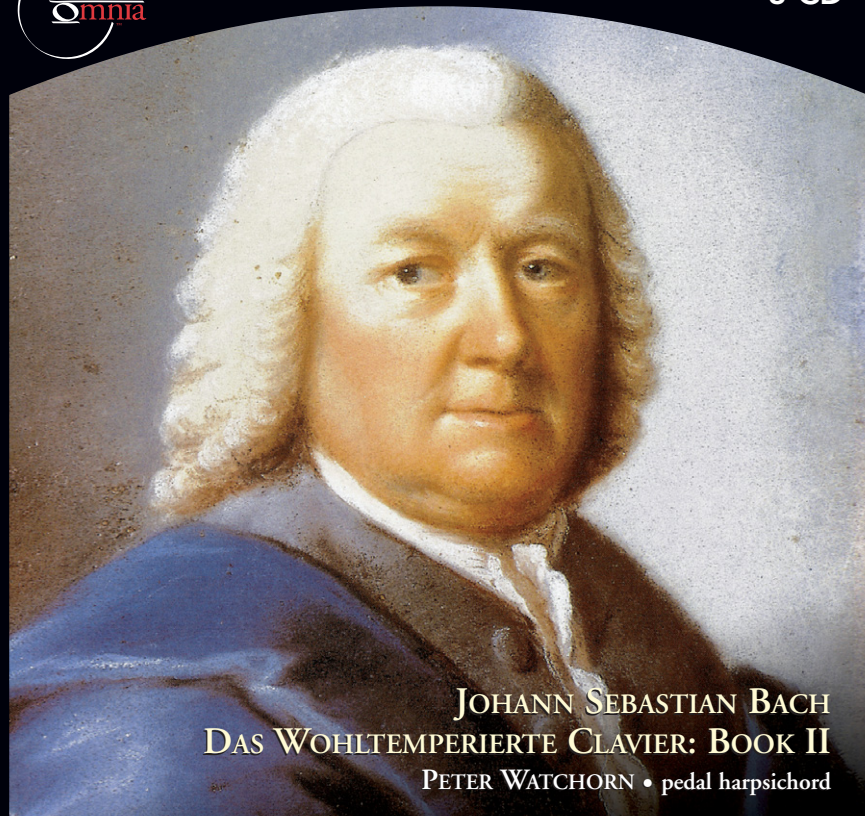




Keyboards of harpsichord by A. R. McAllister, 1999 after J. H. Harrass



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
DAS WOHLTEMPERIERTE CLAVIER: BOOK II
PETER WATCHORN • pedal harpsichord

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

DAS WOHLTEMPERIERTE CLAVIER

BOOK II (1742-1744)

BWV 870-893

PETER WATCHORN

PEDAL HARPSICHORD

(A.R. McAllister, Melbourne 1999 after J. H. Harrass;

Hubbard & Broekman, Boston 1990)

FOR GREGORY MILLER,
WHO FIRST SUGGESTED THIS SERIES

Recording Dates:
April 26-30, 2009

Recording Location:
St. Mary of the Hills Church, Milton, MA

Producer:
Penelope Crawford

Editing:
David Corcoran, Peter Watchorn

Engineering & Technical Production:
Joel Gordon, David Corcoran

Tuning:
Bach/Lehman, 1722/2004: Peter Watchorn

Harpsichord:
A. R. McAllister, 1999 after J. H. Harrass

Pedal harpsichord:
Hubbard & Broekman, Boston, 1990

Booklet Design & Layout:
Nathan Lamshead, Goodnews Graphics
goodnews@ptcnh.net

Cover Illustration:
J. S. Bach c. 1741
"Meiningen" pastel: J. P. Bach, c. 1756

Our thanks to Rev. A. F. Wright, Pastor
St. Mary of the Hills Parish,
Milton MA



I have also sought to emphasise the almost generational difference between the *Well-Tempered Clavier* proper, what we now know as Book One, and its sequel of twenty-two years later, by using a splendid copy of the famous Ruckers/Taskin harpsichord (much more Ruckers than Taskin, in fact) for the original 1722 cycle, and a massive German style instrument after Johann Heinrich Harrass (d. 1714) for Book Two, completed in 1744.

It is my intention with this series devoted to the harpsichord works of Johann Sebastian Bach to document the finest harpsichords by the great builders of our day. Makers such as Alastair McAllister, Walter Burr, Hubbard & Broekman, Zuckermann Harpsichords and Allan Winkler have provided instruments to a truly enviable standard. It is yet another aspect of the performer's challenge to present their work effectively in the service of Bach's music.

– Peter Watchorn, Cambridge MA 2009

DISC 1

1	<i>Prelude No. 1 in C major</i>	BWV 870a	2'51
2	<i>Fugue No. 1 in C major (a 3)</i>	BWV 870b	2'03
3	<i>Prelude No. 2 in C minor</i>	BWV 871a	2'49
4	<i>Fugue No. 2 in C minor (a 4)</i>	BWV 871b	2'38
5	<i>Prelude No. 3 in C# major</i>	BWV 872a	2'49
6	<i>Fugue No. 3 in C# major (a 3)</i>	BWV 872b	2'47
7	<i>Prelude No. 4 in C# minor</i>	BWV 873a	4'28
8	<i>Fugue No. 4 in C# minor (a 3)</i>	BWV 873b	2'37
9	<i>Prelude No. 5 in D major</i>	BWV 874a	6'13
10	<i>Fugue No. 5 in D major (a 4)</i>	BWV 874b	3'52
11	<i>Prelude No. 6 in D minor</i>	BWV 875a	1'56
12	<i>Fugue No. 6 in D minor (a 3)</i>	BWV 875b	1'56
13	<i>Prelude No. 7 in Eb Major</i>	BWV 876a	3'00
14	<i>Fugue No. 7 in Eb major (a 4)</i>	BWV 876b	2'00
15	<i>Prelude No. 8 in D# minor</i>	BWV 877a	4'59
16	<i>Fugue No. 8 in D# minor (a 4)</i>	BWV 877b	4'58

Total Time: 51'59

DISC 2

1	Prelude No. 9 in E major	BWV 878a	6'48
2	Fugue No. 9 in E major (a 4)	BWV 878b	4'03
3	Prelude No. 10 in E minor	BWV 879a	4'17
4	Fugue No. 10 in E minor (a 3)	BWV 879b	3'16
5	Prelude No. 11 in F major	BWV 880a	3'42
6	Fugue No. 11 in F major (a 3)	BWV 880b	2'09
7	Prelude No. 12 in F minor	BWV 881a	6'22
8	Fugue No. 12 in F minor (a 3)	BWV 881b	2'53
9	Prelude No. 13 in F# major	BWV 882a	4'21
10	Fugue No. 13 in F# major (a 3)	BWV 882b	2'50
11	Prelude No. 14 in F# minor	BWV 883a	3'02
12	Fugue No. 14 in F# minor (a 3)	BWV 883b	6'01
13	Prelude No. 15 in G major	BWV 884a	3'09
14	Fugue No. 15 in G major (a 3)	BWV 884b	1'34
15	Prelude No. 16 in G minor	BWV 885a	2'08
16	Fugue No. 16 in G minor (a 4)	BWV 885b	3'26

Total Time: 60'05

with a boringly constant legato, but rather the art of conveying through the keyboard the living rhetorical principles, the constant ebb and flow upon which Bach based his music. This can only be done in a genuinely “vocal” way, with articulation clearly delineated against a satisfying backdrop of beautiful, sustained tone, which projects and supports the harmonic framework upon which music is constructed. Furthermore, the Bach/Lehman temperament, with its gentle contrast between keys, and overall smoothness of modulation, encourages just this type of playing. In one other crucial aspect I am more fortunate than my teacher: having regular access to some of the most beautiful harpsichords being made in the world today. Her own special genius enabled Ahlgrimm, nevertheless, to make an ordinary instrument sound beautiful, something she did better than anyone, creating sounds I have never forgotten.

Having experienced numerous performances and recordings of the *WTC* on various keyboard instruments in a variety of temperaments, from “equal” to various unequal tunings, I hope and trust that this recording will convey the various elements I have outlined above. No one (and no one’s) interpretation can ever be definitive. Indeed, it is the measure of this work’s greatness that it allows many different approaches and still yields its secrets, without the performer ever coming close to exhausting their possibilities. The *WTC* is, in the words of Kirkpatrick, music that is better than it can ever be played. Our task is, nevertheless, to try to achieve the impossible by matching music with performance, so far as we are able.

Finally, I would mention one further and unusual element I have introduced with this recording: the use of a fine pedal harpsichord, a completely independent instrument for the feet with 16’, 8’ and 4’ sound, which is useful in sorting out Bach’s more complex counterpoint. In 18th century Germany the pedal harpsichord and pedal clavichord were practice instruments for organists, for use when the church was too cold or the organ-blower absent. But beyond this role as a mere substitute organ, the pedal harpsichord supplements the clarity and colour of the harpsichord with the powerful bass sonority associated with the organ. It bridges the gap between the two instruments.

For works like the *Well-Tempered Clavier* it truly adds the “third dimension”. In this regard, as in so many others, I owe a profound debt to Isolde Ahlgrimm, whose performances on her pre-war Ammer pedal harpsichord (very different from, and greatly superior to the notorious post-war German *Serien Instrumente* bearing the Ammer name) made such a powerful impression on me over thirty years ago.

spent, but which commands one's attention from beginning to end. In the final stages of preparing the recording of each book, for over a month I played it from beginning to end every day, sometimes twice. Rarely in my experience has time passed so quickly.

Furthermore, using Bradley Lehman's "Bach" tuning, which, decades of experience as performer, builder and tuner have convinced me, is the precise solution to the puzzle of just what the composer meant by his term "Well-Tempered", I felt that, for the first time, I was truly experiencing Bach's great work as it was meant to be heard. This is a discovery of tremendous importance that is bound to influence Bach performance for years to come. Lehman's discovery has provoked much controversy, but my own ears – and experience – tell me that he is correct.

As a performer on the harpsichord for over thirty-five years I have always tried to present the instrument as a highly developed, beautiful sounding, fully satisfying, three-dimensional medium of musical expression, for which no excuses need to be made. To this end I have drawn on my thirty-plus interdisciplinary years as performer, builder, tuner and listener. So often I find that the harpsichord poses a serious challenge to the performer to supply through other means the dynamic detail and shading that is so easily conveyed by mere touch on the clavichord, the piano and virtually every other existing musical instrument. My teacher, Isolde Ahlgrimm, was a master of conveying dynamics and colour on the harpsichord through touch and articulation, and without resort to tricks of registration and other fancy artifice to which performers of her generation often succumbed. This was also the main problem with which I grappled as her student for ten summers and beyond: how to provide musical shading and detail while conveying the overall architecture of the work, without benefit of touch-based dynamic control. In the hands of many performers, the harpsichord can curiously and obviously resist conveying these essential elements of a truly satisfying musical experience. It can, in short, become dull and relentless. It is also, as are few other instruments, an absolute and unforgiving mirror of the performer's own skill, mood and state of mind.

With Ahlgrimm I studied many aspects of touch and articulation, "over holding" of essential harmony notes, phrase structure, articulation and, above all, the art of "cantabile" playing, whose cultivation Bach lists in the preface to his two- and three-part Inventions and Sinfonias as one of his principal aims in writing those pieces. This denotes not, as is often mistakenly believed, playing

DISC 3

1	<i>Prelude No. 17 in Ab major</i>	BWV 886a	4'58
2	<i>Fugue No. 17 in Ab major (a 4)</i>	BWV 886b	4'10
3	<i>Prelude No. 18 in G# minor</i>	BWV 887a	5'42
4	<i>Fugue No. 18 in G# minor (a 3)</i>	BWV 887b	5'57
5	<i>Prelude No. 19 in A major</i>	BWV 888a	2'05
6	<i>Fugue No. 19 in A major (a 3)</i>	BWV 888b	1'31
7	<i>Prelude No. 20 in A minor</i>	BWV 889a	7'07
8	<i>Fugue No. 20 in A minor (a 3)</i>	BWV 889b	2'06
9	<i>Prelude No. 21 in Bb major</i>	BWV 890a	8'17
10	<i>Fugue No. 21 in Bb major (a 3)</i>	BWV 890b	2'21
11	<i>Prelude No. 22 in Bb minor</i>	BWV 891a	3'09
12	<i>Fugue No. 22 in Bb minor (a 4)</i>	BWV 891b	4'41
13	<i>Prelude No. 23 in B major</i>	BWV 892a	2'53
14	<i>Fugue No. 23 in B major (a 4)</i>	BWV 892b	5'25
15	<i>Prelude No. 24 in B minor</i>	BWV 893a	3'04
16	<i>Fugue No. 24 in B minor (a 3)</i>	BWV 893b	2'08
17	<i>Prelude in G major</i>	BWV 902	8'50

Total Time: 74'36



PETER WATCHORN

Peter Watchorn has studied the harpsichord, its history, repertoire and construction in great detail since 1974, introduced to the instrument through his teacher, Margaret Lloyd. In the years since he has achieved an international reputation for his consistently high standard of performance. In 1985 he was presented with the Erwin Bodky Memorial Award by the Cambridge Society of Early Music for his performance of J. S. Bach's solo harpsichord music. Born in Newcastle, NSW (Australia), he moved to Cambridge, MA in 1987, becoming a dual Australian/US citizen in 2005. He has continued to enjoy an active career in the USA and Europe as performer, scholar, recording artist and participant

in several ensembles. He is also noted as a harpsichord builder and researcher, his most recent efforts resulting in collaboration with Zuckermann Harpsichords International in re-constructing the 1642 Ioannes Moermans double-manual harpsichord, now in the Russell Collection, Edinburgh.

From 1985-1992 Peter Watchorn studied with Isolde Ahlgrimm in Vienna and has written extensively about her life and career. His full-length biography of her, *Isolde Ahlgrimm, Vienna & the Early Music Revival* appeared in 2007 (Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, UK). Dr. Watchorn was a contributing artist to the 2000 *Edition Bachakademie* (Hänssler-Klassik), recording the seven harpsichord toccatas (BWV 910-916) and the seventeen concertos arranged by Bach after other composers (BWV 972-987; 592a). With the award-winning recording label, *Musica Omnia*, which he co-founded in 2000 (with David Fox and Joel Gordon), and for which he serves as producer and board president, he has embarked on separate projects devoted to the immense keyboard outputs of J. S. Bach and the English Renaissance composer, Dr. John Bull. He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Boston University (1995). His articles have been published in professional journals such as *Musicalog Australia*, *Early Music* and *Harpsichord & Fortepiano*.

standards. Rarely, however, have I ever read anything about the “48” that in any way adequately conveys the awesome, mystical and truly universal nature of Bach's vision, or the overwhelming effect that hearing it can have on performer and listener alike. It is one of those astounding achievements of human endeavour in the face of which, perhaps, the wisest observer simply remains silent. To hear it or play it – often – are the only ways to truly begin to understand it. Its vision of a perfect universe is incredibly moving and powerful.

Despite the inadequacy of writing about Bach, it is nevertheless worth noting for the listener some of the principles that guided my exploration of this work. First, as a performer I have tried to convey not only the sheer majesty of Bach's vision, but most particularly, its collective beauty and power when considered as an integrated cycle designed to demonstrate not only a tuning system, but also a way of thinking about music in general. The great American harpsichordist, Ralph Kirkpatrick, whose brief study of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* presented reflections on his fifty year experience of the work, simply and summarily dismissed the notion of presenting the work in cyclical form as “a monstrous piece of pedantry”. My own experience has proven to me that, in this regard at least, he is entirely wrong. A truly great performance of the *WTC* conveys something inexhaustible, universal in a literal sense, and provides a resource whose bounty is never



Bust of Bach by Carl Ludwig Seffner, 1894

FORTY YEARS WITH BACH'S WELL-TEMPERED CLAVIER

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

T. S. Eliot, *Little Gidding* (Four Quartets, No. 4)

This recording of the second part of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* represents the culmination of a forty year quest to understand, absorb and present this incomparable cycle. I first began to play Bach's "48" as a piano student of Margaret Lloyd in Australia beginning in 1969, shortly after I had first discovered the sound of the harpsichord, an instrument which was, at that time and in that place, rare and precious. It was also at this time that I first encountered through recordings the playing of Isolde Ahlgrimm, the great Viennese harpsichordist whose performances I was to come to know intimately over the next few years and with whom I was to study the "48" in great detail many years later. Her performances of Bach have continued to influence me to this day. Those who know her playing will detect its influence in the present recording, which is offered as the second instalment of a tribute to our many years of work together.

Much has been written about this greatest of all collections of keyboard music and how its use of all major and minor keys has largely determined the course of western music ever since Bach compiled the first set of twenty-four preludes and fugues in 1722. Virtually no other collection has been so analysed, discussed, performed, recorded, criticised and debated as has the *WTC*. There are numerous fine written analyses available, notably by Herman Keller, Frederick Illiffe, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Donald Francis Tovey, Alfred Dürr, Richard Jones, David Ledbetter and David Schulenberg. All of these authors rightly point out the obvious characteristics of the *WTC*: its diversity, comprehensiveness, integral planning, contrapuntal ingenuity and its unique musical

THE INSTRUMENTS

For this recording a large German-style instrument by A. R. McAllister and a pedal harpsichord from the Hubbard & Broekman shop have been used. The harpsichord is derived from the only surviving signed instrument by the famous Saxon builder, Johann Heinrich Harrass (1662-1714) from some time before 1714, the year of Harrass's death. This instrument is located in Sondershausen, Germany. Another (unsigned) harpsichord survives, also attributed to Harrass on the basis of certain details of construction that are in common with the Sondershausen instrument. This is the celebrated "Berliner Bach-Flügel", instrument no. 316 in the Berlin Museum, which has at various times been either connected with Bach, or debunked as a fraud. The latest research, by Dieter Krickeberg and Horst Rase, appears to establish a solid connection between the instrument and Bach's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann. If this harpsichord stemmed from his collection, then, in all likelihood, given its date and provenance, it was passed down from Johann Sebastian, very likely as the "large" harpsichord mentioned in the composer's will. There it is described as "fourniert" or veneered.

While the case of the Berlin instrument is painted (and was originally plain pine), the area around the key well is veneered, perhaps an unusual enough feature to have warranted mention in an inventory. In any case, both Harrass instruments give a good indication of the type of long-scale German harpsichords that would certainly have been familiar to both Bachs. The harpsichord has an upper manual 8' register (with buff), and lower manual 8' and 4' sets of strings, plus the standard "shove" coupler. The present copy is of very large proportions: just over 9' in length, with massive internal framing. It is (unlike its prototype) fancily veneered in Tasmanian Blackwood, while the soundboard is made of King William pine, a southern hemisphere equivalent of the spruce used in the original. It is an instrument of extraordinary power and clarity, perfect for delineating Bach's complex counterpoint. One can also imagine the harpsichord concertos (BWV 1052-1065) being successfully performed on such an imposing instrument.

The pedal harpsichord, following eighteenth century descriptions of an instrument then in common use in Germany, but of which no original example survives, was built in the Hubbard & Broekman shop in 1990, built according to the inspired design of the shop's director, Hendrik

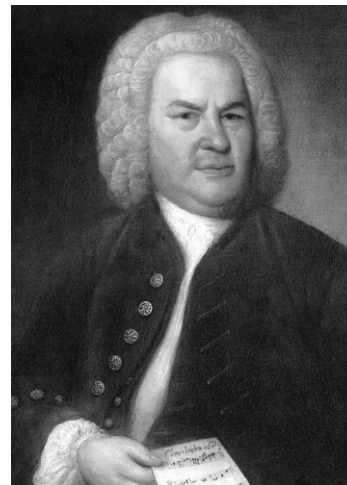
Broekman. Tonally, the pedal instrument follows the general scaling of harpsichords by the Hamburg-based Hass family. The disposition is 1 x 8' (with two different sets of jacks available to provide contrasting sound), 1 x 4' and 1 x 16', the latter stop being almost entirely strung in brass. The inventory of Bach's instruments taken at his death includes a somewhat obtuse reference to an instrument (or instruments) with a set of pedals, left by his father to Johann Christian. In any case, in an age where organs were pumped manually and churches were cold in the winter months, pedal string instruments were used extensively by organists for practice. For certain of Bach's harpsichord works, the pedal harpsichord becomes an especially attractive medium, adding a distinct third dimension to the sound. In some cases the use of a pedal is virtually essential, the best known example in the "48" being the A minor fugue from Book One. There is no doubt, however, that there are many other works in this collection that benefit equally from its use, including (in Book Two) the C minor fugue, the D# minor fugue and particularly the G minor prelude and fugue, both of which seem particularly idiomatic to the pedalboard instrument.



Harpsichord by A. R. McAllister, 1999, after J. H. Harrass (without pedal)

calm, while encompassing considerable variety of texture and figuration. The opening of the second half, especially, seems to point the way forward to the expressive style of Bach's sons and Haydn. Though effectively banished to a kind of limbo by its exclusion from the *WTC*, it is a masterpiece in its own right and provides an interesting window into Bach's creative and selective process in compiling the magnificent 48 preludes and fugues that comprise the *Well-Tempered Clavier*.

– Peter Watchorn, Cambridge, MA



Johann Sebastian Bach (1746) by Elias Gottlob Haußmann (1695-1774)

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 24 IN B MINOR, BWV 893

In his introduction to his edition of this piece Donald Francis Tovey writes:

“This Prelude exists in two notations: in common time, as here, and in *Alla-breve*. Kroll, in *Edition Peters*, decided for the present notation, but in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition came to the conclusion that Bach wrote it in *alla-breve* for convenience.”

This prelude seems to represent the typical *andante*, neither dawdling nor in a hurry. It is a two-part invention except for a few rhetorical chords towards the end. In the last three measures it utilizes rests to heighten the drama, similar to the effect achieved in the finale of the fourth *Brandenburg Concerto*, with a series of interruptions to the flow. The fugue is another transparent, *passpie*-like piece, given a peculiarly angular character through the use of descending octaves in its quirky subject, which seems to recall the final fugue of the early *Capriccio*, BWV 992. Whereas the B minor fugue in Book One represents a massive and profound working out of an anguished subject unfolding on a huge scale, the B minor fugue here seems to wear its position as the conclusion of this immense cycle in an almost ironic way, as if Bach is saying: the sum total of all our work is insignificant when compared to the infinite. With the final fugue of Book Two we have truly reached the end of something. There is no need, in contrast to what I felt upon completing Book One, to reprise the beginning. The low BB of the final chord of this fugue provides a nonchalant finality entirely on its own.

PRELUDE IN G MAJOR, BWV 902

This is by far the most significant of the three G major preludes that Bach attached at one time or another to the G major fugue included in Book Two of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, including the one that was selected by Bach. It has been argued that, in the end, Bach excluded this one from the *WTC* because of its disproportionate size in comparison to the fugue it preceded (which, in its original form was shorter and far less sophisticated than the final revised version included here – see the note to BWV884). Another explanation put forward is its marked similarity in both structure and mood to the E major prelude. Whatever the reason, it is a magnificent work in its own right, fully worthy to stand next to the preludes included in *WTC* Book Two. In up-to-date binary form, with a clearly-defined recapitulation, BWV 902 creates an atmosphere of serenity and



THE TUNING

In J. S. Bach's obituary it was reported: “In the tuning of harpsichords, he achieved so correct and pure a temperament that all the tonalities sounded pure and agreeable. He knew of no tonalities that, because of impure intonation, one must avoid.”

I believe that Bach's elegant diagram at the top of his *Well-Tempered Clavier* title page defines that “correct and pure” temperament. It establishes a specific set of sounds for every musical scale and for all harmonies. Every major scale and minor scale sounds different from every other. This allows music to project a subtly different mood or character in each melodic and harmonic context, with a pleasing range of expression as it goes along. It builds drama into the music. A tuner of harpsichords or organs, making the intervals very slightly compromised on purpose (as Bach's drawing indicates), ends up with a keyboard tuned beautifully for music in all keys. This carefully balanced result was apparently Bach's preferred system, and it solves all the practical problems in his music and the music of his sons. Indeed, it turns out to be an excellent tuning solution to play all music, both before and after Bach's.

My article presenting this hypothesis is “Bach's extraordinary temperament: our Rosetta Stone” published in the February and May 2005 issues of *Early Music* (Oxford University Press). Further details about this temperament are in the November 2005 issue of *Clavichord International*, and at www.larips.com.

The layout is:

F-C-G-D-A-E	1/6 comma narrow 5ths;
E-B-F#-C#	pure 5ths;
C#-G#-D#-A#	1/12 comma narrow 5ths;
A#-F	a residual diminished 6th, 1/12 comma wide.

The result sounds almost like equal temperament in its smoothness, and it similarly allows all keys to be used without problem, but it has much more personality and colour. In scales and triads it sounds plain and gentle around C major (most like regular 6th comma temperament), mellower and warmer in the flat keys such as A-flat and E-flat major (most like equal temperament), and especially bright and exciting in the sharp keys around E major (like Pythagorean tuning, with pure 5ths). Everything is smoothly blended from these three competing systems, emerging with an emphasis on melodic suavity.

The following chart uses a measurement scheme from Neidhardt's *Sectio canonis*, 1724, and developed further and more accurately in later publications by Sorge. The three stacked major 3rds within each (pure) octave are measured for their relative size, within a total of 21 units for each set of three: each row of this chart. The intervals having higher numbers sound spicier, more restless, with a more vigorous vibrato.

Bb-D 6	D-F# 7	F#-A# 8
Eb-G 7	G-B 5	B-D# 9
Ab-C 8	C-E 3	E-G# 10
Db-F 9	F-A 3	A-C# 9

In this measurement, a value of 11 would indicate a major 3rd that is one syntonic comma too sharp (a "Pythagorean major third," having been generated by four pure 5ths). A pure major 3rd would be represented here as 0. Equal temperament, as opposed to the variety shown here, has a constant size of 7 in all twelve of the major 3rds. Regular 1/6 comma temperament, for further contrast, has in each row two 3s and a 15, where the 15s indicate the "wolf" diminished 4ths such as G#-C or F#-Bb.

In functional harmony the Bach tuning sets up especially interesting contrasts within minor-key music. In the minor keys from one flat to three sharps, the dominant triad (V) is much stronger/brighter than the tonic, creating forward motion for relaxed resolution. In the minor keys with two or more flats, that relationship is reversed, with a dominant that is calmer than the tonic: making a gentle effect overall, yet leading into intense or troubling conclusions.

chromaticism creating an air of tension that is hardly matched anywhere else in the *WTC*. It exploits the use of stretto in its most dissonant and potentially anguished form: at the intervals of the 7th and 9th. After a 21 bar exposition, the subject appears from m. 42 in its inverted form, later appearing in stretto. In a final virtuoso display of "demonstration" counterpoint the final measures, like those of the G minor fugue exploit the use of stretto and inversion, the upper and lower voices pairing off and appearing in thirds and sixths against each other, a unique demonstration of Bach's late period contrapuntal mastery, extraordinary even for him.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 23 IN B MAJOR, BWV 892

BTwo in the *WTC* seems to imply a special serenity and grace. The B major prelude in Book Two is composed largely in two voices, with occasional excursions into three-part writing alternating with fantasia-like dissolution into a single line of notes. At the end the prelude descends to the lower reaches of the keyboard, concluding with the right hand in the tenor range and the left hand sinking to BB below C, one of the very few occasions in the *WTC* where this occurs. The following four-voice fugue is, like D major, E-flat major and E major, vocal in style, with a quiet serenity that is hardly disturbed by the introduction of a second subject in cascading eighth notes at m. 27, in combination with the main tune in the dominant key of F sharp major. Nothing is wasted: even the briefly introduced figure at m. 22 in the alto part is utilized for repeated rhetorical effect at mm. 98-99. As I noted in the essay to accompany Book One, it is interesting to contrast the key of B major, which, in this temperament is quite consonant, with the same tonality in a standard unequal 6th comma temperament such as Valotti, where it is actually the harshest and most dissonant key of all. Again I quote myself from before: "clearly, for a relaxed and consonant pair of works such as this prelude and fugue, agreeable (Well-Tempered) tuning is a prerequisite. This, for me at least, is further evidence in favour of the Bach/Lehman tuning as Bach's own preferred system."

of *Harmony*). It is also remarkable how this prelude and fugue seem to relate to portions of Handel's *Messiah*, not a work that one would normally associate with Bach. The prelude evokes the chromaticism of the bass aria, *The People That Walked in Darkness*, the chromaticism tending to emphasize the idea of "darkness". The fugue uses the same subject as one of Handel's finest *stile antico* choruses, *And With His Stripes*, a theme also utilized by Mozart in his *Requiem* and Haydn in his *F minor Quartet* from Op. 20. Whereas Handel's chorus is one of his strictest contrapuntally, Bach's fugue on the same subject is very free and even loosely organized. It is an extraordinary creation, combining three basic ideas: a subject in quarter notes followed by jaggedly accented eighths, with a dizzying countersubject consisting of cascading 32nd notes. This provides an almost apocalyptic vision of turmoil and unrest that is never resolved until the very final cadence, including the bass note AA – one of the very few times that Bach exceeds the basic four-octave compass C-c”.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 21 IN B-FLAT MAJOR, BWV 890

The prelude is a large-scale *pastorale* in early sonata form, with a distinct recapitulation at m. 49. It seems to be related somewhat to another Bach work, the *Fantasia in C minor*, BWV 906, as it includes crossing of hands in several places (mm. 13-16 and mm. 37- 40). It is otherwise quite dissimilar, as even the difference in tonalities between the two works might imply. The B-flat major prelude has a sunny and open mood with the overall transparency of a large three-part invention. Extraordinary, too is the extended coda from m. 76, almost with the character of a cadenza, where the piece winds its way through a series of keys using contrary motion between the hands to return to the tonic. The fugue is one of most delicate, transparent and delightfully concise works in Book Two. It has the rhythm of a quick *minuet* (or *passepied*), with a fashionable off-beat subject and written-out slurs in mm. 3-4. These two figures are combined and explored throughout the movement.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 22 IN B-FLAT MINOR, BWV 891

One of the very greatest pairs in the *WTC*, the prelude is a tautly-composed and lengthy three-part invention, the second part of its subject containing a faint reminiscence of the B-flat minor prelude from the first book. The fugue is, along with the G minor, perhaps the most ambitious and extraordinary of the entire “48”, its subject punctuated by rests and its relentless

In major-key music, the triads on degrees I, IV, and V have characters similar to one another. The sizes of major 3rds change by only 1, 2, or 3 units from each key to its neighbors, moving by the circle of 5ths (through typical subdominant/tonic/dominant progressions). Any change of *Affekt* is therefore gradual and subtle, as if we never really leave the home key altogether but it feels a little more or less tense as we go along.

To summarize those two important observations: major-key passages tend to give a luxurious and unproblematic flow, a basically even-keeled personality. Minor-key passages tend to draw more attention to themselves with powerfully dramatic strokes, more vivid and obvious gestures.

Bach's first biographer, Forkel, wrote: “Nobody could install the quill-plectrums of his harpsichord to his satisfaction; he always did it himself. He also tuned both his harpsichord and clavichord himself, and was so practiced in the operation that it never cost him above a quarter of an hour. But then, when he played from his fancy, all the 24 keys were in his power; he did with them what he pleased. He connected the most remote as easily and as naturally together as the nearest; the hearer believed he had only modulated within the compass of a single key. He knew nothing of harshness in modulation; even his transitions in the chromatic style were as soft and flowing as if he had wholly confined himself to the diatonic scale...”

“In the modulation of his instrumental works, every advance is a new thought, a constantly progressive life and motion within the circle of the keys chosen and those nearest related to them. Of the harmony which he already has he retains the greatest part; but at every advance he mixes something related to it; and, in this manner, he proceeds to the end of a piece so softly, so gently and gradually, that no leap or harsh transition is to be felt; and yet no bar (I might even say, no part of a bar) is like another. With him, every transition was required to have a connection with the preceding idea and to appear to be a necessary consequence of it. He knew not, or rather he disdained those sudden sallies by which many composers attempt to surprise their hearers. Even in his chromatics the advances are so soft and tender that we scarcely perceive their distances, though these are often very great: we fancy that he has not deviated a step from his diatonic scale. Thus he knew how to combine everything in the whole extent of the dominion of sound which could by any means be connected together.”

— Bradley Lehman, November 2005

DAS WOHLTEMPERIERTE CLAVIER

BOOK II (1742-44)

Des Wohltemperierten Claviers Zweiter Teil, bestehend in Praeludien und Fugen durch alle Tone und Semitonien, verfertigt von Johann Sebastian Bach, Königl. Pohlnisch und Churfürstl. Sächs. Hoff Compositeur Capellmeister und Directore Chori Musici in Leipzig. Im Jahre 1744.

(Second Part of The Well-Tempered Clavier, consisting of preludes and fugues in all tones and semitones, prepared by Johann Sebastian Bach, Royal Polish and Electoral Saxon court composer, chapel master and choir director in Leipzig, in the year 1744.)

Twenty or so years after the completion of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Bach's compendium of elaborate preludes and fugues in all possible major and minor keys, the composer doubled the size of this great enterprise by revising early works, composing new ones and then compiling the 48 resulting pieces into a new volume whose title made clear its direct connection to the earlier set. Indeed, it is impossible to consider the incredible scope of the entire work without comparing and contrasting the various stylistic developments that took place in the nearly quarter of a century that separates the compilation of each book.

Why Bach chose to assemble another set of preludes and fugues in all possible keys has often been the subject of scholarly speculation. It seems clear to this performer that Bach had one overriding concern: to demonstrate what he had learned in the twenty-two intervening years. In general the pieces from Book Two are longer, more elaborate and more adventurous harmonically than those from Book One. They are also, on the whole, more difficult to play, so it might be that Bach wanted to take his students to another level of executive skill and expose them to a new pinnacle of his own compositional achievement. There is no doubt that great progress was made between the two volumes, an observation that in no way disparages the earlier set, which remains one of Western

siciliano, but it never loses its plaintive sense of mystery. G-sharp minor was a little-used key in the Baroque. The Bach/Lehman tuning is so designed that keys further around the cycle of fifths than E major/C-sharp minor actually improve in their intonation. This represents a departure from the more usual unequal tunings where, simply, the greater the distance one strays from the starting point (F or C), the less pleasant and agreeable the tuning becomes. With its wistful melancholy and ambiguously chromatic harmonic language, his fugue remains the “sphinx” of the *WTC*.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 19 IN A MAJOR, BWV 888

The prelude is another *pastorale*, similar in character to some of Bach's other A major music for keyboard. The prelude to the first English Suite is perhaps the prime example, similar in length and in the working out of its thematic material, which in this case involves exploiting the theme and its inversion. The A major prelude from Book 2 of the *WTC* also resembles some of the three-part *Sinfonias*, both in its transparency and the juxtaposition of subject and inversion. The sprightly fugue that follows it begins, unusually, in the bass and combines plain 16th note movement with dotted rhythms, which lends a humorous, nervous and somewhat quirky character to this lightly transparent piece. Like several other pieces in Book Two, it exceeds the four octave range of C-c” by momentarily landing on low AA.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 20 IN A MINOR, BWV 889

This prelude is astonishing on many different levels. First, it is singular in its display of pure mathematical ingenuity. Hermann Keller writes:

“One can study it as a blueprint design: two exactly similar halves of 16 bars each; in the first section of the second half (bars 17 – 24) the two subjects, firmly and indissolubly bound together, are inverted; in the second section (bars 25 – 32) they are combined in normal and inverted movement.

The prelude is also remarkable in its total exploitation of chromatic harmony, creating an effect similar to that of such works as the *Crucifixus* of the *B minor Mass* and the middle section of the second *Duetto* in F major, BWV 803. Bach's student, J. P. Kirnberger used this prelude as an example in his 1773 treatise, *Die wahren Grundsätze zum Gebrauch der Harmonie* (*The True Basis for the Use*

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 17 IN A-FLAT MAJOR, BWV 886

With the autograph appearing to date from 1741, the A-flat major prelude, closely related to that in F-sharp major, is a perfect example of Bach's mature style expressed in the form of a large-scale concerto movement with clearly delineated *ritornellos* and an insistent momentum that is underlined by the accumulating broken-chord harmonies of the opening bars. A sign of Bach's progress over twenty years of composing since *WTC I* in 1722 is his interest in exploring the relationship of the "Neapolitan" tonality, located a semitone (or flatted second degree of the scale) above the home key and used as a temporary harmonic detour. In the prelude this appears at m. 74, where the perceived tonality of A major is notated in its Neapolitan relationship to the key of A flat: with B-double flats! Here Bach pairs one of his latest preludes with one of his earliest fugues, for the four-voice fugue is a reworking of an early work, the *Fughetta in F major*, BWV 901. Here it is doubled in length, its original 24 bars being extended to 50. Like the prelude, it also exploits Neapolitan harmonic relationships at m. 44, with an excursion into B-double flat territory once again, concluding with a rhetorical fermata. This is followed by an equally extraordinary conclusion, where in its penultimate bar the fugue accumulates first one, then two extra voices, the subject appearing in the tenor.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 18 IN G-SHARP MINOR, BWV 887

This prelude, one of the most modern of the *WTC* is the only piece in the entire "48" to positively indicate the use of two manuals, marked *piano* and *forte* to produce echo effects. In this performance I have extrapolated Bach's somewhat terse suggestions and applied the effect throughout the movement. It is the soul-mate of the F minor prelude, similar in its mood and affect, with flowing 16th note figuration making up its bulk. It is also mature in the sense that it is far more extensively chromatic than almost anything Bach would have written in 1722. The G-sharp minor prelude is another binary-form piece that foreshadows the Classical sonata in its use of themes and their working out. The fugue is a very mysterious work, perhaps the most impenetrable of the entire *WTC*. It is outwardly cast as a gigue, but its character is shaped by its rhythmic neutrality (or monotony) and a pervasive chromaticism that allows it to slide into many unexpected key centres during its 143 bars. The four-bar subject divides in the middle, the second half being an upward transposition of the first two bars by one tone. Its character is similar to a

music's great marvels. In fact the two halves perfectly complement one another and provide us with an encyclopaedic survey of Bach's peerless knowledge of musical forms and different national styles of composition.

In the 1740s Bach concerned himself with bringing his life's work into some kind of final form. Works such as the *B minor Mass*, *Art of Fugue*, *Goldberg Variations* and the canonic variations on *Vom Himmel Hoch* seem to indicate a concern with revising old works and composing new ones to represent Bach's most recent level of compositional development. It is a mistake to assume that Book Two of the *WTC* contains works composed entirely after Book One. As in the case of the *B Minor Mass*, where Bach mined material from church cantatas stemming from every stage of his career, Book Two of the *WTC* contains works both old and new, as well as extensive revisions of pre-existing material. The term "parody" refers to Bach's technique of re-using existing vocal works in a different guise in order to give them a more permanent place in his output. Bach's reworking of earlier keyboard works for inclusion in the *WTC* was also very much in this spirit, in this case the objective being to give miscellaneous works a final form and home.

Unlike Book One, the second volume consists of exclusively three- and four-part fugues, ranging from those of great transparency (A major, F-sharp major, G major, B-flat major) to others exhibiting highly chromatic, compact and rigorous "demonstration" counterpoint (G minor, B-flat minor). There is greater economy in many of the fugues than before: Hermann Keller, for example sees the B-flat minor fugue as fulfilling the organizational and contrapuntal promise inherent in the great A minor fugue from Book One, as Tovey notes: "with perfect economy and maturity on more beautiful material." The preludes are altogether more developed than those in Book One, with many composed in binary form with repeats, in contrast to the lone B minor example in the 1722 set. Some appear to anticipate classical sonata form (D major, F minor, F-sharp major, B-flat major) and have identifiable recapitulations. Some use the *ritornello* principle derived from the Italian concerto model (A-flat major), while others are cast as two-part inventions (C minor, D minor, A minor, B minor) or three-part inventions (A major, B flat minor). Although the works that comprise Book Two did not originate, like those from Book One, in a didactic collection for Wilhelm Friedemann (who was 32 in 1742), the surviving source material shows clearly the evolution of some of the pieces. These are principally the British Museum autograph manuscript,

which is incomplete and documents Bach's revisions over a period of several years, and the later version copied out in 1744 by Bach's student and son-in-law Johann Christoph Altnickol, which in many cases clearly represents Bach's last wishes.

As with Book One, I have used the edition by Donald Francis Tovey, which chooses the best and most sophisticated texts from these sources, while carefully noting the alternatives. In the spirit of the *Bach Gesellschaft* in the 19th century, Tovey's combination of great scholarship and unique musical insight produced an edition that is perhaps as near as we can get to Bach's final intentions. It is hard to believe that Tovey wrote as early as 1924:

The wealth of authoritative material for the text of *Das Wohltemperirte Klavier* (sic) is such that no single version of the work may be considered decisive on all points. The material has been thoroughly sifted many times; twice by Kroll (in Vol. XIV of the *Bach Gesellschaft* edition and, earlier, in Edition Peters), and later by Bischoff, whose presentation of Bach's complete clavier-works (Edition Steingräber) combines to an unprecedented extent a complete statement of the facts with a straightforward text almost entirely unencumbered by anything that need interrupt a reader playing at sight. Bischoff's results differ from both of Kroll's texts and all three are further corrected by the important supplementary materials (including an account of the British Museum autograph) given in Vol. XLV. of the *Bach-Gesellschaft*.

These three texts and these supplementary materials are now all that is necessary for a knowledge of what Bach actually wrote in *Das Wohltemperirte Klavier*. The present text collates these results, and these alone; and together with reasonings indicated by a practical knowledge of the clavichord, the harpsichord, of Bach's models in French ornamentation and Italian form, and of his vocal works, recombines them into something calculated to enable teachers and students to read Bach straightforwardly with the certainty that neither the editor or the modern pianoforte can mislead them as to the meaning of Bach's musical language.

Tovey's edition was remarkable for the 1920s and shows the extent to which the "early music" revival, spearheaded in England by Arnold Dolmetsch, had begun to shape thinking about Bach's music among pianists. In any case, Tovey's edition (with fingering suggestions by the great Bach pianist, Harold Samuel) has not been surpassed and any players who exclusively use the primary sources at some point must choose between equally valid alternative readings.

piece was reworked by Bach, prior to its inclusion in Book Two, to a far higher level of sophistication, complete with a newly-composed fantasia-like coda. Another explanation may lie in the fact that it is rather similar in nature to the E major prelude, with a pastorale-like serenity and an unhurried beauty that is transfixing. It has been included as an appendix to the present recording since it is, alone among the earlier versions of various preludes and fugues, able to hold its own with the actual contents of Book Two. The newly-composed prelude, like BWV 902 a binary piece, is based on broken-chord figuration over pedal-points at the beginning of each section. Bach was undoubtedly correct in his assessment, for prelude and fugue are here as perfectly matched in scope and general mood as any of the "48".

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 16 IN G MINOR, BWV 885

The prelude is a profound and serious piece, composed in French-style dotted rhythms with the tempo indication *Largo* designated by Bach. It is also perfectly designed for performance on a pedalboard instrument, the entire bass part proving highly idiomatic to this medium, with its pairs of dotted notes allowing the pedal to easily add a considerable degree of *gravitas* to the overall effect. The four-voice fugue, with its insistent repeated notes and distinct countersubject that becomes important in its own right (this could qualify as a double fugue), is one of the peaks of the *WTC*. Tovey says:

"The Subject and its powerfully contrasted Countersubject are in an all-comprehending Double Counterpoint in the octave, tenth and twelfth, the nature and purpose of which reveals itself in the course of the Fugue."

It is quite extraordinary how Bach pairs the subject and countersubject in parallel thirds and sixths from m. 45 through m. 58 and again at mm. 59-62. The dominant cadence at m. 67 provides repose from all the energy and sets up a remarkable coda. In this performance the excitement is amplified by the use of the pedalboard instrument for the final bass subject entry, which occurs from m. 78 to the conclusion. Herman Keller's assessment: "No stringed instrument can adequately do justice to the expression of this fugue with its cumulative rhetoric." The listener may be the judge.

resembles an extended concerto movement without the inner parts provided, and in this respect most closely resembles the A-flat major prelude, also in Book Two. The fugue is unusual in several respects, not least for its beginning on the leading-note of the F-sharp major scale, although the standard Baroque convention of playing the ornament on the auxiliary note mitigates the effect. It is also dance-like in nature, resembling a *gavotte* in its character and general mood. It features, like the F minor prelude, the familiar Baroque sighing motives, which end its subject and are then exploited thematically in the episodes. The work has a geniality and sunny transparency that masks the actual difficulty of performing it: it is quite tricky to play this piece in F-sharp major.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 14 IN F-SHARP MINOR, BWV 883

This prelude in F-sharp minor, or “this magnificent stream of lyric melody”, as Tovey put it, resembles an aria. It also seems akin to the middle movement of a solo concerto and comes quite close to the mood and style of the *Andante* of Bach’s own *Italian Concerto*, for example. At several points its prevailing triplet figuration is heard against simple 8th notes. With the exception of the very end of the piece, it can be played on two separate manuals, a temptation that is only thwarted by the alto voice-leading in the last four bars. The fugue is a “demonstration” of triple counterpoint, with three distinct subjects, the second and third appearing at m.20 and m. 36 respectively. The fugue is often said to combine three different national styles, each represented by one of the themes: German, French and Italian, the three appearing together in triple counterpoint from m.66-69 in a typically Bachian display of contrapuntal ingenuity. Sober in character, the fugue acquires a definite momentum from the nature of its subjects and the extraordinary way in which Bach combines them. The F-sharp minor fugue is also one of the few pieces in the “48” that seems to invite the use of contrasting manuals: at m.20 for the introduction of the “French” subject, and again at m. 36, where matters turn Italian.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 15 IN G MAJOR, BWV 884

The piece included in *WTC II* is one of three preludes that were associated at some time with this particular fugue, the others surviving as BWV 902 and 902a. On the face of it, it seems odd that the most significant of the three preludes, BWV 902, did not make it into the *WTC*. One reason might be that it is very much larger than the fugue it accompanied, even when that same

In compiling Book Two of the *WTC*, Bach utilized a series of preludes and fuguetas that remain extant in their original versions (BWV 900-902) as part of his basic source material. As is the case with Book One, there are many thorough analyses available of the second part of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, including books of fairly recent provenance by David Schulenberg and, most recently, David Ledbetter, which contain all the information one could need about sources and history of this work, so pivotal to the development of Western music. The following notes represent just a few of my own thoughts on compositional points of interest, performance issues, tuning and other topics.

A few fugal terms:

Subject: the main theme of a fugue.

Countersubject: the accompaniment to the subject, often a melody in its own right.

Episode: the extra material used to extend a fugue and move it between different tonal areas.

Inversion: the subject turned upside down

Augmentation: the note values of the subject are lengthened (*diminution* is the reverse).

Stretto: statements of the subject in different voices overlap

Ricercar: an early, strict form of fugue that utilizes learned devices such as stretto and inversion.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 1 IN C MAJOR, BWV 870

In contrast to the famous set of arpeggios that opens *WTC I*, the first prelude of the second part is an expansive piece of complex counterpoint, rich in texture and sonorous in its effect, suggesting performance on full harpsichord. It is an expansion of an earlier prelude and fuguetta that also survives in its more rudimentary form. The three-voice *moto perpetuo* fugue also stands in stark contrast to its parallel work from Book One. Whereas that piece is in four-part vocal style, this one is entirely instrumental in nature and retains a lively and irrepresible energy throughout. In this later, revised version of a much earlier piece, Bach introduces an “interrupted” cadence, and tacks on a final coda in order to extend the work.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 2 IN C MINOR, BWV 871

The prelude is cast as a two-part invention, with thematic material passing back and forth between the voices. It also introduces another feature that will be exploited throughout Book Two: binary form, derived from the dance suite. Many of the preludes in Book Two are written as bi-partite dance movements or inventions, while only the final prelude from Book One is cast in this mould. The sober four-voice fugue exploits the techniques of inversion and augmentation. It is in fact a three-voice fugue for much of its length: the final part remaining silent throughout fully two-thirds of the piece before finally making its appearance in the bass (played on the pedalboard in this performance).

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 3 IN C-SHARP MAJOR, BWV 872

Another expansion of an earlier work, this time transposed from its original key of C major in order to complete the chromatic sequence, the C sharp major prelude is another “broken chord” style piece, similar in concept to the very first prelude in Book One, and like BWV 846, notated originally as a mere set of chords, without suggested arpeggiation. Bach expands the work in its new form by attaching a lively three-voice fughetta, marked *allegro*, which implies a more serene tempo for the first part. This noble *gravitas* is underlined in the present performance by playing the bass on the pedals at 16’ pitch (a registration that is possible on the pedal harpsichord in a way that would not work on the organ, since the first harmonic is quite strongly present in the sound of the plucked string), the beautiful and insistent tenor part on the lower 8’ register and the upper two parts on the more nasal and transparent upper manual 8’. The fugue, like its prelude a transposed and expanded version of an earlier piece, exploits the devices of inversion, augmentation and diminution, the rudimentary, four-note subject being presented in varying note values throughout. The fugue eventually dissolves into a fantasia, with rapid 32nd note figuration creating a brilliant finish, a fourth voice appearing in the bass for the final cadence.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 4 IN C-SHARP MINOR, BWV 873

The prelude is a strictly-composed three-voice contrapuntal piece, cast in the expressive guise of a *sciliano*. It features numerous *appoggiaturas* (long suspensions), alternating with *accenti* (short grace notes designed to emphasise rhythmic and harmonic points of arrival). The gigue fugue

to the French unmeasured preludes of D’Anglebert and Louis Couperin. It was D’Anglebert’s table of ornaments that Bach copied for his son’s instruction book in 1720, so he was undoubtedly familiar with this style of prelude as well. The following fugue is a lively three-voice gigue, which features a relentlessly nervous energy that lasts for its entire length. Extraordinary is the momentary excursion of the subject to B flat minor at m. 87, with extra notes temporarily added to the three-voice texture for dramatic effect, followed by brilliant 32nd notes that occur in the soprano over the final bass entry of the gigue subject.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 12 IN F MINOR, BWV 881

The F minor prelude is, along with its cousin in G# minor, the most modern of all the preludes in the entire “48”, a sort of homage by their father to the *Empfindsamer Stil* (expressive style) of his sons, Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel. The conventional “sighing” motive of the opening is the basis for the entire movement, which includes a recapitulation of the opening tune, while counterpoint is kept to the bare minimum. The entirely up-to-date character of this piece suggests that Bach thoroughly understood the expressive possibilities of his sons’ style, as well as how to enhance its effect through combining this expressively homophonic thematic material with a whiff of the contrapuntal traditions to which he was committed. The fugue is a straightforward and relatively simple work: there are no great contrapuntal devices other than the entries of its subject and intervening episodes. As Tovey puts it (discussing a parallel fugue in *The Art of Fugue*, but referring also to this one), “...it is possible for a Fugue to enjoy life without Stretti, without Double Counterpoint, without Inversion, and without anything but well-timed entries of its Subject in the course of a happy flow of Episodes.” The F minor fugue seems lively in character, but its ebullience is somewhat tempered by the tonality and its implied *Affekt*.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 13 IN F-SHARP MAJOR, BWV 882

As noted with Book One, F-sharp major is another key to challenge most unequal systems of tuning, and its sunny, bright quality shows further evidence of the effectiveness of the Bach/Lehman scheme. Here we have an extended, through-composed prelude in two voices that incorporate the dotted rhythms of the French (though these figures are not really over-dotted as they would be in a French overture), contrasting with flowing Italian 16th notes. In form it

unity”, a classical ideal. The E major fugue is a genuinely *stile antico* piece, composed in the purest vocal style that recalls Renaissance vocal polyphony. In the copy of this work by Johann Philipp Kirnberger the source of the subject is attributed to J. K. F. Fischer’s *Ariadne Musica*. The fugue uses the devices of stretto, diminution and inversion. It survives in no earlier version, appearing rather to belong to the period in Bach’s career that produced the *B minor Mass*, with its preoccupation with “old style” vocal writing and Part III of the *Clavierübung*, which displays a similar concern.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 10 IN E MINOR, BWV 879

The prelude is closely related to the two-part Inventions of 1723, composed in the dance rhythms of a *passepied*, or perhaps an Italian *corrente*. There are no earlier versions of it extant and it appears in the part of the London autograph that stems from 1739-1740. The question of the long ornaments that appear throughout the piece has caused controversy: should they be chromatic or diatonic in nature? To heighten the dissonance they impart I have opted for chromatic ornaments throughout, following Tovey and Ahlgrimm. The fugue is an extraordinary juxtaposition of different types of notes and rhythms, both simple and compound. It also contains one of the longest subjects of any to be found in the *WTC* and the staccato marks indicated by Bach give it a stern, march-like quality. Like many of Bach’s earlier fugues it is also quite uncompromising in its voice-leading, with parts that frequently overlap and require dextrous fingerings in order to untangle them from one another. This fugue proves the importance of considering sources other than the autograph in order to determine Bach’s final thoughts, for in the London manuscript the piece ends abruptly at m. 70. In Altnickol’s 1744 copy the work is longer by another 16 measures of elaborately worked-out coda, with an extraordinary climax over a dominant pedal figure from m. 78.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 11 IN F MAJOR, BWV 880

Tovey describes this prelude as a “mass of four-part and five-part harmony built up mainly by a single melodic figure and its inversion, which floats all over the key-board leaving sustained notes in its wake.” Composed, like the E-flat major prelude in ternary form, it features a genuine recapitulation at m. 57. In his discussion of this prelude, David Schulenberg perceptively observes that the written-out sustained chords created by the melodic lines in this prelude may hearken back

that follows it is an early composition, transposed from C minor to its present rather awkward C-sharp minor configuration. Its subject (with regular inversion) and general character resemble several of the early fugues that the young Bach composed after Reincken and others. It is highly energetic, unusually chromatic in its harmonic language for an early work and possesses a momentum that never wanes. It is also quite challenging to play in its final tonal destination of C-sharp minor.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 5 IN D MAJOR, BWV 874



D major represents one of the brightest and most brilliant of all the keys, as one would expect from the tonality normally associated with trumpets. This character is heightened in the Bach/Lehman tuning that has been used for this recording. The D major prelude provided for Book Two is one of the most striking and forward-looking single movements of the entire *WTC*. It is

composed in a rudimentary sonata form, with clearly laid out exposition and recapitulation that clearly foreshadow the works of Mozart and Haydn. It possesses a *brio* that suggests Domenico Scarlatti, whose sonatas Bach perhaps had encountered by the time this piece was written. The prelude, cast in binary form, has another strange feature: it is provided with two simultaneously occurring time signatures (C and 12/8), and written in two contrasting types of prevailing note-values, in both common and compound time. This raises the issue of how to make the two rhythms combine with one another to achieve greatest effect. In this performance I have opted for the opposite of Tovey's (and following my teacher Isolde Ahlgrimm's) solution: to keep the two rhythms distinct from each other, even when dotted notes are combined simultaneously with the prevailing compound-time triplets. This provides a sharp and exciting effect, with rhythmic alertness that recalls the slow dotted introductions to Bach's French Overtures. The slurred 1/8th notes (mm. 2, 18, 20, 42, 44) are meant to be performed unequally, as if dotted. The following four-part fugue is written in the most purely *stile antico* vocal manner, as are several other fugues in this collection (E flat major, E major, B major). It is a serene and lovely work, with a sense of quiet urgency imparted by its repeated-note subject, and its exploitation of the technique of close stretto, with subject entries piling up and overlapping in close proximity to one another.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 6 IN D MINOR, BWV 875

The brilliant D minor prelude, with its cascading scales is a technical *tour de force*. It is another early piece clearly written to display the skill of the virtuoso. In this performance I have arranged it so as to be played on contrasting manuals with single 8' registers, with the treble and bass parts often changing position between keyboards (and occasionally overlapping one another). The dramatically concise and brilliant three-voice fugue features a subject with a pervasive ascending triplet rhythm followed by a descending chromatic scale. Serious in nature despite the brilliance, it exploits the devices of stretto and inversion of the subject and provides a suitably intense mood, appropriate to both the key and the preceding prelude.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 7 IN E-FLAT MAJOR, BWV 876

This E-flat major prelude, a far less elaborate work than the corresponding piece in Book One, is a ternary-form *pastorale*, one of several contained in Book Two, closely related in style to yet

another prelude in E-flat by Bach, (BWV 998: which is followed by a *da capo* fugue and *allegro* movement). Composed primarily in just two voices, directions to hold notes down to increase the sonority are carefully notated by Bach at m. 26, m. 28 and m. 52. The four-voice fugue that follows is one of the several purely vocal-style fugues of Book Two, eminently singable by a choir. Despite the awkward stretch in m. 20, a sustained, yet articulate vocal style of performance is also mandatory on the harpsichord.

PRELUDE & FUGUE NO. 8 IN D-SHARP MINOR, BWV 877

Unlike Book One, where different key notations for prelude and fugue point up the distinction between D-sharp minor and its enharmonic equivalent, E-flat minor, both prelude and fugue here are written in D-sharp minor. The prelude (and perhaps the fugue as well) appear to have been conceived in D minor: what fitted the hand admirably in that key becomes far more of a challenge when transposed up a semitone into that most arcane and little-used of all keys. The prelude is an extended two-part invention in binary form (a form used for no fewer than ten of the twenty-four preludes in Book Two). The fugue is serious and intense, its profound earnestness hardly lightened by the few rudimentary episodes it contains, which are mere stepping-stones between key centres. The climax appears with the final subject entry at m. 40, the drama heightened by the rhetorically-laden parallel upper part movement in the next bar. Or, as Tovey puts it: "massed iambic chords with rests – Bach's supreme climax." The last four measures display "demonstration" counterpoint: in this case combining the subject with its inverted mirror image between the soprano and the tenor voices. This is one of the most powerful fugues in the entire "48". It was one that also profoundly affected Mozart when Baron van Swieten introduced him to the *WTC* in the 1780s and he arranged it (transposed into D minor), along with several others, for string quartet.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 9 IN E MAJOR, BWV 878

The E major prelude of Book Two is another binary form piece, this time an expressive slow movement, such as one might expect to find in a trio sonata. It requires great care from the player in its opening measures in order for the ear to discern clearly the delicate part-writing with its expressive suspensions. It is interesting to note how Bach at mm. 43-48 reverses the order of the material presented in the first half from mm.18-24, providing an early example of "variety in