## Mp3 Mike Hall - J.s. Bach: The Gamba Sonatas



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Bach's legendary viola da gamba sonatas performed by alto trombonist Mike Hall and harpsichordist Rebecca Bell; learned counterpoint of the great master expressed through the majestic sound of the trombone. 11 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Traditional, EASY LISTENING: Mature Details: The sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord were almost certainly composed at Leipzig during the last 20 years of Bach's life. In modern times they are usually offered as a set, both in print and in recording, merely because of their instrumentation. But they were conceived independently from one another, perhaps for the Leipzig Collegium Musicum performances Bach conducted between 1729 and 1741 at Zimmerman's Coffee House. This concert series was a major focus of Bach's musical life in the 1730's. The scores originate between 1736 and 1741, a period when Bach was deeply involved in chamber music. These sonatas are a graphic representation of Bach's philosophy, not just of music, but of the purpose of life. Bach saw the world as created, ordered and logical. His art reflected his cooperation in this system and he apprehended learned counterpoint as the preeminent brush for painting the natural world through music. In his mind it is counterpoint, two or more melodies moving together, that create vertical relationships - harmony, and spatial relationships - rhythm. The sonatas recorded here present three, distinct voices between trombone and the keyboardists right and left hands. These voices moving together exemplify much more than the demonstration of Bach's mastery of musical construction; he was not interested in purely abstract goals. He sought to prove the existence of God, to relate truth, to represent the natural order of the world. Knitting the melodies together in this way create an aesthetic reality only implied by any single voice, a reality that exists and merely awaits discovery through counterpoint. Indeed, Bach expressed the depths of his faith through learned counterpoint and it is the Mass in B Minor and Art of Fugue that arguably represent his most profound compositions. The gamba

sonatas are incidental by comparison but the astounding craft and creativity in them demonstrate the depths at which Bach integrates theory with practice. They present real problems for the trombonist. Chief among them are extended phrase lengths and the continuous nature of Bach's counterpoint. Rest is precious to brass players and little is afforded here. Extended range is also a great challenge to the trombonist as is the dexterity required in fast movements and ornamentation. But the majestic sound of the trombone imbues this great music with the spirit of a mighty steed. MIKE HALL is the brass choir director and professor of trombone and euphonium at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA. He served as professor of trombone at the University of Kansas 2000-2006, and at Eastern Michigan University 1995-2000 where he was lecturer of low brass and director of the EMU Jazz Ensemble. He also serves as Literature Reviews Editor for the International Trombone Association Journal. He has received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in trombone performance from the University of Minnesota, the Master of Music degree in trombone performance from the University of Arizona, and the Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. His principal teachers include Thomas Ashworth, Tom Ervin, Vern Kagarice, and Brian Martz. In 1994 Dr. Hall won a position on the Christian Lindberg Solo Seminar at the University of North Texas where he worked with Mr. Lindberg for seven days of intensive study in the art of solo performance. Dr. Hall has performed extensively throughout the United States, Mexico, Europe and China covering a large spectrum of styles, including appearances with many symphony orchestras including Kansas City, Ann Arbor, Detroit, Tucson, and Kharkiv, Ukraine. As a chamber musician Dr. Hall served as trombonist for the Kansas Brass Quintet 2000-2006 and the Galliard Brass Ensemble 1995-2000. During that time he also gave many performances with the Detroit Chamber Winds and Michigan Chamber Brass. As a studio musician Dr. Hall has recorded several motion picture sound tracks, television and radio commercials, and compact disc projects. As a soloist he gives recitals and masterclasses throughout the U.S. and Europe. This recording is the second in a long-term program of research that contributes solutions, new techniques, and suggestions of melodic embellishment to trombone repertoire of the Baroque era. The first, Arcangelo Corelli Solo Chamber Sonatas Opus 5, was released in 2004. Mike Hall is a C.G. Conn and Selmer Bach performing artist. REBECCA BELL studied at the Royal College of Music, London, where she won the prize for clavichord playing while studying with Ruth Dyson and Robert Woolley. She performs with the Kansas City Symphony and the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra and with the opera studio of Bill Hall. Other recording

projects include a compact disc of Bach flute sonatas with former Kansas City flutist Lamar Hunt Jr., and she is featured on A Heartland Morning, A Heartland Afternoon, a sampler of Kansas City artists. She is a member of the American Guild of Organists and organist at All Saints Episcopal Church, Kansas City, MO.

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