



signum
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
The Complete Organ Works, Vol. 14
DAVID GOODE
Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge

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Clavierübung III

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BACH, BEAUTY AND BELIEF

THE ORGAN WORKS OF J.S. BACH

Introduction – Bach and the Organ

The organ loomed large from early on in Bach's life. The foundations of his multifaceted career as a professional musician were clearly laid in the careful cultivation of Bach's prodigious talent as an organist whilst he was still a child. Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach in 1685, and after the death of his father – the director of municipal music in the town – at the age of ten moved to Ohrdruf, where he was taken in by his eldest brother, Johann Christoph. Christoph was the organist at St Michael's Ohrdruf and had been taught by Pachelbel.¹ During his years at Ohrdruf, the young Sebastian was a choral scholar and likely had his first experiences in organ building and maintenance.² In 1700 he moved to Lüneburg, as a choral scholar at St Michael's School; this move brought him into the orbit of many organists, including Georg Böhm and Adam Reinken in Hamburg.³ 1703 found him examining a new organ at the New Church in Arnstadt, where he was appointed as organist in August of that year, remaining for four years, his first major professional organist post (Wolff 2001 p. 526). Clearly showing remarkable talent as a player from an early age, Bach's career remained founded upon the organ even as he moved around in a variety of posts after leaving Arnstadt in 1707: as the organist

¹ Peter Williams, *J.S. Bach: A Life in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 9.

² Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 37.

³ Wolff, *Learned Musician*, p. 525.

of St Blasius's in Mühlhausen (1707 – 1708), court organist and chamber musician at Weimar (1708 – 1717), capellmeister at Cöthen (1717 – 1723) and cantor at St Thomas' Church in Leipzig (1723 – 1750).

'The Complete Organ Works of Bach'

Given that strong foundation, it is no surprise that organ music flowed from Bach's pen throughout his life. Yet how do Bach's organ works cohere? For the monolithic notion of 'The Complete Organ Works of Bach' is misleading. The picture is more fluid, even unclear, both as to the veracity of individual works and of their particular chronology. The impression is of a combination of works that have reached us in their present form through an often uncertain process of revision and collection (such as the *Six Sonatas*, BWV 525 – 530) and those with a more definite origin and/or date, such as *Clavierübung III*, which was published in 1739. Even a collection with a clear didactic purpose that is apparently easy to date like the *Orgelbüchlein*, BWV 599 – 644 (its title page is dated to 1722 or 1723)⁴ can remain opaque in the chronology and detail of its contents: the title page was added later than the chorales it contains (Williams 2003 p. 227). Many of the preludes and fugues do not exist in autograph form, a fact that in most cases does not affect the question of authorship as much as that of the date of composition, although the authorship of some organ works previously assumed to have been by Bach have been called into question, like the *Eight Short Preludes and Fugues*, BWV 553 – 560. Others are easier by

⁴ See Peter Williams, *The Organ Music of J.S. Bach*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 227.

virtue of their singularity either to ascribe authorship to, such as the Passacaglia, BWV 582, or to date, such as the Concerto Transcriptions, BWV 592 – 596, which are from Bach's Weimar years (Williams 2003 p. 202). However, the fluidity of the corpus is not as interesting – or as significant – as the stylistic and generic variety it exhibits.

Genres, Styles and Influences

Bach's organ works are characterised, typically for the composer, by a multiplicity of genres and stylistic influences. Broadly they can be categorised into five areas, though inevitably these overlap: chorale-based works (preludes, partitas, variations, trios); the *Six Sonatas*; preludes/toccatas/fantasias (including the Passacaglia) and fugues (paired together, and single); transcriptions of works by other composers (concertos, trios, etc.); miscellaneous works (Allabreve, Canzona, Pièce D'Orgue, etc.). Williams catalogues the multifarious stylistic influences on Bach's organ works.⁵ Many of these are traceable to other contemporary German organ composers whose compositional style Bach would almost certainly have known. As Williams states, these would have included Pachelbel, Böhm, Buxtehude, Bruhns, Reinken, Kerl and Froberger. Bach's organ works also frequently betray a French influence, both specifically, such as in the famous example of the Passacaglia, BWV 582, the first half of whose main theme originates in a piece by Raison, and more generically, such as in the C minor Fantasia, BWV 562 with its stylistic debt to French composers such as de Grigny. In addition,

⁵ See Peter Williams, *Bach Organ Music* (London: BBC Music Guides, 1972), p. 9.

an Italian influence is often felt in the manual writing across-the-board from the quasi-string writing in the *Six Sonatas* to the tripartite Toccata in C, BWV 564 via the Frescobaldian Canzona, BWV 588 and Corellian Allabreve, BWV 589.

Purposes

As the above discussion suggests, it is not surprising that many of the exact original purposes for the organ works remain unknown, though in general terms the following categories of use can be discerned: liturgical (many, if not most, of the chorales and chorale preludes; some of the prelude/toccatas and fugue pairs); didactic (the *Six Sonatas*; the *Orgelbüchlein*); stylistic assimilation (the concerto transcriptions; some toccatas and fantasias; Legrenzi and Corelli Fugues). In addition, collections such as *Clavierübung III* and perhaps the *Schübler Chorales* had a purpose that transcended their immediate utility: the desire to offer a musical-theological compendium (*Clavierübung III*), or leave a musical legacy (*Schübler Chorales*).

A Note on Current Bach Scholarship

Such is the scope of Bach's organ works. But how have they been covered in the literature? There is a fascinating dialectic evident in current Bach studies more broadly between a hermeneutic taken up with purely musical concerns for Bach's works,⁶ and a broader analytical approach to his music that seeks to contextualize Bach's contrapuntal, figurative and harmonic

⁶ The work of Peter Williams is helpful in this regard. See Peter Williams, *The Organ Music of J.S. Bach*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Peter Williams, *J.S. Bach: A Life in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

peculiarities and complexities within a much broader framework involving contemporary theology,⁷ aesthetics,⁸ philosophy,⁹ and science.¹⁰ Assessing these different approaches to Bach's music is difficult, as the results are inevitably mixed. On the one hand, there is a need to maintain a degree of musical integrity by allowing the musical features of Bach's compositions to come first in any attempt to understand them. Thus, some of the least convincing musical-analytical work done from the contextual side arises from an approach to Bach's music that is too superficial. On the other hand, there is a sense in some of the 'music-only' approaches that *any* recourse to relevant external and contextual questions ought to be dismissed out of hand when clearly such factors occasionally – perhaps often – played a legitimate role in Bach's compositional process. The ideal, then, seems to be to take an approach to describing Bach's organ music that both honours the music itself whilst allowing for wider contextual questions to shape one's thinking as appropriate, perhaps on a piece-by-piece basis. With that

7 Eric Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Anne Leahy, "'Vor deinen Thron tret ich": The Eschatological Significance of the Chorale Settings of the P271 Manuscript of the Berlin Staatsbibliothek' in *Bach*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2006), pp. 81 – 118; Timothy A. Smith, 'Fugues Without Words: A Hearing of Four Fugues from "The Well Tempered Clavier" as Passion Music' in *Bach*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2009), pp. 45 – 66; Linda Gingrich, 'Hidden Allegory in J.S Bach's 1724 Trinity Season Chorale Cantatas' in *The Choral Journal*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (August 2010), pp. 6 – 17.

8 Christoph Wolff, 'Bach and the Idea of "Musical Perfection"' in Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

9 See John Butt, 'A mind unconscious that it is calculating'? Bach and the rationalist philosophy of Wolff, Leibniz and Spinoza' in John Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

10 David Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

in mind, there seem to be two broad extra-musical contexts of particular relevance to the organ music of Bach in which purely musical observations can be worked out. These are *theology*, and *aesthetics*.

Theological Aesthetics

Peter Williams highlights a conundrum that needs tackling if one is to think theologically about Bach's organ music, namely the tension that exists between Bach's stated theological intention in composition (most famously revealed in the composer's signature 'S.D.G.' – 'Soli Deo Gloria' (To God Alone Be Glory) – that has been found on some of Bach's manuscripts, penned after the final bars) and the apparent self-interestedness of much of Bach's music.¹¹ The key that unlocks this dilemma is the observation made by John Butt,¹² that for Bach, as for other Lutherans, music was *intrinsically* of eternal value. We can be more specific and outline two ways in which the inherent theological nature of music, as it was understood, appears to have influenced the music Bach actually wrote.

i) Music as Theological Metaphor

A theological idea that was found in the Leipzig circles in which Bach moved in the 1740s was that God's beauty can be conceived conceptually as a type of *harmonia*:

God is a harmonic being. All harmony originates from his

11 See Williams, *Bach Organ Music*, pp. 10-11.

12 See John Butt, 'Bach's metaphysics of music' in Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach*, p. 53.

wise order and organization... Where there is no conformity, there is also no order, no beauty, and no perfection. For beauty and perfection consists in the conformity of diversity.¹³

This fundamental idea of God's beauty as expressed in His unity-in-diversity immediately invites the metaphorical projection of this concept onto His creation: His beauty is expressed through His creation via the same aesthetic of unity-in-diversity. While criticisms have been levelled at this definition of beauty when held as an absolute value, as an explanation of Bach's contrapuntal practice it is highly suggestive. This desire for art to imitate nature in its perfection motivated Bach's musical project throughout his career and is particularly evident in his treatment of counterpoint: '[c]haracteristic of Bach's manner of composing is a way of elaborating the musical ideas so as to penetrate the material deeply and exhaustively.'¹⁴ Bach's maximization of thematic coherence, harmonic richness, and contrapuntal complexity can be thus understood as having a *theological* rationale. This rationale perhaps best fits the music with which there is no accompanying text to direct one's interpretation of the musical figures, and is particularly relevant in grasping the aesthetic behind specifically contrapuntal projects like *The Art of Fugue*.

¹³ Georg Vensky, 1742. Like Bach, Vensky was a member of Lorenz Christoph Mizler's Society for Musical Science. Quoted in Wolff, *Learned Musician*, p. 466.

¹⁴ Wolff, *Learned Musician*, p. 469.

ii) *Music designed to move the Affections towards God*

Ever since the discovery of Bach's personal Bible commentary, the so-called 'Calov Bible', it has often been noted that Bach's music appears to have been intended as an expression of a specifically, and personally-held, *Lutheran* faith.¹⁵ The implications of this in seeking an informed speculation of Bach's theological views of music are significant. For the indications in Luther's writings are not only that he saw music as inherently theological on a number of different levels,¹⁶ but specifically that he saw music as having a role in moving the believer's affections towards God, and thus an ability to strengthen the believer's faith in Christ.¹⁷ Combining this insight with the commonly-observed (though not unchallenged) evidence of the Baroque *Affektenlehre* (or 'Doctrine of the Affections') in Bach's music, it can be seen how often Bach's sacred music (chorale-based or liturgically-intended; often both) makes its spiritual utility felt through its projection of a relevant and (sometimes) dominant *affekt*. This primary *affekt* is then projected through the musical material, itself often consisting of harmonic and motivic workings-out of a single *inventio*, or dominant musical figure.¹⁸ In the organ

¹⁵ See Robin A. Leaver, 'Music and Lutheranism' in Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach*, pp. 39 – 40.

¹⁶ Robin A. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

¹⁷ See Luther's directions to believers suffering depression: 'When you are sad, therefore, and when melancholy threatens to get the upper hand, say: "Arise! I must play a song unto the Lord on my regal [...]" Then begin striking the keys and singing in accompaniment, as David and Elisha did, until your sad thoughts vanish.' Martin Luther, Theodore G. Tappert (ed.), *Letters of Spiritual Counsel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006) p. 97.

¹⁸ Laurence Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

music, this notion is perhaps most useful in approaching the chorale preludes – a genre that covers many of the organ works – where in many cases the background text, where clear, often illuminates both the general *affekt* of a given prelude, and the specificity of particular harmonies and figurations that have been chosen to illustrate it.

Conclusion – Bach, Beauty and Belief

Although the label of ‘The Complete Organ Works of Bach’ for the corpus is a misnomer, there are still many varied ways in which to view it coherently; theological aesthetics is just one example. Theology and aesthetics combine throughout Bach’s organ music, uniting them as works that project a Christian Lutheran worldview through their specifically musical beauty. In this they serve as exemplars of the theology of another towering eighteenth-century Christian intellect, whose published thought also combined beauty and belief with an emphasis on the affections of the believer: the American pastor Jonathan Edwards, with whom Bach has once been compared.¹⁹ Edwards placed the affections-of-the-heart at the centre of his definition of genuine Christian experience, and thus taught that moving them God-ward was the primary aim of any means of grace in the church, whether preaching or music. As examples of Edward’s affection-driven theology in practice, the organ works of Bach clearly cohere in their common ability to promote both belief and beauty, or perhaps more accurately, belief *through* beauty.

¹⁹ Richard A. Spurgeon Hall, ‘Bach and Edwards on the Religious Affections’ in *Johan Sebastian: A Tercentenary Celebration*, ed. Seymour L. Benstock (Westport: Greenwood Press), pp. 69 – 81.

Clavierübung III

Clavierübung III was published in 1739, while Bach was working in Leipzig. Its title page specified its purpose as written for ‘music lovers and particularly for connoisseurs of such work, for the recreation of the spirit’. This description hides the most significant quality of the collection apart from its sheer musical variety, namely its liturgical and theological character. *Clavierübung III* is a collection of chorale settings, and four Duets, bracketed with a Prelude and Fugue. Carefully structured, it was Bach’s first publication for organ (Williams 2003 p. 388) and was received as a vindication of his art against critics such as J. A. Scheibe. Scheibe, possibly a one-time pupil of Bach, attacked Bach’s music in 1737 saying that he ‘deprived his pieces of all that is natural by giving them a bombastic and confused character, and eclipsed their beauty too much by art’ (for translation, see Williams 2003 p. 394). By contrast, the chorales in *Clavierübung III* combine art and beauty, setting out with great clarity the many various possibilities by which Bach’s contrapuntal art could serve the organ, and the material with which he worked.

In *Clavierübung III*, Bach collects together twenty-one chorales that recall texts from both the Mass and the Catechism. As such, they are indebted to his experience as a Lutheran church musician, as together these two ‘represent the two main religious observances on a Leipzig Sunday’ (Williams 2003 p. 390). Musically and stylistically, the collection also comprises a unique mixture, offering a sample of Bach’s mastery which sealed his reputation in the sight of his colleagues, such as Lorenz Mizler,

who commented that ‘The author has given here new proof that in this kind of composition he excels many others in experience and skill’ (Williams 2003 p. 389). The structure of *Clavierübung III* also owes something to the concept of a ‘model organ recital’, with a Prelude and Fugue framing a selection of smaller pieces such as trios and chorales.

The liturgical and theological character of the work has traditionally been seen as reflected in its reliance on number symbolism, particularly the number three, which abounds: ‘[three] settings of the Trinity hymn (all in three parts...), [three] themes in the opening Prelude, [three] sections in the closing Fugue; three flats, parallel thirds, *Clavierübung III*, ‘Third Part’. Other allusions are more conceptual...: number of Mass settings (3x3), total number of pieces (3x3x3, like the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, or entries in the Fugue), progressive triple time in the manual Kyries’ (Williams 2003 p.392). The connections between the planning and Bach’s Lutheran theology are also suggested by the practice of giving each Catechism texts two settings, one ‘large’ and one ‘small’ (*manualiter*), which mirrors Luther’s ‘Large’ and ‘Small’ Catechisms.

The collection also contains a concise survey of musical genres: fugue; fughetta; prelude; trio; organ motet; *cantus firmus* settings, in which the chorale melody is given to a single line; canon; ritornello. Throughout, the pieces are also written in a mixture of *stile antico* and *stile moderno*, the latter characterised

by longer note values, with Palestrina-like counterpoint that slowly unfolds.

As Bach’s first published work for organ, it is thus a fitting tribute to his art, his faith, and his musical skill. Coming only 11 years before his death, *Clavierübung III* also stands as perhaps the crowning achievement of Bach’s organ compositions.

BWV 552a Prelude (“St Anne”)

The opening Prelude of *Clavierübung III* is in two broad sections: a three-part ritornello section in the major key; and fugal material in the minor. These are arranged symmetrically in five parts (ABABA).

The first section (A) – with its three contrasting elements – captures a regal feel through the use of dotted French overture rhythms. The second of the three elements within this ritornello is a series of short, repetitive phrases, punctuated with pedal notes, which are written as though echoed. The third is a series of winding descending phrases with hints of chromaticism. This first section (A) then gives way to the B section, fugal and in the relative minor, energised with syncopations and semiquaver runs. The ritornello (A) then returns, with its three contrasting sections, with an emphasis on the subdominant (A flat). The fugal material then returns (B), with a dramatic pedal entry, its drama encapsulated in a series of three pedal

descending scales. Then, for the final section, the ritornello (A) material returns, now reverting back to the Tonic key of E flat major. This description perhaps highlights the disciplined organisation behind Bach's structure, but hides the musical beauty of the work. The structure also reflects compositional choices that invite further Trinitarian interpretations: God as King, hence the French overture; the chromaticisms for the Passion (Christ); and the rushing wind (Spirit), heard in the fugal semiquavers.

BWV 669 Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit

Then follows three large settings of the Kyrie-Christe-Kyrie, from the Mass, that are set in a similar contrapuntal style, in the more austere *stile antico*. In all three settings, there is continuity with the opening Prelude, in the three flats of the key signatures. Each presents the plainsong melody of the text in different parts of the texture: BWV 669 gives it in the soprano.

BWV 670 Christe, aller Welt Trost

BWV 670 presents the plainsong melody in the tenor, below another *stile antico* texture. Motivically, there is a subtle shift in this setting to the repetitive use of the dactyl rhythm (long-short-short), which provides some contrast with the otherwise steady crotchet pulse.

BWV 671 Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist

BWV 671 offers its plainsong melody in the pedals. This setting is united to its two predecessors with its marks of *stile antico*,

but contains a different motivic signature: the anapaest (short-short-long). The final bars also contain mysterious chromaticisms, perhaps symbolic of the Spirit.

BWV 672 Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit

The three *manualiter* settings of the three-fold Kyrie contrast with the larger settings. They are written in a different style: nimbler, in fugal forms, with the plainsong melody disguised by melodic writing. BWV 672 is written in triple time, as shares many qualities in common with 673 and 674: it is in four parts, in a modal form, and features a prominent upbeat in the first bar.

BWV 673 Christe, aller Welt Trost

The middle section of the German 'Kyrie' is in 6/8, with energising semiquavers. It features a falling figure (quaver followed by four semiquavers) that reminds some of similar motifs in the motet *Komm, Jesu Komm* (BWV 229), in which they appear to the word 'Leben' ('Life'). This strengthens the link which BWV 673 also makes between Christ, and 'Leben'.

BWV 674 Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist

The final *manualiter* setting emphasises Trinitarian symbols: it is in triple time (9/8), as the third setting of the three, and uses three-note groups as its motivic material. Thus, its bars typically contain 3x3 groups of notes. In correspondence with the opening of the plainsong, its opening three notes also trace an ascending third (B-C-D).

BWV 675 Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr

Following the form of the German Eucharist, Bach follows the 'Kyrie' settings with three settings of the 'Gloria' text, in the German form by Martin Luther. The three settings are deliberately contrasted. BWV 675 is written *manualiter*, with a key signature of one flat, in triple (duple) time. Trinitarian symbolism is present as well, not least by the fact of the three settings of the same text: presumably as each member of the Trinity is represented in the 'Allein Gott' to praise is directed. Also, the three key signatures of the three settings, taken together, form the interval of a major 3rd: F-G-A. In BWV 675, the text's joyful affirmation is captured in the running triplets.

BWV 676 Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr

BWV 676 is a trio, with pedals, in a sharp key, and in a compound (6/8) time. Again, the affect of joy is suggested by the manual semiquaver duets. Parallel thirds abound in the counterpoint between pairs of lines, such as in the opening (right hand and pedals), corresponding to the shape of the plainsong, but also reflecting Bach's Trinitarian concerns.

BWV 677 Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr (Fughetta)

BWV 677 is a fughetta, in 4/4, in a three-part *manualiter* texture. Striking are the staccato marks on the opening phrases of BWV 677; once again, perhaps the implied lightness fits the positive statements of the text. They also provide a contrast with the smoother lines in the setting.

BWV 678 Dies sind die heiligen zehen Gebot

BWV 678 is a peaceful setting of Luther's text of the Ten Commandments, the first Catechism text. Bach's setting here is an intensified trio. There are three layers of material (right hand, left hand, pedal), but the top and middle layer are each in a duet form. The left-hand chorale melody is heard in canon, perhaps symbolising God's law, with the right and giving a pair of lines that weave in and out of each other with a pastoral affect, perhaps suggesting that God's law is a good way to live. The subtle interplay of harmony and rhythm leads to moments of great beauty.

BWV 679 Dies sind die heiligen zehen Gebot (Fughetta)

The smaller *manualiter* setting is a complete contrast. The energy of the opening repeated Gs leads to a Gigue-like dance in 12/8, with large leaps and semiquaver interjections. A fughetta, the chorale melody is hidden in the opening subject. Williams suggests, on the scholarship of Robin Leaver, that this 'strange jig' may derive from Luther's words 'in the Lesser Catechism: 'we should...cheerfully do what he has commanded'' (see Williams 2003 p. 410). Indeed, the work's theological symbolism goes further, with Bach giving ten entries of subject, corresponding to each Commandment.

BWV 680 Wir gläuben all an einen Gott

The larger setting of the Luther's text for the Nicene Creed – 'Wir gläuben all an einen Gott' – reflects its text in its strength and

gravitas. Written in *organo pleno*, it opens with a syncopation that throws the metre out of balance. This is then (literally) grounded with the entry of the pedals, a straight ascending quaver line: a musical picture of the solidity of belief.

BWV 681 Wir gläuben all an einen Gott (Fughetta)

The smaller *manualiter* setting is written, again as a fughetta, in a French style. It is richly ornamented, and punctuated with striking diminished seventh chords. Williams points out the structural importance of BWV 681, coming exactly in the middle of the *Clavierübung III*, though it is also the shortest piece, perhaps ‘reflecting a kind of inverse emphasis’ (Williams 2003 p. 414).

BWV 802–5 Duets I, II, III & IV

The reason behind the inclusion of the four Duets in *Clavierübung III* is somewhat of a mystery. Theories range from the pragmatic – such as the need to fill out pages in the manuscript – to the theological – that they serve as further musical symbols for ideas such as the four gospels, or the four Table prayers in Luther’s Small catechism (see Williams 2003 p. 530). Whatever the reason, their placement in the collection is in line with its other general characteristics and reflects a striking degree of care. Together, the Duets continue the *Clavierübung’s* tendency towards comprehensive coverage within a given genre. Their consecutive keys (e; F; G; a) parcel two major modes within a bracket of two minors, and together

trace the highest four notes of the classical tetrachord. Stylistically, though written in a common ‘duet’ form, the four pieces are very varied. BWV 802 is chromatic (typical of its E minor key) and contains keyboard writing that looks fast and virtuosic, though here played dolefully. BWV 803 is an ebullient F major, fugal, like a two-part invention. BWV 804 is in 12/8, a pastoral Gigue; and BWV 805 is more opaque, in a chromatic A minor. In this recording, the Duets are moved from their traditional place immediately before the final Fugue, and placed instead after the two ‘Wir gläuben’ settings. In this case, the E major close of BWV 681 leads well onto the initial E of the first Duet.

BWV 682 Vater unser im Himmelreich

BWV 682 is an elaborate trio, marked by limping ‘Scotch snap’ rhythms, with the chorale melody given in canon, at the top and in the middle of the texture. These Scotch snaps were employed as up-to-date stylistic features from Dresden, perhaps Bach deliberately showing off his modernity. The melodic writing in between the canon is rich in its rhythmic subtlety and thoughtful affect.

BWV 683 Vater unser im Himmelreich

The contrasts between the two settings of ‘Vater unser im Himmelreich’ – Luther’s text for the Lord’s Prayer – are again dramatic. The *manualiter* BWV 683 is a simpler arrangement of the chorale, in a four-part texture, with the melody undisguised in the right hand.

BWV 684 Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam

BWV 684 is Bach's 'larger' setting of Luther's text on Baptism. The chorale melody is in the pedal, though its pitch lies above the left hand, below a left hand of running quavers, which some liken to the 'running waters' of the Jordan. In the right hand, there are musical figures in the shape of the Cross, that fill in the harmony. The free parts cross at exact moment of chorale entry – depicting Jesus going 'under' the water. A piece rich in symbolism, Williams also mentions the possibility that the melody 'of this 'Jesus chorale' appears in the tenor as middle voice or mediator, second Person of the Trinity (Williams 2003 p. 420).

BWV 685 Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam

The *manualiter* setting, in a simpler three-part texture, is built from motifs which are themselves derived from the chorale. Despite its brevity, it is nevertheless 'amongst the most closely reasoned of the whole collection' (Williams 2003 p. 420), with a dense web of motivic connections to the chorale.

BWV 686 Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir

BWV 686 is unique in Bach's output. It is an 'organ motet', in huge six-part texture, written in *organo pleno* with a double pedal line throughout. It builds a massive structure, fugal, running through each phrase of the chorale in turn. The theme of Luther's text is repentance, based on Psalm 130. The note of anguish is unmistakable in the dissonances, felt more keenly

with the slowly unfolding harmony. Perhaps 'the depths' are invoked by the extra weight and textural thickness created by the double pedals, with the chorale melody given to the upper pedal – literally crying out under the weight of a heavy burden above it. As the setting progresses, the *antico* style of slowly unfolding counterpoint is lifted by the appearance of *dactyl* rhythmic figures, lending more of a dance-feel, even joy, to the music.

BWV 687 Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir

The more private, inward-looking, side to the text is reflected in BWV 687, the *manualiter* setting. The chorale is again at the top of the texture, with the three lower parts providing an accompaniment whose forward-movement contrasts with the granite-like stasis of BWV 686. The intensity of spiritual experience reflected in the text is given musical expression in the intense motivic workings, with dense inversions.

BWV 688 Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der von uns den Zorn Gottes wandt

The texts behind BWV's 688 and 689 are a translation by Luther of a hymn written by John Hus. It was typically played and sung before, and during, communion (Williams 2003 p. 377). BWV 688 is another trio, characterised by wide leaps and runs of semiquavers, above the chorale melody in the pedal. Texturally, it is more straightforward than previous trios in the collection, such as BWV's 682 or 678. Note the strange affect of BWV 688. Some have interpreted the characteristic 'wedge' shape of the

manuals (for example, the opening), which becomes especially odd when the hands do it in inversion, syncopated, as Jesus turning away the wrath of God. This would fit exactly with the subject of Hus's text. Williams points out other possible intriguing symbolisms that scholars have suggested in 688: 'Naturally, the number of times the main motif appears has Trinity associations ($72 = 1 \times 2^3 \times 3^2$), while the wedge-shaped theme and its inversion seem to trace *iota-chi*, *jc*, Jesus Christ' (Williams 2003 p. 426).

BWV 689 Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der von uns den Zorn Gottes wandt (Fugue)

The lively complexity of BWV 688 is replaced in 689 with an ordinary fugue, built again from phrases of the chorale. Bach gives the text a different treatment, emphasising the intensity of the text through intensely chromatic counterpoint. He uses the rare key of F minor, and sharpens the fourth note (B natural), perhaps reflecting 'der Höllen Pein' in Hus's text ('the pain of Hell').

BWV 552b Fugue ("St Anne")

The Fugue that closes *Clavierübung III*, forming the closing bracket to the collection with its pair of the opening Prelude, picks up from it the theme of 'three'. Returning to the tonality of three flats, it is a Fugue in three sections, each one building on its predecessor, and with subject entries whose numbers are multiples of three (Williams 2003 p. 137). Williams also

points out the 'uncanny structure behind the Fugue, the numbers of bars 36, 45, 36 making 72:45 or 1.6:1 (Golden Section)', with a further example of the Golden Section in the structuring of the material in the middle section. If deliberate, 'it would represent a calculated control of material quite as much as the late canons do' (Williams 2003 p. 137). The first section of the Fugue, with its beautifully wrought counterpoint, opens with notes whose identical pitches to the hymn tune of the same name are responsible for the whole Fugue having been given the nickname 'St Anne'; the second section – *manualiter* – exposes the Fugue's theme to a fugal section of running quavers; and the third moves to a compound time (12/8), and hides the main theme in an energetic texture. As in the Prelude, there is specifically Trinitarian symbolism lying behind the compositional choices: *stile antico* for the eternal God in the first section; running quavers for the Spirit in the second; and Cross motifs for Christ in the third. These are then all combined variously in the third as three-in-one. The whole structure is crowned by the return of the main 'St Anne' theme, as the pedal sounds out its final entry below texture of pealing bells.

George Parsons, 2020

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THE ORGAN OF TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL

The organ of Trinity College Chapel was built by the Swiss firm Metzler Söhne in 1976. The design, by Bernhardt Edskes, incorporated the surviving pipework of the two organs built for Trinity by “Father” Bernard Smith in 1694 and 1708. The organ has three manuals and forty-two ranks, of which seven are original. The 8’ Principal on the Rückpositiv is from Smith’s 1694 organ, while the 16’ Principal on the Pedal and the 16’ Principal, 8’ and 4’ Octave, 2’ Quinte, and 2’ Superoctave on the Great are from 1708. The Victorian enlargements to both the instrument and its cases have been removed, and all the pipework is contained within the restored Smith cases, whose carving recalls the school of Grinling Gibbons. The cases are likely to have been designed by Smith and executed by him or one of his team. The salient characteristics of this mechanical-action organ are the meticulous craftsmanship and artistic integrity employed by Metzlers, the durability of the instrument, together with its rich but gentle resonance, its aptness for the acoustics of the Chapel, and its exquisite balance. It is understandably regarded as one of the finest instruments in the United Kingdom.

HAUPTWERK, C-F”

1•	Principal	16
2•	Octave	8
3	Hohlflöte	8
4•	Octave	4
5	Spitzflöte	4
6•	Quinte	2 $\frac{2}{3}$
7•	Superoctave	2
8	Sesquialter	III
9	Cornett	IV
10	Mixtur	IV-V
11	Trompete	8
12	Vox Humana	8

RÜCKPOSITIV

13•	Principal	8
14	Gedackt	8
15	Octave	4
16	Rohrflöte	4
17	Octave	2
18	Gemshorn	2
19	Larigot	1 $\frac{1}{3}$
20	Sesquialter	II
21	Scharf	III
22	Dulcian	8
	Tremulant	

SCHWELLWERK

23	Viola	8
24	Suavial	8
25	Rohrflöte	8
26	Principal	4
27	Gedacktflöte	4
28	Nasard	2 $\frac{2}{3}$
29	Doublette	2
30	Terz	1 $\frac{3}{5}$
31	Mixtur	IV
32	Fagott	16
33	Trompete	8
	Tremulant	

PEDAL

34•	Principal	16
35	Subbass	16
36	Octavbass	8
37	Bourdon	8
38	Octave	4
39	Mixtur	V
40	Posaune	16
41	Trompete	8
42	Trompete	4

45 Rückpositiv/Hauptwerk 46 Schwellwerk/Hauptwerk

47 Hauptwerk/Pedal 48 Rückpositiv/Pedal 49 Schwellwerk/Pedal

(• Father Smith ranks)

DAVID GOODE

David Goode is Organist at Eton College, combining this post with a flourishing performing career.

A music scholar at Eton, and then organ scholar at King's College, Cambridge, he studied organ with David Sanger and in Amsterdam with Jacques van Oortmerssen. From 1996-2001 he was Sub-Organist at Christ Church, Oxford; following prizes at the 1997 St. Alban's Competition, and the 1998 Calgary Competition, he concentrated on a freelance career between 2001 and 2003. In 2003 he moved for 2 years to Los Angeles as Organist-in-Residence at First Congregational Church, home to the world's largest church organ.


In 1999 he made the first of numerous appearances at the Proms, and in 2002 he made his recital debuts at the RFH and at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, subsequently playing all over Europe, the US, Australia and the Far East. He plays at the AGO National Convention in June 2016. He also has an established partnership with the trumpeter Alison Balsom: in March 2014 they played for the reopening concert of the RFH organ.

Of his Bach CD for Signum in 2013 The Times said: 'One of Britain's finest organists puts the 1714 organ in Freiberg Cathedral through its paces An exemplary introduction'. 7 CDs of a complete survey of Reger's organ music have now also appeared, to warm reviews. He has forged a strong relationship

over the years on Radio 3 with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the BBC Singers, and has played numerous contemporary works, including Francis Pott's *Christus* ('a stupendous achievement' The Times), and Peter Maxwell Davies' *Solstice of Light*.

He has also developed a profile as a composer: a set of anthems has been published, together with recordings by the choir of King's College, Cambridge; and his *Blitz Requiem* was performed in September 2013 by the Bach Choir at St Paul's Cathedral, and broadcast on Classic FM. He played at the AGO Convention in June 2016, and was a juror at the 2017 St. Alban's International Competition.





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