

A level Notes

J.S. Bach (1685-1750): Sarabande and Gigue form Partita no.4 in D major, BWV 828

- JS Bach published 6 partita's between 1726 and 1730.
- In 1731 they were catalogued as Opus 1.
- The BWV numbers are used as a modern cataloguing system.
- Apart from two earlier Mülhausen cantatas the partitas became Bach's first printed works.

It appears that 7 partitas were planned initially, each which contained seven *suites*, (although six was Bach's preferred number for instrumental sets).

The publication of the D major partite in 1730 indicated that another two were to follow. The keys of the partitas are arranged almost ingeniously: the set spreads outwardly from Bb major in zigzags patterns: Bb Maj – c min – a min - D maj – G maj – e min, which correspond to the notes of the Greek hexachord (A sequence of six tones with a semitone in the middle, the others being whole tones, that was used in medieval music).

The movements of the partitas and their sequencing, are orientated towards the model of the French suite, which had become an established genre in Germany by the beginning of the 18th century. The movements were generally in the following order:

Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Gigue

However, many dance styles changed considerably from the early French models, favouring the Italian style. Thus, we have more exciting Courantes and Giges, where German counterpoint is used more frequently.

The partitas also have an extra-large scale movement at the beginning. Again, the precedent is French but it was Bach that executed this idea.

Partita	The name used during the 17 th and 18 th centuries to mean either a suite or a set of variations. Bach's six keyboard Partitas are suites.
Suite	<p>A collection of pieces, often dances, grouped together to form a complete work. Many Baroque suites were for harpsichord, and by Bach's time the most common plan for a keyboard suite brought together the four main dances from different countries.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) A German Allemande – 4/4 time, moderate speed(2) Either a French courante in 3/2 or 6/4, moderately fast or an Italian corrente in 3/4 or 3/8 time, rather quicker.(3) A Spanish sarabande, in slow triple time.(4) A lively gigue (English Jig) usually in compound time. <p>All dances in the Baroque suite were usually in the same key and in binary form.</p>

The music:

A detailed analysis:

SARABANDE

Section A (Bars 1 – 12)

1. There is an introduction before the principle motif enters. How many bars does the introduction last?
2. What function does the C natural in bar 2 have?
3. Comment on the minim A in bar 2.
4. Identify the style of the bass line in bars 3 and 4.
5. What key have we reached by bar 5? How do we know this?
6. How does Bach decorate his motif?
7. Identify rhythmic repetition and sequence in Section A.
8. What is the interval of the jump in the LH part bar 6-7 and where does this take us?
9. How does Bach develop and extend his material?
10. How many parts do we have by the end of this section?

Section B (Bars 13-38)

1. How is section B similar to section A.?
2. What do Bach do to his motifs?
3. How many octaves does the melodic line fall between bars 18 and 19?
4. Identify an appoggiatura. What is special about this?
5. What happens at bar 21?
6. What key have we reached at bar 23³?
7. At bar 24 we reach e minor. Comment on this key change.
8. Identify a tonic melisma and petit reprise.
9. What happens at the end of this section?

Paper 2 questions

Gigue	Suite	Sequence
Sarabande	Appoggiatura	Cycle of fifths
Walking bass	melisma	Petit reprise

Q1. Choose 3 words from the table above and explain in your own words

Q2. Using the words you have just explained identify them in a piece of your choice.