

Johann Sebastian Bach



Prelude & Fugue BWV 550 in G major for Organ (2 Manuals & Bass)

arranged for 5-part String Orchestra

Complete parts

edited by Alan Bonds

from notes for the superb recording of the Prelude & Fugue for the Netherlands Bach Society by Matthias Havinga on the Müller organ in Haarlem.

There is also an accompanying video by Havinga about the work - essential listening!

“Preludio Pedaliter

This piece requires pedal and in no small measure!

In some of the earliest sources for this exuberant Prelude and fugue, the first part is described as a “*praeludio in G-dur con pedal*” or a “*praeludio pedaliter*”. In itself, there is nothing unusual about the use of pedals (the ‘keys’ of the organ operated by the feet) in an organ piece in Bach’s day. So at first sight, the description appears to be just a useful eighteenth-century indication (NB: can only be played on an organ with pedals!). But twelve bars into the piece, there is an *aha-erlebnis* (an “aha-experience”); you hear a long, lively pedal solo, which not only requires more than a second-rate village organist, but also more than a second-rate village organ. The range of the solo covers more than two octaves (from low C to high D), which was definitely not the norm at the time! The organ of the Cathedral of Saint Bavo, in Haarlem, has a pedal with this range. It has two ‘pedal towers’, with pipes measuring almost 11 metres in length. So it was logical that organist Matthias Havinga should choose this instrument on which to play the piece.

In the rest of the piece, both in the prelude and the fugue, the feet play a role equal to the hands. The pedal is used to its full capacity throughout the piece. There is even one note that is higher than the highest note of the solo. The theme of the fugue is as exuberant as that of the prelude, and is based on similar motifs. With no over-complicated excursions to far-flung keys, the fugue proceeds towards its ending like a lively Baroque *perpetuum mobile*. And just before the ending, the feet (with the hands in their wake) go one last time from low to high and back again over the pedals. Pedaliter indeed – point taken!

Organ

This recording was made on the famous Müller organ in the Great or St. Bavo Church, in Haarlem. It is a very special instrument from 1738. Both Georg Friedrich Händel and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart travelled to Haarlem to play this organ! Händel was particularly delighted by the unusual Vox Humana register. The organ has over 5000 pipes, divided over 64 registers, with three manuals and a pedal.”

EDITOR'S NOTES

This Prelude & Fugue transcribes well for strings. The individual voices may have even greater clarity and identity than on the organ.

The Cb. part occasionally descends to C2 and an *ossia* has been suggested. This bass line could benefit from being doubled on Vc2 for extra clarity.

A couple of notes in the Viola part have been transposed.

I have actually done a transposition to A major, but G major is far more idiomatic for strings.

The words *alla breve e staccato* (bar 82) signifies a complete change in rhythmic 'feel' and articulation for the fugue. It should be light and springy in the bow, otherwise the fabulous counterpoint will not sound as it deserves.

Alan Bonds
[abonds@swiftdsl.com.au]
Perth, Western Australia
March 2024

Praeludium & Fugue in G maj.

Violin 1

Transcribed for 5-part string orchestra
by Alan Bonds (2024)
Praeludium

BWV 550

J.S. Bach

Praeludium

9

14

29

33

37

40

44

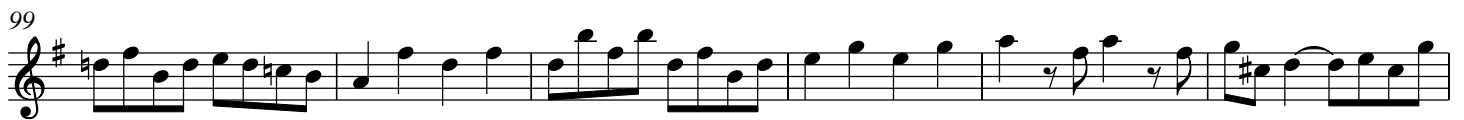
47

51

56

60

alla breve e staccato



150

155

160

165

Example 10: Musical notation for the first staff, showing a melodic line in G major. The notation includes a fermata over the first measure and a trill over the eighth measure.

170

175

180

185

190

196

201

206

Praeludium & Fugue in G maj.

BWV 550

Transcribed for 5-part string orchestra
by Alan Bonds (2024)

J.S. Bach

Praeludium

2

8

11

10

25

29

33

37

43

48

52

56

61

alla breve e staccato

5

71

Example 71 is a single staff of music in treble clef, featuring a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with a repeat sign at the end.

76

Musical notation for measure 76, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with various articulations like slurs and ties.

82

Musical notation for measure 82, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with a triplet of eighth notes.

88

9

102

tr

107

Musical notation for measure 107. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The bass line consists of eighth and quarter notes. The measure ends with a quarter rest.

112

Musical notation for measure 112, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with rests.

117

Musical notation for measure 117. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of: quarter note D4, quarter note E4, eighth note F#4 tied to the next, eighth note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, quarter note F#4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter note C4. There is a whole rest in the next measure.

123

The first system of the musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of six measures. The first measure contains a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4. The second measure contains a quarter rest followed by a quarter note A4. The third measure contains a quarter rest followed by a quarter note B4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note C5. The fifth measure contains a quarter note B4. The sixth measure contains a quarter note A4. The system ends with a double bar line.

128

Musical notation for measure 128, featuring a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of eighth notes and rests.

133

Exercise 133 is a single-staff piece in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with rests interspersed throughout. The piece concludes with a quarter note D5.

138

Musical notation for measure 138, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with rests, and a key signature change to one sharp (F#) is indicated by a sharp sign on the F line.

143

148

154

160

170

175

180

185

190

195

201

206

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' in G major, measures 143-206. The score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody is characterized by a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups. There are several measures with rests, indicating pauses in the melody. The score includes measure numbers 143, 148, 154, 160, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 201, and 206. The final measure (206) ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Praeludium & Fugue in G maj.

Viola

BWV 550

Transcribed for 5-part string orchestra
by Alan Bonds (2024)

J.S. Bach

Praeludium

2

3

10

9

23

28

32

37

42

46

51

56

61

67

73

alla breve e staccato

tr

79



86



92



98



115



121



128



161



168



179



193



199



205



Praeludium & Fugue in G maj.

Violoncello 1

Transcribed for 5-part string orchestra
by Alan Bonds (2024)

BWV 550

J.S. Bach

Praeludium

2

7

12

(if necess.)

16

19

22

27

32

36

41

46

52



57

alla breve e staccato

17



80

Vla



87

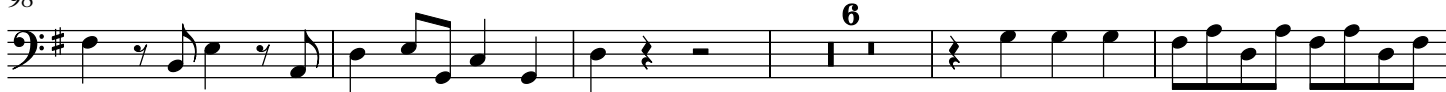


93



98

6



109



114

8

Vla



128



133



138



144



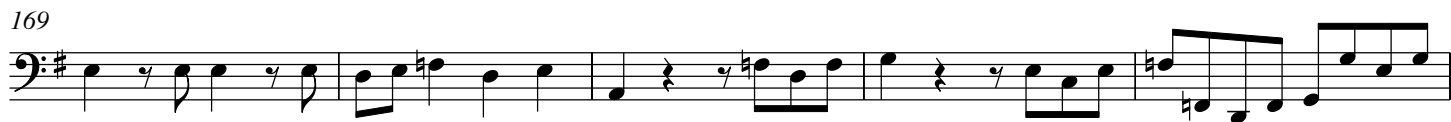
149



155



169



174



179



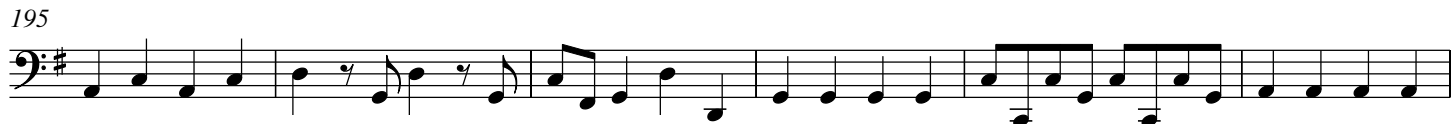
184



189



195



201



206



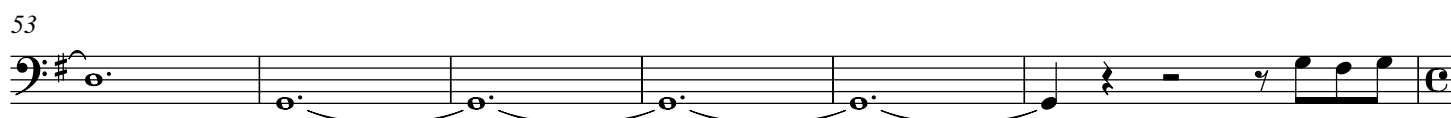
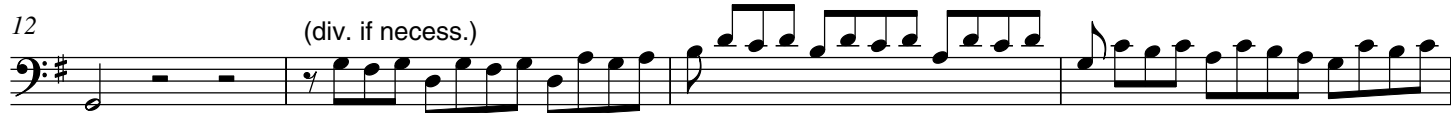
Praeludium & Fugue in G maj.

BWV 550

J.S. Bach

Transcribed for 5-part string orchestra
by Alan Bonds (2024)

Praeludium



89



95



101



128



134



140



174



180



186



192



199



205

