



**JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**

The Sonatas for Violin  
and Cembalo obbligato Vol. 1

**Ryo Terakado** violin

**Fabio Bonizzoni** harpsichord



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## **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)**

### **Sonata No. 1, BWV 1014, in B Minor**

<b>[1]</b> Adagio	<b>3:12</b>
<b>[2]</b> Allegro	<b>2:58</b>
<b>[3]</b> Andante	<b>3:07</b>
<b>[4]</b> Allegro	<b>3:36</b>

### **Sonata No. 2, BWV 1015, in A Major**

<b>[5]</b> [Dolce]	<b>2:51</b>
<b>[6]</b> Allegro assai	<b>3:14</b>
<b>[7]</b> Andante un poco	<b>2:54</b>
<b>[8]</b> Presto	<b>4:34</b>

### **Sonata No. 3, BWV 1016, in E Major**

<b>[9]</b> Adagio	<b>3:41</b>
<b>[10]</b> Allegro	<b>3:14</b>
<b>[11]</b> Adagio ma non tanto	<b>4:32</b>
<b>[12]</b> Allegro	<b>4:03</b>

Total time 42:01

My first performance with Fabio was in 2018, when he invited me to the Risonanza Summer Academy in Bertinoro. We had been colleagues at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague for a long time, but we had never actually performed together in concert. We discovered immediately that we shared a common musical language and approached our music similarly, and the collaboration was tremendously successful and rewarding. Since that time, we've programmed Bach obbligato sonatas every time we meet in Bertinoro. The idea of recording these sonatas emerged quite naturally: Bach is a big part of both of our musical lives, and our feelings towards this composer are well aligned. Over the years, we have played together more and more, exploring the richness of these sonatas and branching out into other repertoire; and we now feel that our ensemble as a duo is sufficiently mature that it is our pleasure to present to you these fruits of our collaboration. Bach is a delight in our life. I hope you enjoy our performance!

Ryo Terakado

## **Sonata with *cembalo obbligato***

In the Baroque era, *sonata*, like *sinfonia* and *ritornello*, was a general term for instrumental music as distinct from vocal music. Although today, sonatas are most commonly written only for solo instrument (or solo instrument with a second instrument accompanying), in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the sonata could feature four, five, six or even eight voices. In the 18th century, we see the sonata beginning to contract to smaller settings: trio sonatas (two melody instruments with basso continuo) or solo sonatas (one melody instrument with basso continuo) became the most usual forms. In his trio and solo sonatas, Johann Sebastian Bach used these usual forms but also developed a new style, *cembalo obbligato*, where the right hand of the keyboard plays as a melody instrument and is given the same importance as the violin, flute or other solo instrument.

In this new style, a “trio sonata” is played by only two performers, with the keyboard filling two roles: second melody instrument (right hand) and bass (left hand). In the conventional trio sonata, the task of the keyboard instrument as basso continuo was to add a fullness of texture to the music by improvising melodies, adding embellishments, and filling in harmonies, guided by a written bass line and figures which suggest the overall harmonic context. Because of the improvisational nature of the figured bass, the resulting music could differ greatly depending on the performer. When the right-hand part is not figured but is rather fully written out (this is called *obbligato* [obligatory], meaning “not improvised”), the keyboard is no longer considered a continuo instrument, and the composition becomes more complete.

This innovation by Bach would eventually lead to the flourishing classical and romantic sonatas. By assigning the keyboard instrument two of the three voices of the trio sonata, the obbligato style made the keyboard equal to, or even more important than, the melody instrument. C.P.E. Bach continued



to develop this obbligato sonata style with his *concertato* sonatas, further increasing the importance of the keyboard instrument. These were often referred to as 'keyboard sonatas with violin or flute accompaniment'. This trend persisted well into the time of Mozart, though in that composer's later sonatas the importance of the violin part increases; but it is not until Beethoven that we see the melody instrument again assuming an equal position to the keyboard instrument. Even then, Beethoven's first set of violin sonatas is characterized in the original score as "for cembalo or fortepiano with violin accompaniment".

## **Bach**

Johann Sebastian Bach's sonatas for melody instrument and keyboard instrument include works for flute, violin, and viola da gamba. It seems that the obbligato style interested him more than the traditional continuo role for the keyboard. Although there continue to be questions concerning the authenticity of certain of Bach's flute sonatas, at least half of the undisputed works feature obbligato harpsichord, as do all three sonatas for viola da gamba. As for the violin, there are two sonatas written with basso continuo (three including the Fugue in G Minor), and six with harpsichord obbligato. Among these works, the six sonatas in particular were conceived as a set, with a consistent style and a well-considered key distribution. This set is one of the highlights in the catalog of Bach's chamber music.

Bach's son Carl Philippe Emmanuel Bach writes to Bach's first biographer, Johann Nikolaus Forkel, in 1774: *"The 6 clavier [and violin] trios... are amongst the best works of my dearly beloved father. Even now they sound very good and give me many delights, regardless of the fact that they are over fifty years old. There are several Adagios among them which even today could not be composed in a more singing style."* In his well-known 1802 biography, Forkel writes: *"Composed at Cöthen, they are among Bach's masterpieces in*

*this form and display fugal and canonic writing which is both natural and full of character. The Violin part needs a master to play it; for Bach knew the capabilities of the instrument and spared it as little as the Clavier.”<sup>1</sup>*

Forkel’s opinion that the sonatas were composed in Cöthen might, however, have derived solely from C.P.E. Bach’s 1774 letter: an extrapolation from the words “*they are over fifty years old*”. Today, the complete autograph by Bach is lost, and the earliest source of the sonatas is in the hand of Bach’s nephew Johann Heinrich Bach, completed by the composer himself, and dating from the year 1725. This was about two years after Bach’s move to Leipzig; and it is likely that some of the composition work took place there. At a minimum, further revisions to Sonatas No. 5 and No. 6 were made after the manuscript of 1725.

Bach not only made the right hand of the harpsichord into the second voice of the trio sonata: in some of the slow movements, he also used distinctive keyboard figures with more notes which contrast with the melody of the violin. These are perhaps what C.P.E. Bach praises as “*several Adagios...which even today could not be composed in a more singing style.*”

The key distribution is somewhat symmetric – B Minor, A Major, E Major/C Minor, F minor, G Major – and this suggests that Bach intended these as a set of pieces for violin, comparable to his unaccompanied sonatas and partitas for violin. The same cannot be said of Bach’s other obbligato sonatas for flute or viola da gamba. Additionally, with the exception of Sonata No. 6, this set of works all follow the church sonata style, in which movements alternate slow-fast-slow-fast. The structure of prelude, fugue, free and singing aria, then fugal but also dance-like finale follows the tradition of Corelli closely.

1. From *Johann Sebastian Bach: His Life, Art and Work*. Translated from the German of Johann Nikolaus Forkel. With notes and appendices by Charles Sanford Terry, Litt.D. Cantab., Harcourt, Brace and Howe, New York, 1920.

## **Sonata No.1 in B Minor, BWV 1014**

**Adagio:** A melancholic and lyrical prelude in which the harpsichord always comprises three voices. While the two voices in the right hand play figures that flow and sigh, the left-hand contributes deliberate arpeggios and strong falls. The violin enters with a long note emerging from nowhere, which transitions into a richly ornamented Corelli-style melody. In the middle section, the violin plays double-stops to form a dense five-voice polyphony with the harpsichord. Bach often sets works for violin in the key of B minor; other examples include the "Erbarme dich" movement from the *St. Matthew Passion* and solo Partita No.1 (BWV 1002). Did he think the tone of the violin in B minor was the best way to express a tragic yet fresh lyricism?

**Allegro:** Since the time of Corelli, a fugue has been the traditional second movement of the church sonata. Even in the Baroque era, which simplified music and pursued greater freedom of expression, the complex polyphonic music traditional in the earlier Renaissance period was regarded as noble and eminently suitable for praising God, especially within the church context; the fugue form was a product of this polyphonic counterpoint tradition. In this sonata, the fugue is cheerful but rigorous, yet it does not rely solely on imitation: passages unique to the violin and figures unique to the keyboard appear alternately, creating a concerto-like atmosphere.

**Andante:** The harpsichord repeats an ostinato-like figure in the left hand, while the right hand of the harpsichord and the violin weave around one other, sometimes intertwined and sometimes meeting and parting, a lovely arabesque pattern. This is perhaps the most beautiful and peaceful movement of the work.



**Allegro:** In sharp contrast with what came before, this final movement evokes *stile concitato* (an agitated style) through repeated striking of a single note. The *concertante* fugue creates the illusion of riding in a small boat buffeted by rough waves; it features a Vivaldi-like motif entwined with the turbulent rippling that surrounds it.

### **Sonata No.2 in A Major, BWV 1015**

**Dolce:** The harpsichord part has no tempo indication: only the word *Dolce* appears at the beginning of the violin part. *Dolce* (sweet) is an instruction denoting musical character, not tempo, so the intended tempo can only be determined through extrapolation from this description of character. Starting from a unison A, the theme moves in canon-like imitation, like ripples spreading across still water. A lake in the woods surrounded by the morning mist, the humming tranquility and peace of nature...this movement is almost pictorial in the imagery it evokes.

**Allegro:** As mentioned earlier, the fugue is the standard second movement of the church sonata; but at the outset of this movement, somewhat uncharacteristically, the harpsichord is given the leading role, with virtuoso passages producing concerto-like excitement and tension, while the violin temporarily provides accompaniment and support. But eventually, announced by a splendid arpeggio, the violin steps into a more equal role. While maintaining the trio sonata writing style, this music is perfectly matched to both instruments, with passages that draw out the unique character of each.

**Andante un poco:** The left hand of the harpsichord says *staccato sempre* (always performed with each note sharply detached or separated from the others), and the sequence of semiquavers is like the ticking of a clock. Over this foundation, a perfect canon takes shape: a beautiful melody spins from the violin, then is picked up by the right hand of the harpsichord.

The flow of the melody is often interrupted with interrogative semi-cadenzas, as if some philosophical question is being asked. This movement gives way to its successor unresolved: the question remains unanswered.

**Presto:** A bright and cheerful finale. Although it is a fugue that makes full use of counterpoint, the bouncy two-beat rhythm is reminiscent of a dance such as gavotte or tambourin.

### **Sonata No.3 in E Major, BWV 1016**

**Adagio:** The heavy and majestic left hand of the harpsichord has the octave doubled throughout, giving an effect reminiscent of the 16-foot pedal of an organ or a double bass, while the right hand is homophonic with a powerful three-voice tone. The violin sings a melody as graceful and majestic as a bird flying on outspread wings between steep cliffs. This is music for keyboard and violin, completely deviating from the trio sonata writing style. It can be imagined that such a true keyboard accompaniment part emerged from Bach's own basso continuo playing (which is said to have been very rich).

**Allegro:** In contrast to the large-scale Adagio, this next movement is a very appealing and friendly trio sonata-style three-voice fugue with a theme reminiscent of a children's schoolyard song. It is a uniquely delicate and beautiful Allegro, in which Bach brilliantly overturns the church sonata convention of a lyrical and simple first movement followed by a more majestic, virtuosic and technically challenging fugue. This movement contains no technical passages; it is unexpectedly anti-virtuosic, pure, and almost innocent music.

**Adagio ma non tanto:** The left hand of the harpsichord is an ostinato bass-like chaconne with a 4-bar phrase as a unit; it avoids rigidity through the use of modulations. While a variation riding on an ostinato bass is quite common, here the music is spun out primarily through a contrast between only two elements – a less extensive development than would normally be deemed a variation. The violin and the right hand of the harpsichord repeat a gentle imitation; the two elements, a flowing triplet and a more static semiquaver figure, seem to symbolize the two faces of the world, evoking a dream-state where the outward or physical meets the inward or spiritual.

**Allegro:** A fugue written in trio, this is the richest and most virtuosic concerto-style movement among all three sonatas. The middle section is peacefully pastoral, and you can catch echoes of the hunting horn. Tension between triplets and eighth notes, with interspersed occasional fragments of the subject, creates a mysterious contrast.

Ryo Terakado



## **Ryo Terakado** Violin (Period Instrument)

Born in 1961 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. He started to play violin at the age of 4, and won 2nd prize in the All Japan Youth Musical Competition when he was 14. Ryo studied violin, chamber music and conducting at the Toho Gakuen School of Music. In 1983, he took third prize in the All Japan Music Competition. Upon graduating from Toho Gakuen, he was invited to become concertmaster of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, a position he held for two years.

Meanwhile, Ryo's interest in Baroque music had been developing for some time: at the age of 19, he started to teach himself Baroque violin, and in 1985, he moved to the Netherlands to study the instrument at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague under the guidance of Sigiswald Kuijken, receiving a soloist diploma in 1989.

Since 1987, he has performed as concertmaster with Baroque orchestras in Europe and Japan including La Petite Bande, Les Arts Florissants, La Chapelle Royale, Collegium Vocale Gent, and Tokyo Bach Mozart Orchestra; he made regular appearances with these orchestras to perform the concertos of composers including Bach, Vivaldi and Mozart. Ryo is also the current concertmaster of Bach Collegium Japan, and is invited frequently to Italy, Poland, France and Australia as a soloist. Since 1994, he has been one of the featured artists in the Hokutopia International Music Festival in Tokyo, where he made his debut as a conductor. His repertoire as a conductor includes operas by Monteverdi, Purcell, Rameau, Gluck, Haydn and Mozart.

Ryo is a faculty member of the Hague Royal Conservatory (Holland), The Royal Conservatory in Brussels and his alma mater, Toho Gakuen School of Music (Japan). He teaches regularly at Yonsei University in Seoul and makes concert appearances in Korea.

His discography can be found on the Ricercar (Belgium), Accent (Germany) BIS (Sweden) and Denon (Japan) labels.

**Fabio Bonizzoni** is considered one of the leading Italian harpsichordists and organists of his generation. His playing has been defined as “Bright and buoyant, with no tricks [...] but plenty of energy and brilliance” (Gramophone).

Having graduated in baroque organ and harpsichord at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague in Ton Koopman’s class, he played for several years with some of the most important baroque orchestras of our times, in particular with the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Le Concert des Nations and Europa Galante. Since 2004, he exclusively devotes himself to his activities as soloist and director, in particular of his own orchestra *La Risonanza*.

His impressive discography includes works by Claudio Merulo, Giovanni Salvatore, Giovanni Picchi, Francesco Geminiani, Bernardo Storace, Domenico Scarlatti, Johann Sebastian Bach (Goldberg Variations and the Art of Fugue), Girolamo Frescobaldi (First and Second Book of Toccatas).

With *La Risonanza* he has completed the project of recording all the Italian Cantatas with instruments by G.F. Handel: this project has been named by the Gramophone Magazine the most important of the decade, and 3 of the 7 CDs of the collection have been awarded the prestigious Handel Stanley Sadie Prize. The last disc of this series, *Apollo e Dafne*, won the Gramophone Award.

Since 2016, he and *La Risonanza* are recording for Challenge Classics: a Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* and two volumes of Bach harpsichord concertos have appeared so far.



His activity is also enriched by commitments as guest conductor both of baroque and modern orchestras.

Since 2014 he is artistic director of *Note Etiche*, a festival focusing on links between music, ethics and sustainability and, since 2016, he and his orchestra enjoy artistic residency at *Palazzina Liberty in their hometown Milan*.

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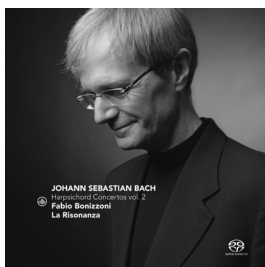


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**JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**

Harpsichord Concertos vol. 1

**Fabio Bonizzoni | La Risonanza**



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**JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**

Harpsichord Concertos vol. 2

**Fabio Bonizzoni | La Risonanza**

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Harpsichord: Willem Kroesbergen, Utrecht, after Couchet

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