When you think cello, you think of Bach’s immortal cello suites.

The suites take center stage in the cello literature. They are timeless and beautiful and accompany cellists from their student years throughout a professional career at the highest level.

Appropriately and not surprisingly there are numerous editions of the suites. But the composer’s autograph has not come down to us in full. This has always been a major challenge for editors. The four surviving handwriting sources and the original fine edition of 1724 differ in many details, the articulation and phrasing being particularly ambiguous.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Six Suites for Violoncello solo
BWV 1007 – 1012

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Six Suites for Violoncello solo BWV 1007–1012

Edition August Wessinger
BA 329

The standard edition – with performance markings

August Wessinger's edition of Johann Sebastian Bach's solo suites for violoncello is a success story. It has become the recognized edition for cellos worldwide.

Who was August Wessinger?
A Swiss cellist, August Wessinger was a teacher and conductor. Wessinger (1903–1990) played an important role in restoring historically informed performances of Baroque works. He established performances on historical instruments and was one of the first teachers at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. Under his leadership, the Gamèr Trio of the Schola Cantorum was created in 1968. He also taught at both Harvard and Brandeis University.

Bach's 'Wessinger edition' includes Wessinger's fingering, dynamics, slurs, and articulation markings. This provides an excellent guide for an informed interpretation of the famous suites and is very well-served for cello approaching these works for the first time.

Six Suites a Violoncello Solo
terza Bando BWV 1007–1012
Edition Benito Schwesinger, Douglas Woodfield Harris
BA 5216 Schubert critical edition

A unique edition – all readings at a glance

Six Suites for Violoncello solo BWV 1007–1012

Urtex (Editor: Andrew Talle)
BA 5257 Soloscore performing edition
BA 5258 Line-bound performing edition

NEW

Urtex edition with articulation markings

This is the most recent addition to Riemenschneider's collection of cello suite editions. The edition Andrew Talle has fundamentally redefined the relationship between the surviving sources. He has drawn conclusions regarding their evaluation and consequently the genesis of the suites, which presumably took place over a lengthy period of time.

The musical text of the edition is based on three primary sources. It approaches the composer's original intention as far as the sources will permit. Articulation markings were judged reliable and integrated in the musical text, if they were found in the majority of the primary sources: "The edition does not present a perfect reconstruction of the lost canonography on edition could claim to do. Instead, I have attempted to provide musicians and scholars with a reliable version of the surviving musical text of the six cello suites and to sketch light on the options which the Bach sources offer.