

Selections from J.S. Bach's Violin Partita No. 1 in B Minor, Performed on Marimba

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Abstract: This performance will feature three movements of J.S. Bach's Violin Partita No 1 in B minor, that the performer has adapted for marimba, an instrument, which has its origins in traditional African and Latin American music. The selected movements will include: the Sarabande, Double, and Tempo di Bourrè (Gavotte) respectively. Each of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Violin are lengthy compositions from the Baroque Period, made up of short dance movements alternating with filler material. Bach bases the rhythm of each dance movement on its original Baroque dance steps. The Sarabande is a stately dance of Spanish origin. The selected Double movement is a filler movement, not necessarily composed to fit a particular baroque dance, but certainly with its own unique musical ideas. The movement titled "Tempo di Bourrè" is a Gavotte, which is based on a lively French folk dance with a very strong duple feel. The listener will notice a definitive change in mood and tempo between the Sarabande and the Gavotte movement. Of critical importance to performing this work on any medium is attaining knowledge of how each of the different dance movements is to be performed. By researching the characteristics of the individual dance genres the performer gains insight into Bach's original intent in composing the work. When learning the piece on a non-traditional instrument such as the modern marimba, the performer should listen to numerous violinists' interpretations as a resource to help adapt Bach's music to the new instrument. The culmination is to use the research and specialized marimba techniques combined with the instrument's unique musical capabilities to create a new and convincing interpretation.

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