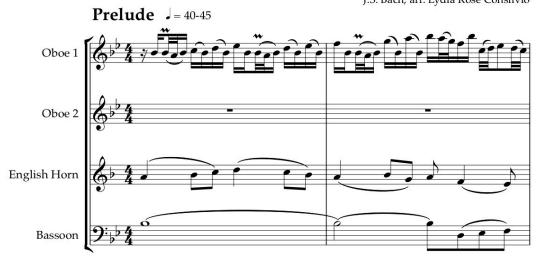
Editorial Notes:

All tempo ranges and articulations are my own suggestions, not necessarily markings of J.S. Bach. The Corrente was originally written in 3/4 time with triplets notated simultaneously with dotted rhythms. The current version has been changed to 9/8 time so that sixteenth notes line up with eighth note triplets, as performance practice dictates. The ornamentations indicated above may have more or less trills in the context of the music, depending on the note length to which it belongs.

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Partita No. 1 in B-flat major, BWV 825

J.S. Bach, arr. Lydia Rose Consilvio





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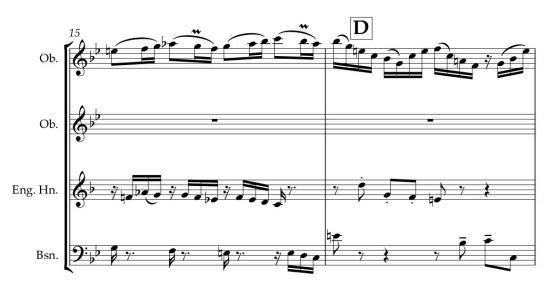


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Appendix B

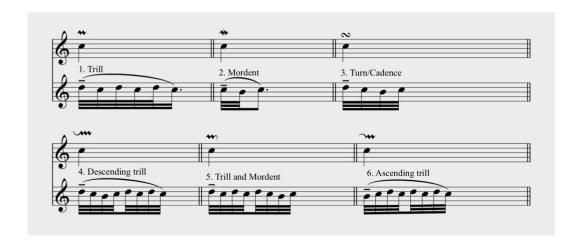
Double Reed Quartet (Two Oboes, English Horn, and Bassoon)

J.S. Bach arr. Lydia Rose Consilvio

Partita No. 3 in A minor, BWV 827

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Partita No. 3 in A minor, BWV 827

J.S. Bach, arr. Lydia Rose Consilvio



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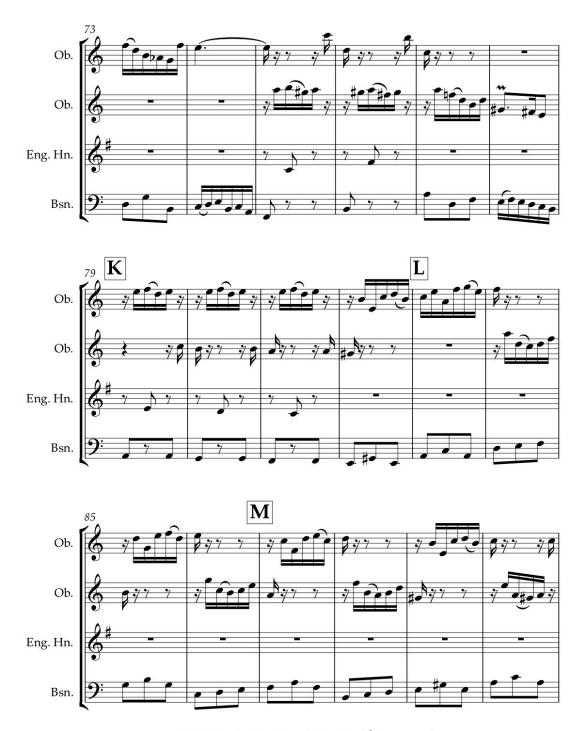


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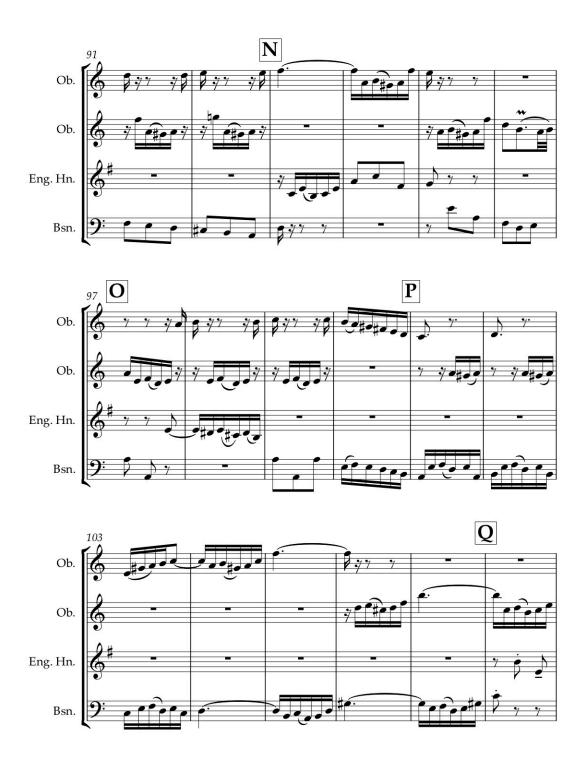


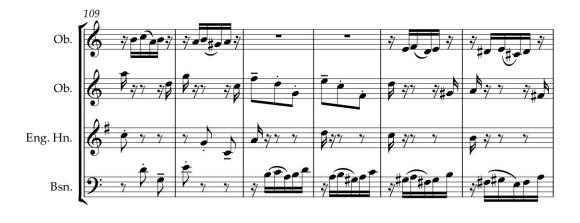


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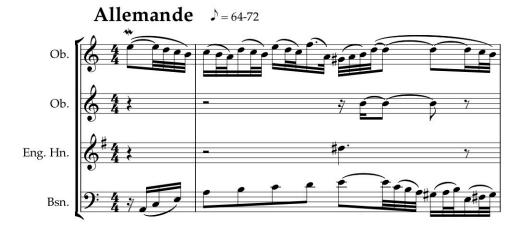


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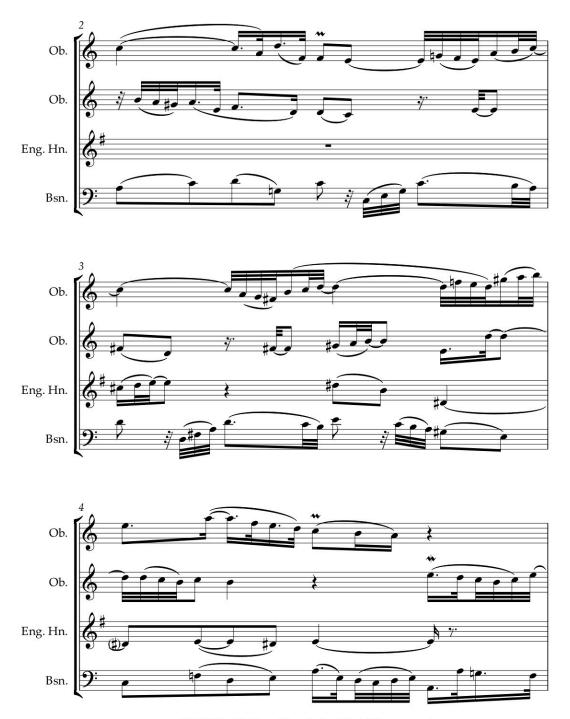








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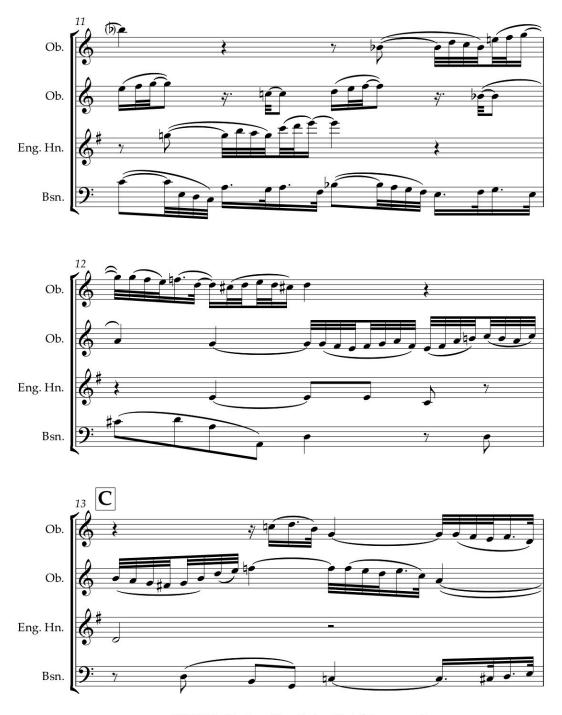
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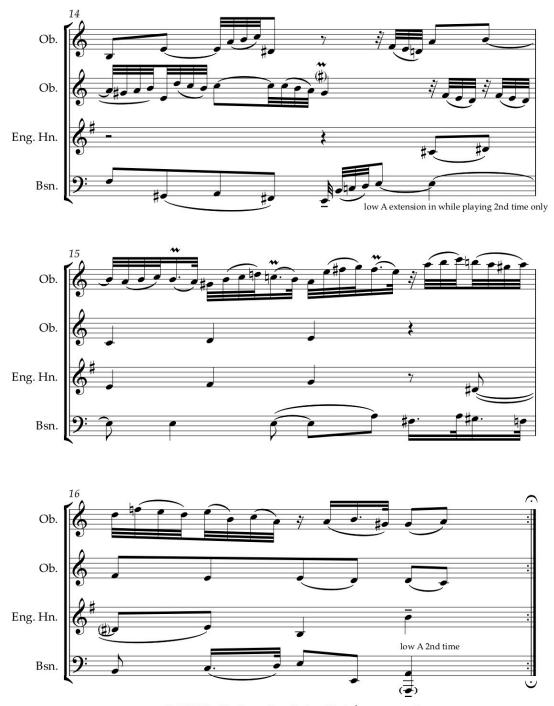
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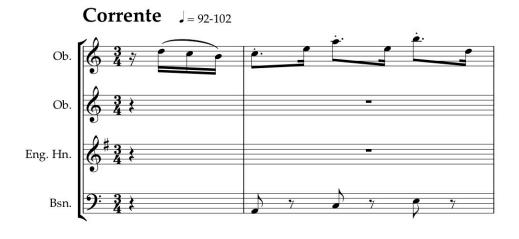
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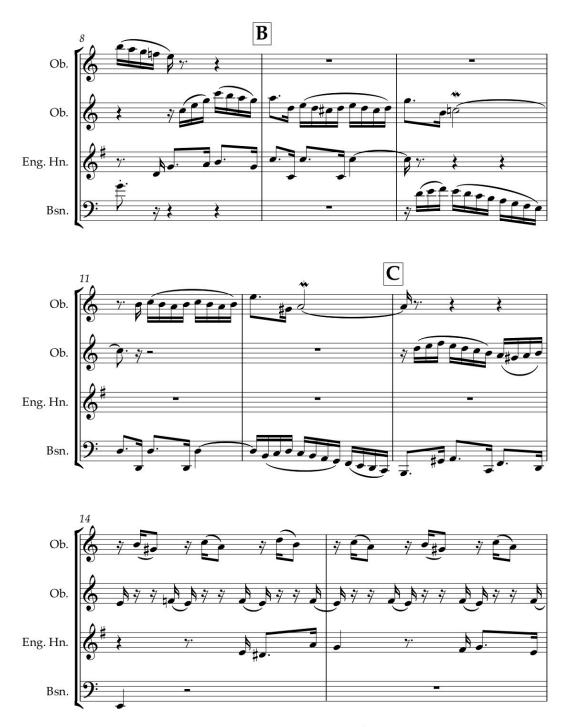
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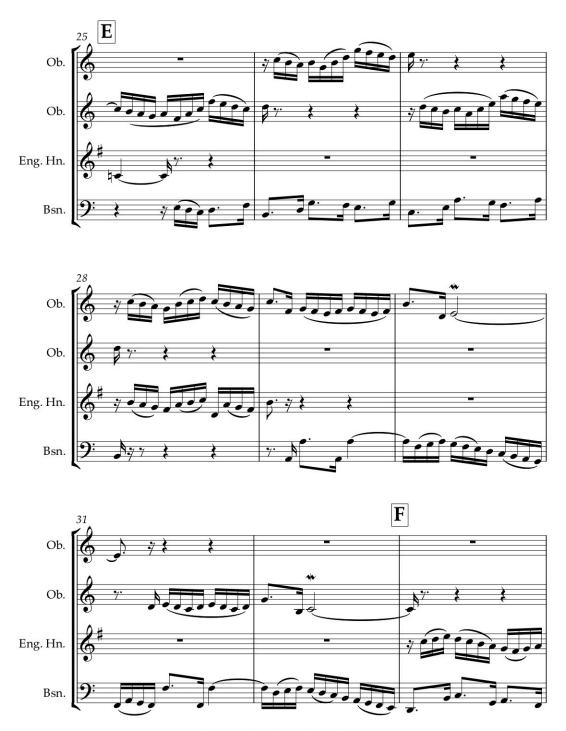
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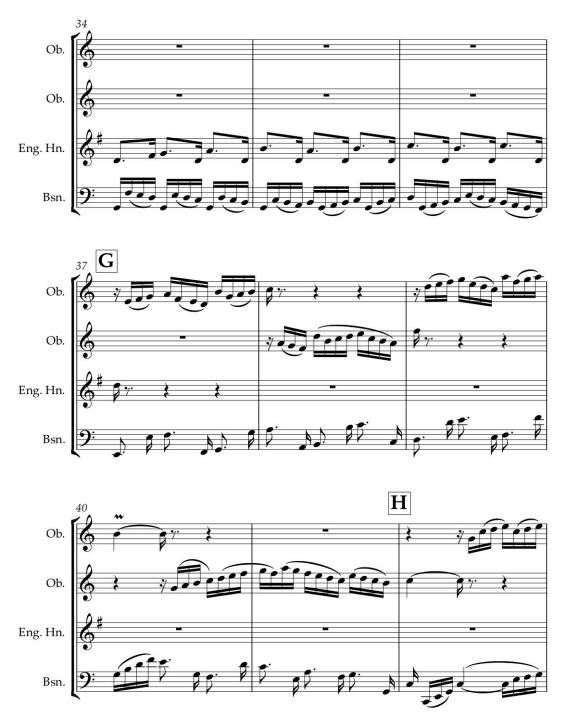
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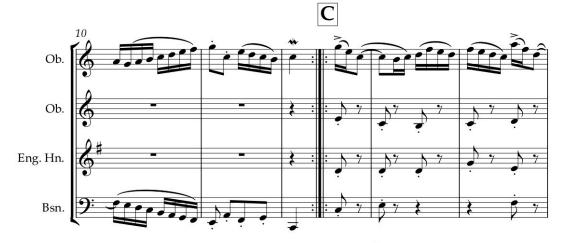




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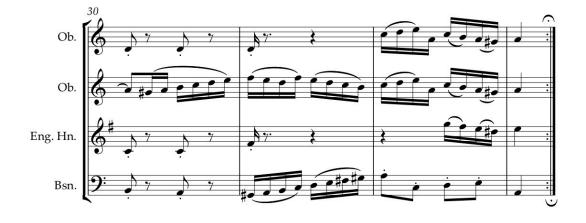




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Appendix C

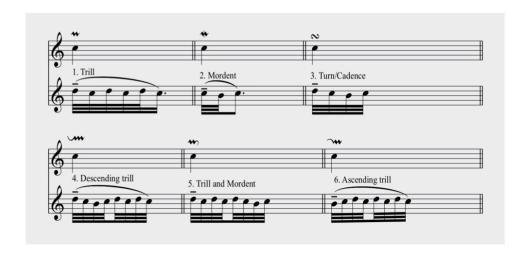
Double Reed Quartet (Two Oboes, English Horn, and Bassoon)

J.S. Bach arr. Lydia Rose Consilvio

Partita No. 4 in D major, BWV 828

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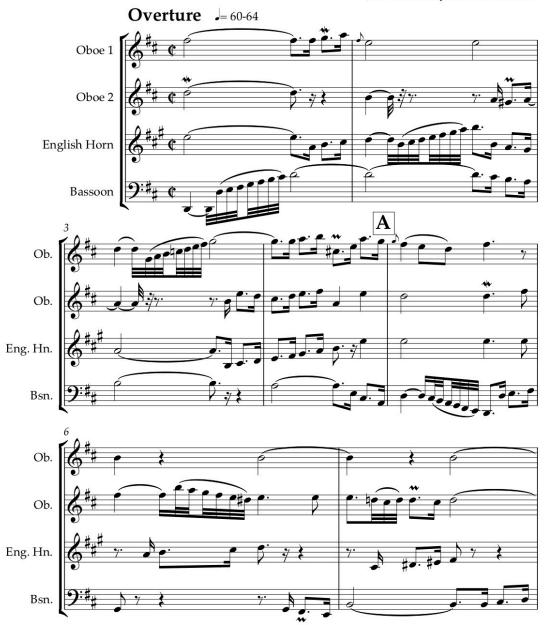
Editorial Notes:

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Partita No. 4 in D major, BWV 828

J.S. Bach, arr. Lydia Rose Consilvio

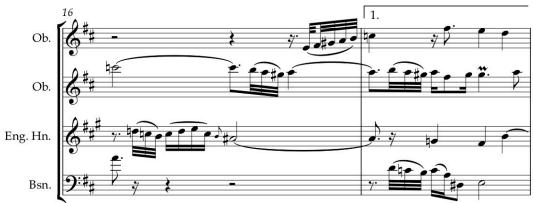


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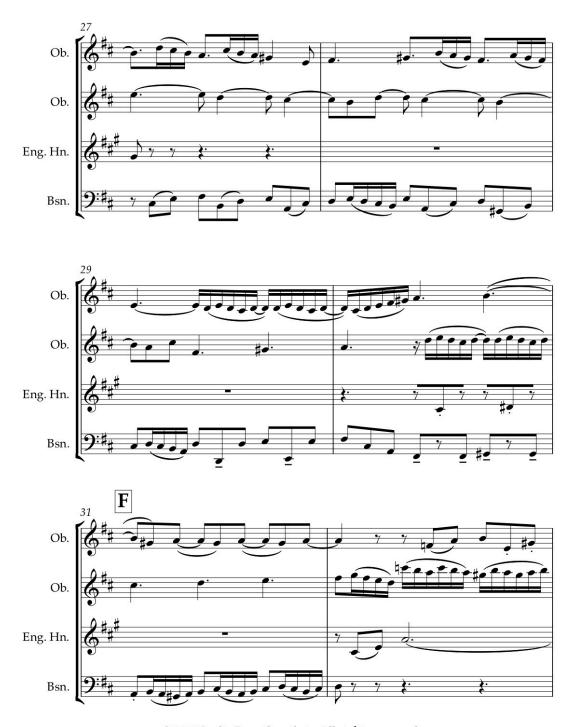
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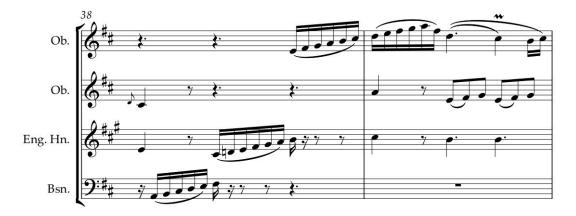
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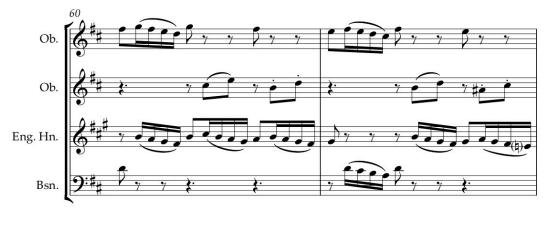




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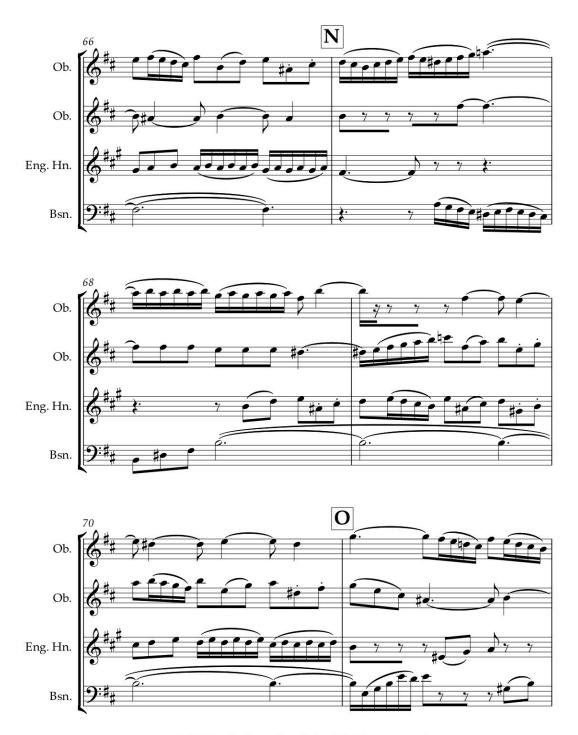
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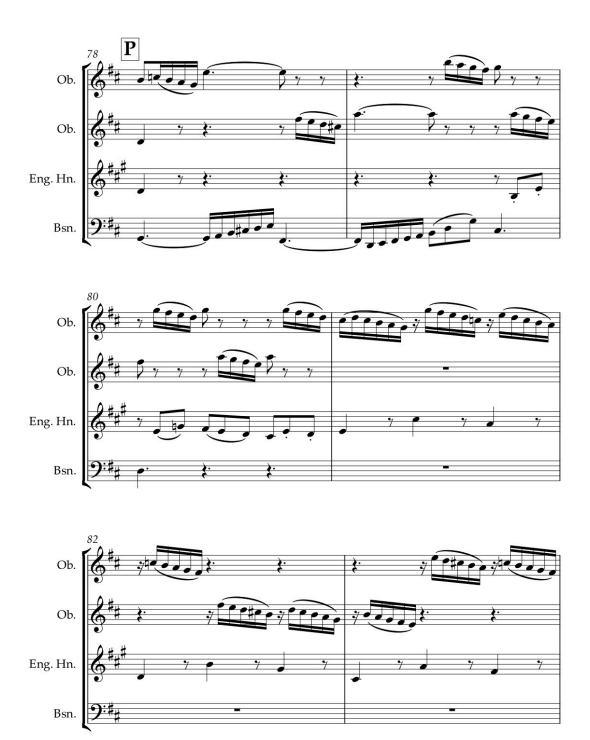
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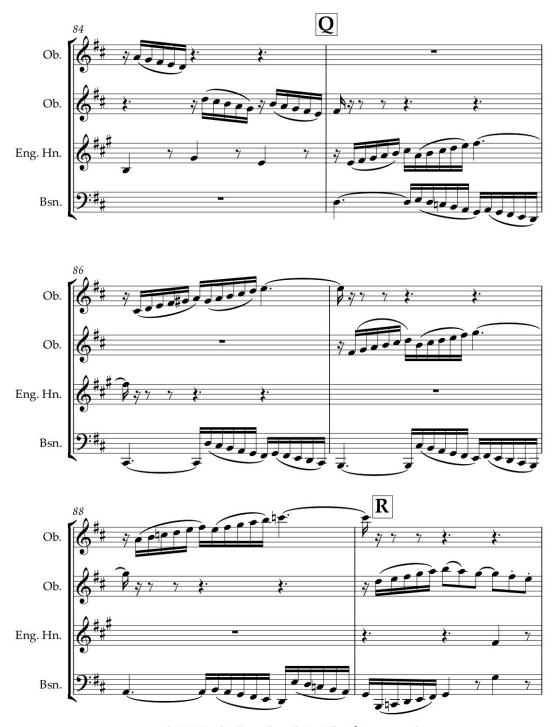
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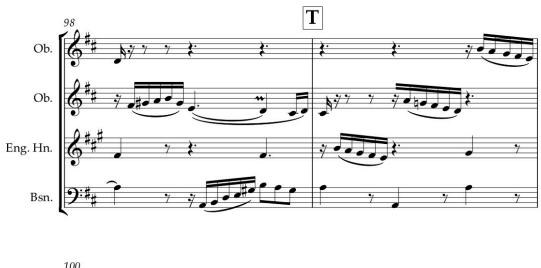
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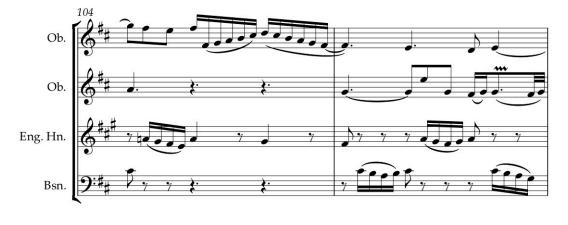
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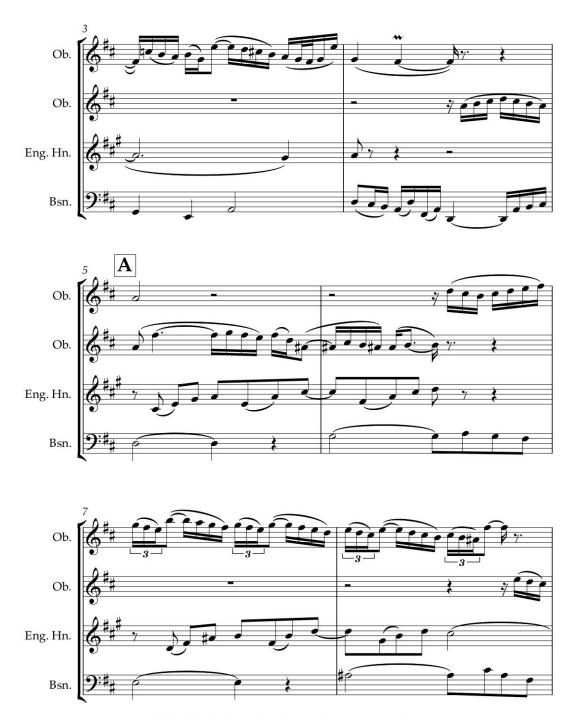
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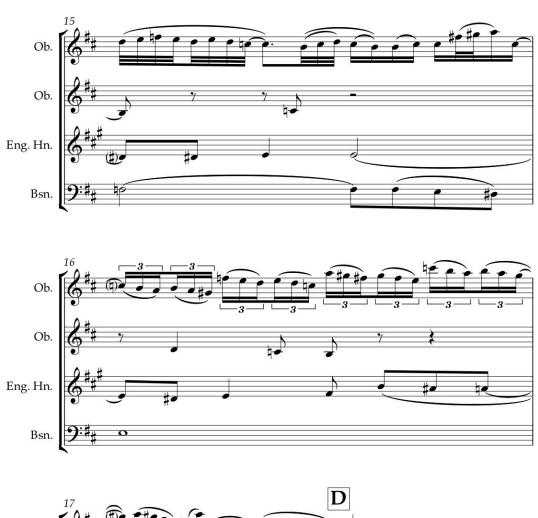
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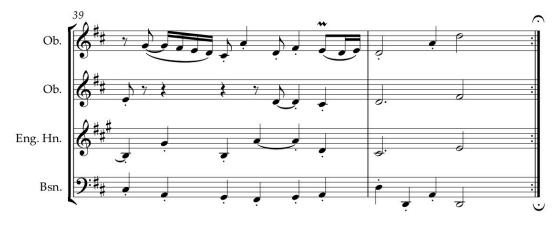
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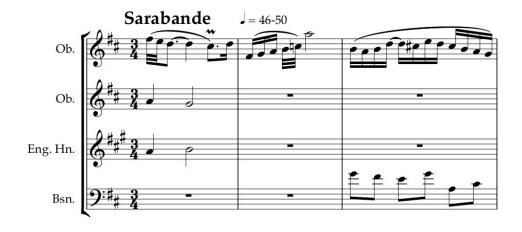
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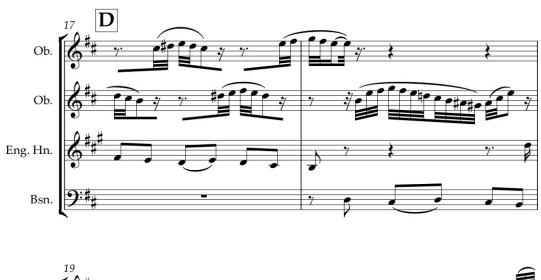




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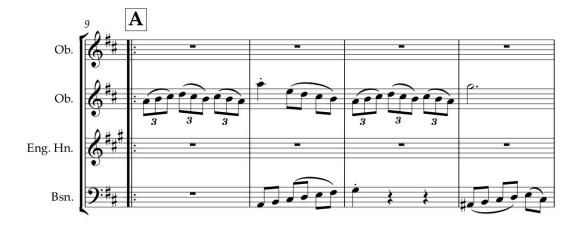


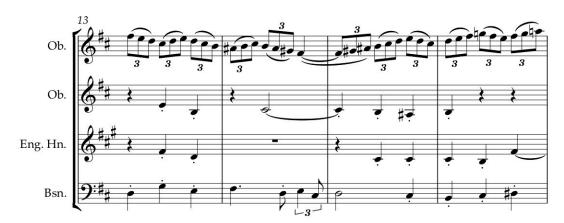


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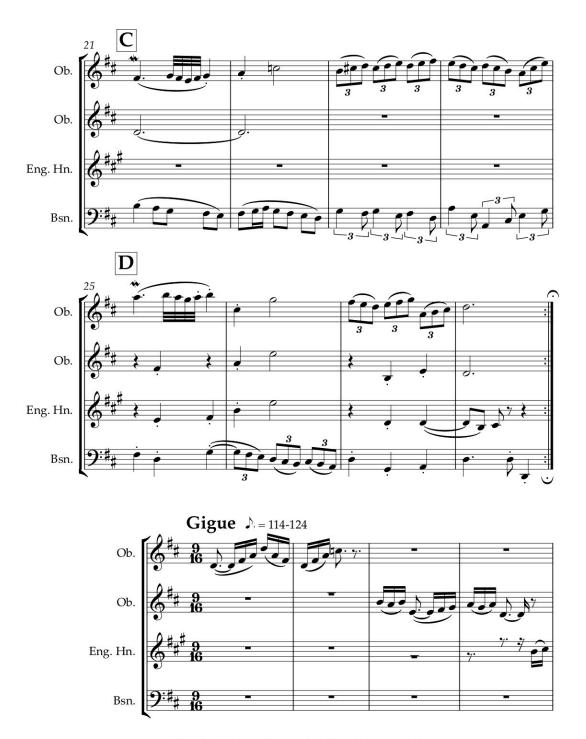
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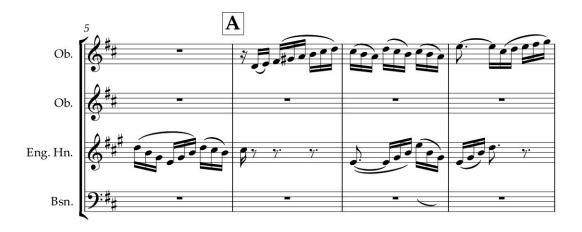




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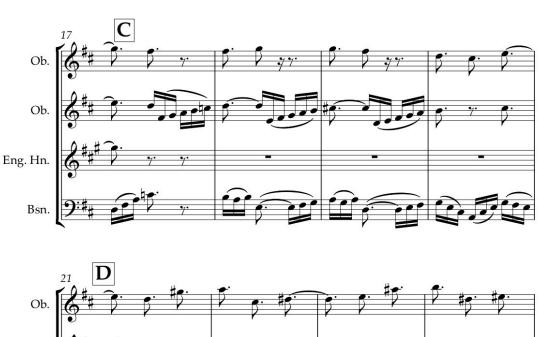
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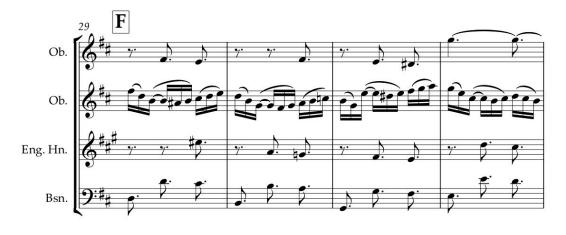
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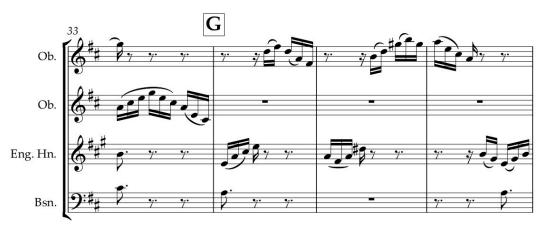






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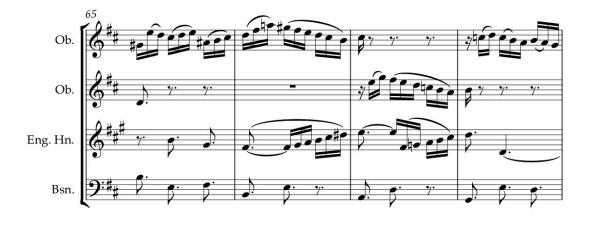
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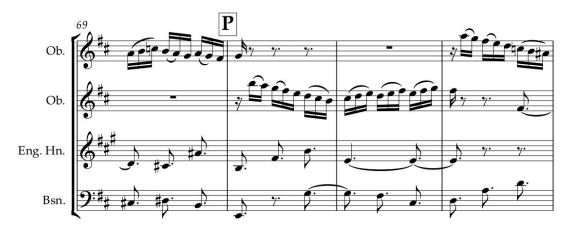


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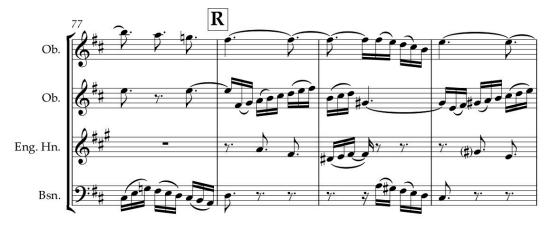
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