Minuet

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)
adapted by Jana Bezpalcová
How to play correctly the ornaments in this composition:

This minuet in g minor comes from the Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach, which Johann Sebastian Bach composed and compiled in 1725 for his beloved wife, a singer, Anna Magdalena (1701–1760). The notebook contains about forty piano compositions, including several baroque dances. The minuet in g minor belongs to the best known of them and is a popular study composition for players of various instruments all around the world.

To those interested, I present here this version, adapted for the piano accordion.

I recommend that you pay attention to proper articulation while playing, i.e. strictly respect the beginnings and the ends of legato slurs and distinguish carefully between tenuto and staccato. The same is true for the left hand, too – don’t slur anything that isn’t tied by legato.

It’s necessary to attend to the melodic ornaments as well; the right way to play them is explained at the end of the sheet. The squiggle is called pralltriller, the wavy line with a short vertical line through it represents mordent. The pralltrillers were played in baroque times always from above, which means that they begin with the upper note, then you go to the main note, and then back.

To play this minuet, use one of the registers without tremolo, i.e. without the trembling sound typical of the accordion – it’s good for folk songs, but doesn’t suit a baroque composition very well.

You can find the minuet in g minor with the fingering for a button accordion in my new book Škola hry na knoflíkový akordeon 2. díl (Button Accordion School Vol. 2), which includes not only a number of other baroque and classicism compositions, but also folk songs, French valses, Irish dances, klezmer, etc. For more information and detailed contents, visit www.chromatika.cz (in Czech). The book can be used for the piano accordion, too, you’ll just need to adapt the fingerings for the right hand.

Good luck and enjoy playing!

5.2.2014, Jana Bezpalcová