

J.S. Bach, *Overture No. 3 in D major, BWV 1068*



The Overture No. 3 consists in five dances:

1. **Ouverture**
2. **Air**
3. **Gavotte I and II**
4. **Bourrée**
5. **Gigue**

It is scored for three trumpets, two oboes, violins, violas, timpani, and basso continuo (cello, bass, and harpsichord). It is approximately 22 minutes long.

Johann Sebastian Bach (31 March 1685 – 28 July 1750) (often referred to simply as Bach) was a German composer, organist, violist, and violinist whose ecclesiastical and secular works for choir, orchestra, and solo instruments drew together the strands of the Baroque period and brought it to its ultimate maturity. Although he did not introduce new forms, he enriched the prevailing German style with a robust contrapuntal technique, an unrivalled control of harmonic and motivic organization, and the adaptation of rhythms, forms and textures from abroad, particularly from Italy and France.

Revered for their intellectual depth, technical command and artistic beauty, Bach's works include the Brandenburg concertos, the Goldberg Variations, the Partitas, The Well-Tempered Clavier, the Mass in B Minor, the St Matthew Passion, the St John Passion, the Magnificat, The Musical Offering, The Art of Fugue, the English and French Suites, the Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin, the Cello Suites, more than 200 surviving cantatas, and a similar number of organ works, including the celebrated Toccata and Fugue in D minor and Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.

Bach's abilities as an organist were highly respected throughout Europe during his lifetime, although he was not widely recognized as a great composer until a revival of interest and performances of his music in the first half of the 19th century. He is now regarded as the supreme composer of the Baroque, and as one of the greatest of all time.

The Overture (also known as an “Orchestral Suite” due to the fact that it is based on dances) opens with an *Ouverture* in French style with traditional solemn introduction, followed by a fiery fugue. The second part, the *Air*, is probably one of the most famous pieces of baroque music. An arrangement of the piece by German violinist August Wilhelm (1845–1908) has come to be known as *Air on the G String*, which in its original form it is certainly not. The pair of Gavottes is played in alternation, followed by a Bourrée and a lively Gigue, the most frequent conclusion to any set of dances.