

Suggestions for Performance

The 5 compositions gathered into this collection were inspired by and written for the great Kimball pipe organ of the Saint Louis Scottish Rite Cathedral. They are also entirely playable on a 3- or 2-manual instrument. Each piece is pitched at the advanced level and calls for legato technique punctuated with other types of touch where indicated in the score or when deemed appropriate by the performer. The complete independence of the moving parts in these pieces, while it makes them challenging to learn, also makes them compelling to hear. And, while they would make for effective recital and lesson material and have a variety of fraternal uses, a place can be found for each of them somewhere in the worship service throughout the liturgical year where they might serve as preludes, postludes, or for dedication.

All 5 Preludes in this collection begin with an introduction of 2 bars, are treated in 4 voice texture, and have a thematic connection with their paired Fugues. The first 4 Fugues are worked in triple counterpoint, employ a development which passes through all nearly related keys, and have a closing of great finality. They all have subjects each 5 bars long, 2 countersubjects which are maintained throughout, and episodes regularly 4 bars long developed from the subjects, countersubjects, and their inversions. The variety of effect this creates from the several combinations of each subject with its multiple countersubjects sounding in triple counterpoint (where any of the 3 moving lines may serve as a bass for the others) made this a favorite method with J.S. Bach, whose enormous compositional output includes many fugues of sturdy build, the main structural supports of which are well-spaced entries of these same 3 lines in different positions and keys. Home key final entries in all of these Fugues, following the example set by J.S. Bach in his own organ fugues, are in the bottom octave of the pedal. The final work (D Major Op. 28) from this grouping shares these same characteristics save for the Fugue which employs 3 countersubjects specially worked in quadruple counterpoint.

In performing these works it will be incumbent upon the performer to make mental adjustments to the score, if necessary, so the music makes it for the listener. As with any organ music some experimentation can be expected in order to bring out best what's written on the page. In wet acoustics the organist will need to play a little slower and more detached to keep things clear. In dry acoustics the rests between detached chords may need to be shortened more and the chords held longer than their written values. The fundamental pulse should be retained, but variations in tempo can and should be introduced at appropriate places to nuance the music and keep it from sounding mechanical. These places have been marked in the scores.

Tempo marks corresponding to beats per minute also have been included, with the crotchet (quarter note) receiving one beat and descriptive terms written in the universal musical language of Italian. These are relative only and should be understood as broad approximations to be used as a guide which, like all tempo marks, may not be appropriate in every circumstance due to the personal interpretations of performers, the way the instrument at hand responds, and especially, the way its sound lingers in its own acoustical environment. The feeling aroused by the harmonic structure of the music will be the true source of correct tempo in any given situation, thus performers are apt to find their tempo mark in the composition itself rather than in the instructions in the beginning.

Markings for tempi appear as follows:

**Quarter note = 162 -182 -- Vivace
142-161 -- Allegro molto
120-141 -- Allegro
100-199 -- Allegretto
80-99 -- Moderato
60-79 -- Andante
42-59 -- Adagio
30-41 -- Lento**

The 4 part writing found in these 5 pieces is in standard organ score (3 staff) notated with treble and bass clefs. Voice lines in these pieces are never permitted to cross, and voice ranges are never exceeded. These 5 works stay within the following voice ranges:

Top (treble) staff:

Soprano voice – middle C to high A (1st line above staff)

Alto voice – tenor G to D (4th line)

Middle (bass) staff:

Tenor voice – tenor C to middle G

Bottom (bass) staff:

Bass voice – Bass (low) C to middle E

In these works the compass of the bass voice is extended downward to low C. In passages of 5 part writing an additional high bass, or baritone, voice is supplied, being notated on the middle staff below the tenor line using upward stems for the tenor and downward stems for the baritone. Where the soprano line is soloed in the right hand, the alto is notated on the middle staff above the tenor line using upward stems for the alto and downward stems for the tenor.

In this music the stretch for the hands is kept at an octave or less. Registration suggestions along with indications for hand division are included with the score. The choice of stops and couplers will depend upon personal taste and require more or less adjustment depending upon the resources of the instrument at hand. The fugues paired with these preludes are all scored for a plenum sound with manuals coupled and Swell reeds drawn, and 16-foot reed and 8-foot Principal drawn in the Pedal with Swell coupled, and they all end with the full power of the organ. The preludes may be separated and performed all by themselves if the entire work proves too long. When separated this way the fugues, being related thematically, could be performed later with fine effect.

The e minor Op. 24 Prelude and Fugue begins quietly with a Prelude separated into 3 thirds, or parts, the first 2 of which use the Fugue's 1st and 2nd countersubjects, respectively, as thematic material. These are immediately followed by a 3rd and final combinatory section which is rounded off with a short coda. The 3 individual sections of the Prelude are separated by short modulating interludes each 3 bars long. This part of the work is scored for a plenum sound with Swell reeds coupled and box closed. The Prelude ends in 5 voices with a full cadence on a tonic chord preceded by a trill. The subject of the Fugue begins on scale degree 1 and is supplied with a tonal answer in the dominant. The Fugue passes through all nearly related keys and ends with a full cadence in 5 voices employing a Picardy 3rd in the final chord. This work

finishes with great finality using the full power of the instrument.

The a minor Op. 25 Prelude and Fugue also begins quietly with a Prelude constructed this time as would be an improvisation in 6 parts on a single free theme (a method favored and promoted by Louis Vierne), only in compressed (shortened) form. Its theme is taken from a free voice appearing only once in the Fugue (in the soprano line of the exposition in the subdominant key). This free voice is extended slightly from 5 to 7 bars to create the theme for the Prelude. The theme of the Prelude is thus hidden in the Fugue. This Prelude's first 2 expositions are both harmonized diatonically with the 2nd exposition being more animated rhythmically. The 3rd and final exposition whereupon the theme reenters is harmonized chromatically. This part of the work is scored for soft 8-foot foundation stops with manuals coupled and ends softly in 6 voices on the String Celeste stop in the primitive gloom of the home key. The Fugue draws its subject from being the inverse of the b minor Op. 26 Fugue subject. It begins on scale degree 1 and is supplied with a real answer in the dominant. This piece closes in 6 voices and with great finality on a final chord having a Picardy 3rd. The coda employs a trill in the top line with an anticipation on the penultimate chord.

The b minor Op. 26 Prelude and Fugue also begins quietly with a Prelude constructed as would be an improvisation in 6 parts on a single free theme *a la Vierne*, only in compressed form. Its theme is the Fugue's 1st countersubject slightly extended from 5 to 7 bars. Its first 2 expositions are both harmonized diatonically with the 2nd exposition being more animated rhythmically. The 3rd and final exposition is harmonized chromatically. This Prelude is scored for soft foundations stops with manuals coupled and ends very quietly and softly in 7 voices on a Picardy third with the String Celeste stop drawn. This Fugue draws its subject from being the inverse of the a minor Op. 25 Fugue subject. It begins on scale degree 5 and is supplied with a real answer on scale degree 1, as it should, in the subdominant. In the middle of this Fugue there is an unexpected modulation to the unrelated key (a minor) for an additional entry. The coda employs segmentation of the theme in the bass voice and an unusual final cadence in which the penultimate dominant chord has a 7th which resolves unexpectedly upward to the 5th scale degree instead of downward to the 3rd. The final reiterated chord has a held top note, added 6th, Picardy 3rd, double pedal, and finishes in 8 voices over the full power of the instrument.

The F Major Op. 27 Prelude and Fugue begins very quietly with a Prelude constructed, once again, as would be an improvisation in 6 parts on a single free theme *a la Vierne*, only in compressed form. Its theme is the Fugue's 2nd countersubject extended slightly from 5 to 7 bars in length. Its first 2 expositions are harmonized diatonically with the 2nd exposition being more animated. As the theme reenters in the 3rd and final exposition the music is scored for a flute solo in the right hand against chromatically winding left hand chords on the String Celeste stop. The rest of the Prelude is scored for soft foundation stops with manuals coupled. This Prelude ends very quietly and delicately in a mere 4 voices. The Fugue restores a solid forte dynamic. Its subject begins boldly on scale degree 3, but since its tail points strongly to the dominant, a real answer in the dominant is supplied. This music passes through all related keys and makes an entry in an unrelated key (c minor) just before the final entry. It finishes in 6 voices with an extended, animated coda using the full organ.

The D Major Op. 28 Prelude and Fugue which closes this collection begins more loudly with a Prelude which, once again, is built in the manner of an improvisation in 6 parts on a single free theme *a la Vierne*, only in compressed form. Its theme is taken from the Fugue's 3rd countersubject. The 2nd exposition of the theme and a portion of the development are treated as a 3-part canon at the octave at the distance of a quarter bar. The 3rd and final reentry of the theme is harmonized with chromatic planing and ends very quietly on the String Celeste stop in 6 voices with an added 6th and double pedal. The Fugue which follows brings up the volume and has 3 countersubjects which are specially worked in quadruple counterpoint. Its subject begins on scale degree 1 and is supplied with a real answer in the dominant. Here the 1st countersubject was derived by inverting the subject from the F Major Op. 27 Fugue. This music finishes with great finality in 8 voices with a double pedal and the full power of the organ.

When multiple countersubjects enter into Fugues like these, the counterpoint becomes thrillingly dense, and even more miraculous sounding when all voices are clear, clean, independent, and mutually complimentary. Historically, coordinating this complexity in such a piece of music so that the final unity is aesthetically successful, for composer or performer, has been an achievement of high art, hence, it seems fitting to dedicate this final work in

this collection to the greatest master of all who put music on a plateau that no one else has ever reached.

It's possible that the a minor, b minor, F Major, and D Major Preludes & Fugues from this collection, by plowing in a compositional furrow all their own, may have broken new ground. The process used to create these pieces, i.e., of first taking a 4 voice Fugue with multiple countersubjects worked in triple or quadruple counterpoint (methods favored by J.S. Bach) and then pairing it with a Prelude in improvisatory style constructed in the same 6-part form upon a single free theme favored by Louis Vierne, albeit a bit compressed, and where either a countersubject or a free counterpoint taken from the Fugue serves as the Prelude's theme, seems to represent, so far as this author can determine, a new synthesis, something hitherto untried in organ composition.

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