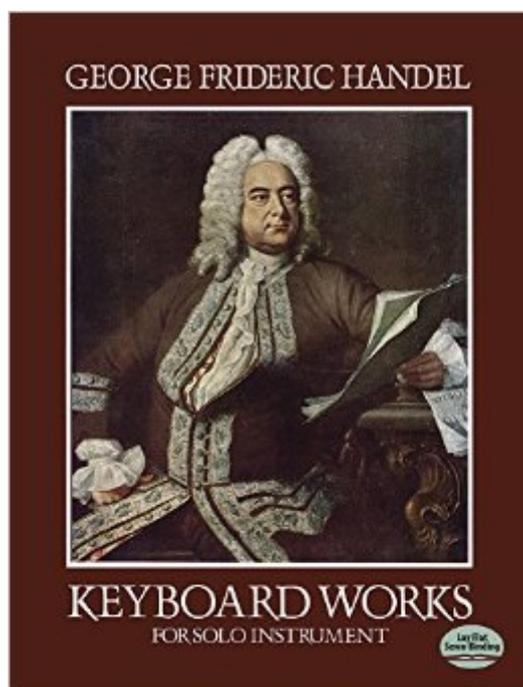


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Keyboard Works For Solo Instrument (Dover Music For Piano)



Synopsis

The music historian Sir John Hawkins recorded that his friend Handel's keyboard improvisations "stole on the ear in a slow and solemn progression; the harmony close wrought, and as full as could be possibly be expressed; the passage concatenated with stupendous art, the whole at the same time being perfectly intelligible, and carrying the appearance of great simplicity." Such fecund spontaneity generated the few published pieces Handel wrote specifically for the keyboard. The first set of suites appeared in 1720, perhaps composed and published for the instruction of Princess Anne, to whom Handel serves as music master. Other collections of harpsichord and clavichord work followed; all seem to have been preserved from Handel's freely inventive keyboard sessions. Here, for the first time in a popularly accessible edition, are 35 of his finest keyboard works for solo instruments, reproduced from the monumental Deutsche Händelgesellschaft edition, still the most complete. This collection features the celebrated Eight Great Suites, including the Harmonious Blacksmith Air and the Passacaille in G Minor (G 255), "a work in which Handel approaches most nearly to the monumental style of his choral writing" (Grove's Dictionary). Other works include: Fugue in A Minor; Fantasia in C Major; Suite (Partita) in G Minor; Sonatina in B-flat Major; Capriccio in F Major; Minuet in G Minor; Sonatas in C Major; Chaconne in F Major; Prelude and Sonata in G Minor; and more. For this new edition, the pieces have been rearranged and retitled according to the latest scholarly sequences found in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Students and scholars will find many of the ideas Handel sketched here expanded and reworked in later chamber and orchestral works and in the opera dance movements; musicians and every Baroque music lover will see in these neglected pieces "a Protean fluidity" (New Grove) worthy of the great composer, and more than worthy of any musical library.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For some reason I had never investigated the Handel keyboard suites until a renewed interest in playing the piano for pleasure caused me to start checking out all sorts of things I wasn't familiar with. Listening to the excellent recordings of the complete suites by Gavrilov and Richter on EMI Handel: Keyboard Suites, Vol. 1; Handel: Keyboard Suites, Vol. 2; Beethoven: Piano Sonata, Op. 31/2 made me want to have this music to play. I was waffling about purchasing this Dover edition for a bit since I wasn't sure about the typeface and there were no fingerings. After realizing that most other editions required buying two books, I decided to pick this one up and am extremely pleased with it. The typeface and layout are perfectly manageable and it's nice to have things like the zippy Gigue in Suite 1 complete on two pages so there's no need for a pageturn. The binding is flexible enough to let the 150-odd pages lie flat on the rack without major gyrations. It's nice to get to know more of Handel's keyboard output beyond the "Harmonious Blacksmith" variations from suite 5 and the ubiquitous Sarabande from suite 11. The volume contains volume 2 of the Handel Gesellschaft edition of the keyboard works. HG numbers and G (Grove) numbers are given but no HWV numbers. I'm listing the complete contents with the HWV numbers for the suites which is how most recordings identify them. Highly recommended.

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