

## Updates for *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach*

### Chapter 8

In the Vivaldi concerto arrangement BWV 973, I have concluded after long practice that the fingering shown in example 8.1 is not practical, at least not on the instruments on which I have tried to use it, and that it is effective after all to play instead on divided keyboards in mm. 56b–61a of the third movement. This can be prepared by using divided keyboards earlier in all three movements, the right hand playing on the lower (forte) manual, the left on the upper (piano) one, as follows: in first movement, mm. 22–35a, 46–69, 76b–89, and 117–24a; throughout the second movement; and in third movement, mm. 8b–12a, 21 (note 2)–27, and 49b–55a.

### Chapter 15

Joshua Rifkin has shown that the scherzo of the Third Partita was suggested not by Bonporti's violin pieces—though the latter may well have been where Bach first saw such a title—but by keyboard pieces that Conrad Friedrich Hurlebusch played during a visit to Leipzig. Rifkin (2007, 31–43) convincingly places the latter in 1726, the year before Bach published the partita, with its added scherzo movement. This point arises in the course of an argument for dating the B-minor orchestral suite BWV 1067, or at least its final movement, the *Battinerie*, to this same period. Rifkin shows that the parallels between the latter movement and the scherzo include their 2/4 meter, triadic opening motive, and staccato bass that outlines a rising triad in the opening measures. The two are also in the same key, A minor, if one accepts Rifkin's strong argument that the suite was originally a whole step lower. To be sure, Hurlebusch's scherzos do not seem to open in the middle of the measure, as Bach does, and Rifkin's “scamper[ing]” flute in the *Battinerie* (Rifkin 2007, 73) may be a mis-characterization if one accepts Williams's argument that 2/4 does not, for Bach, imply an especially quick tempo. That argument is in fact strengthened by the *Vivace* marking of the one Hurlebusch scherzo that Rifkin gives as an example; *vivace* is used for minuets but not for very quick pieces in the early eighteenth century.

### Chapter 18

Gregory Butler, repudiating his earlier findings (1982), now argues that it is a “myth” that Bach intended the *Art of Fugue* to include the incomplete *Fuga a 3 soggetti* or that the latter was meant to incorporate the subject of the *Art of Fugue* as its fourth theme (or third countersubject; see Butler 2008, 116–7). In fact, the argument that the piece was to have appeared on pages 00–00 of the original publication—the basis of the reconstruction in both editions of my own book—was always provisional, due to the uncertainty of Butler's readings of what he took to be altered page numbers in the print. But there can be no question that the incomplete fugue is a late Bach fragment standing in need of explanation (if not completion); nor can there be any uncertainty that the subject of the *Art of Fugue* does combine contrapuntally with the three subjects of the fragment, as Nottebohm and countless authors since have recognized. Butler finds Nottebohm's “syncopation of the principal subject . . . forced and unnatural” (Butler 2008, 112n. 24), but this is to ignore my own solution to the problem, which has been available in print since 1992. Even before then, it was obvious that the combination involved no greater alteration of the thematic

material than occurs countless times in Bach's music, including other movements of the *Art of Fugue* (see, e.g., the stretto exposition that Bach attached to the opening of the original Contrapunctus 10a).

Whether the reconstructed quadruple contrapunctus “belongs to” the *Art of Fugue* is, like the similar questions concerning Contrapunctus 10a and the duo version of Contrapunctus 13, a matter of definition. It is clear enough that, as with the *Musical Offering*, the Goldberg Variations, and other works, Bach continued to elaborate and add to the *Art of Fugue* after its initial plan had been fulfilled. As with the canons composed on the royal fugue subject or over the Goldberg bass line, Bach continued to produce additional movements whose relationship to the main or original portion of the collection is uncertain only if one insists on defining one particular sequence as definitive. Nor is the two-stave keyboard notation in the autograph fragment an impediment to the work's belonging to the *Art of Fugue*. The six-part riccercar in the *Musical Offering* appears similarly in Bach's autograph, and the fragmentary manuscript, contrary to Butler, is not an *Abklatschvorlage* (engraver's exemplar) but rather a revision manuscript; here again, Butler ignores observations that I made years ago. His suggestion that Bach might have intended the work as a contribution for Menzel's Corresponding Society is ingenious but, of course, entirely speculative. It is equally speculative to suppose that a single quadruple mirror fugue in four parts, never composed, would have filled out the “other basic plan” (*andere Grund Plan*) mentioned in a mysterious addition by Agricola on the autograph fragment. One can imagine any number of organizations (or re-organizations) of the work's movements, exhibiting various sorts of symmetries, and Bach doubtless considered many possibilities, including some not yet imagined by his followers.

## Appendix A

On BWV 905, the reference to a “dropping out of the bass” in mm. 3–4 of the prelude is an error for the “dropping out of the upper parts.”

## Bibliography

The article cited as Rifkin (n.d.) is the one now cited here as Rifkin (2007).

Butler, Gregory G. 2008. “Scribes, Engravers, and Notational Styles: The Final Disposition of Bach's *Art of Fugue*.” In Butler, Stauffer, and Greer (2008, 111–23).

Butler, Gregory G., ed. 2007. *Bach Perspectives, Volume 6: J. S. Bach's Concerted Ensemble Music, The Overture*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

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Rifkin, Joshua. 2007. “The 'B-Minor Flute Suite' Deconstructed: New Light on Bach's Overture BWV 1067.” In Butler (2007, 1–98).

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