



## CASALS PLAYS BACH

### SUITES FOR SOLO CELLO



**Pau Casals i Defilló** (December 29, 1876 – October 22, 1973), known during his professional career as Pablo Casals, was a Spanish Catalan cellist and conductor. He is generally regarded as the pre-eminent cellist of the first half of the 20th century, and arguably of all time. He made many recordings throughout his career, of solo, chamber, and orchestral music, also as conductor, but he is perhaps best remembered for the recordings of the Bach Cello Suites he made from 1936 to 1939.

Casals was born in El Vendrell, Catalonia. His father, Carlos Casals i Ribes (1852–1908), was a parish organist and choirmaster. He gave Casals instruction in piano, song, violin, and organ. He was also a very strict disciplinarian. When Casals was young his father would pull the piano out from the wall and have him and his brother, Arturo, stand behind it and name the notes and the scales that his father was playing. At age four Casals could play the violin, piano and flute; at the age of six he played the violin well enough to perform a solo in public. His first encounter with a cello-like instrument was from witnessing a local travelling Catalan musician, who played a cello-strung broom handle. Upon request, his father built him a crude cello, using a gourd as a sound-box. When Casals was eleven, he first heard the real cello performed by a group of traveling musicians, and decided to dedicate himself to the instrument.

In 1888 his mother, Pilar Defilló de Casals, who was born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico of Catalanian ancestry, took him to Barcelona, where he enrolled in the Escola Municipal de Música. There he studied cello, theory, and piano. In 1890, when he was 13, he discovered in a second-hand sheet music store in Barcelona a tattered copy of Bach's six cello suites. He spent the next 13 years practicing them every day before he would perform them in public for the first time. He made prodigious progress as a cellist; on February 23, 1891 he gave a solo recital in Barcelona at the age of fourteen. He graduated from the Escola with honours five years later.

*These notes from Wikipedia.org. Full scores are available at The International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>*

#### Recording and restoration notes

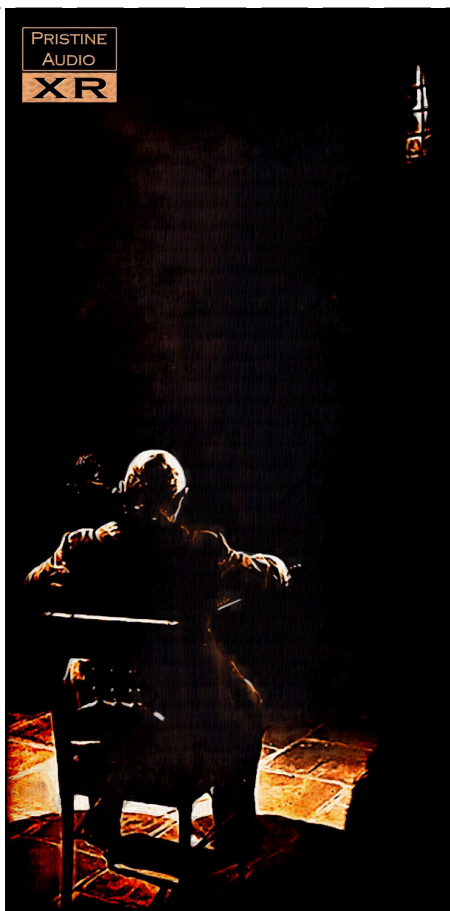
When one considers all of the recordings made in the post-1925 electrical recording era, but before the development of full frequency range recordings in the 1940s, there can be few instruments more suited to the restrictions of the technology at the time than the cello. The range of frequencies required to capture it well, thanks to its low register, generally falls within the capabilities of 1930 disc recording, and this makes it a prime candidate for XR remastering. I've already had considerable success with Casals - his 1938 recording of the Dvorák Cello Concerto (PASC 246) beat all others, old and new, to become Gramophone's recommended recording of the work in February 2011.

However, nothing prepared me for the possibilities lying hidden in the grooves of his Cello Suites recordings of 1936 to 1939, which have surpassed all expectations. I was already familiar with issues on both EMI and Naxos (the latter a considerable improvement on the former), but neither offers the listener the full-bodied tone of Casals' cello, the crispness of his sound, the sense of immediacy and clarity which lay hidden in these recordings for so many decades.

My first task was to take the disparate recordings and bring some homogeneity to the sound of the instrument - each suite was initially processed separately, using a common reference in order to iron out differences in the recording equipment and locations used during the recording sessions. Thereafter I brought them together to continue what was at times a tricky restoration - revealing so much musical detail also reveals much else that is unwanted. Occasionally this may still be heard, but it should not distract you from one of the most remarkable restorations it has been my pleasure to undertake. **AR**

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# PABLO CASALS

PLAYS

## J. S. BACH

SUITES FOR  
SOLO CELLO

RECORDED IN 1936, 1938 & 1939

## Casals plays Bach Cello Suites

### CD1 Suite No. 1 in G major BWV 1007

1. **Prélude** (2:26) [2LA 2583/1]
2. **Allemande** (3:39) [2LA 2584/1]
3. **Courante** (2:31) [2LA 2585/1]
4. **Sarabande** (2:21) [2LA 2586/1]
5. **Menuets I and II** (3:13) [2LA 2587/1]
6. **Gigue** (1:57) [2LA 2588/1]

### Suite No. 2 in D minor BWV 1008

7. **Prélude** (3:42) [2EA 4476/1]
8. **Allemande** (3:54) [2EA 4481/1]
9. **Courante** (2:16) [2EA 4482/1]
10. **Sarabande** (4:06) [2EA 4483/1]
11. **Menuets I and II** (3:19) [2EA 4484/1]
12. **Gigue** (2:45) [2EA 4485/1]

### Suite No. 3 in C major BWV 1009

13. **Prélude** (3:28) [2EA 4470/1]
14. **Allemande** (3:46) [2EA 4471/2]
15. **Courante** (3:14) [2EA 4472/1]
16. **Sarabande** (3:30) [2EA 4473/1]
17. **Bourrées I and II** (3:25) [2EA 4474/1]
18. **Gigue** (3:14) [2EA 4475/1]

**Pablo Casals, cello**

### RECORDING AND ISSUE DETAILS

**Suite 1:** Paris, 2 June 1938, Eng. M. Cailly, issued in Bach Society Volume 7, DB.3671-3673  
**Suites 2 & 3:** Abbey Road, London, 25 November 1936, issued in Bach Society Volume 6, DB.3399-3404  
**Suites 4 & 5:** Paris, 13 June 1939, Eng. M. Cailly, issued in Bach Society Volume 8, DB.6538-6540  
**Suite 6:** Paris, 3 June 1938, Eng. M. Cailly, issued in Bach Society Volume 7, DB.3674-3677

### CD2 Suite No. 4 in E flat major BWV 1010

1. **Prélude** (4:19) [2LA 3140/1]
2. **Allemande** (3:49) [2LA 3115/2]
3. **Courante** (4:00) [2LA 3116/1]
4. **Sarabande** (4:14) [2LA 3117/1]
5. **Bourrées I and II** (3:41) [2LA 3125/1]
6. **Gigue** (2:47) [2LA 3124/1]

### Suite No. 5 in C minor BWV 1011

7. **Prélude** (7:20) [2LA 3126&30/1&2]
8. **Allemande** (3:18) [2LA 3131/1]
9. **Courante** (2:04) [2LA 3133/2]
10. **Sarabande** (2:45) [2LA 3127/2]
11. **Gavottes I and II** (4:30) [2LA 3132/1]
12. **Gigue** (2:31) [2LA 3134/2]

### Suite No. 6 in D major BWV 1012

13. **Prélude** (5:08) [2LA 2593&4/2&2]
14. **Allemande** (7:35) [2LA 2595&6/1&1]
15. **Courante** (3:45) [2LA 2597/1]
16. **Sarabande** (4:20) [2LA 2598/1]
17. **Gavottes I and II** (3:05) [2LA 2599/1]
18. **Gigue** (3:58) [2LA 2600/1]



PACM 074

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a  
photograph of **Pablo Casals**

Total duration: **2hr 9:56**

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