



JOHANN SEBASTIAN

BACH

DAS WOHLTEMPERIERTE KLAVIER
VOLUME 2

STEVEN DEVINE
HARPSICHORD

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Das wohltemperierte Klavier Volume 2, BWV 870–893

Steven Devine *harpsichord*

*Double-manual harpsichord by Colin Booth (2000) after a single-manual
by Johann Christof Fleischer (Hamburg, 1710). Tuning after Kimberger III.*

About Steven Devine:

*'[Devine] is authoritative, suave, technically dazzling and delivers immaculately
manicured ornaments that lend brilliance and expressive introspection when required'*
BBC Music Magazine

*'[The harpsichord's] sonorities are clear and penetrating yet never strident,
and lend themselves both to the music and to Devine's meticulous technique'*
Gramophone

DISC ONE

1. Prelude No. 1 in C major, BWV 870/1	[2:40]
2. Fugue No. 1 in C major, BWV 870/2	[2:06]
3. Prelude No. 2 in C minor, BWV 871/1	[2:56]
4. Fugue No. 2 in C minor, BWV 871/2	[1:52]
5. Prelude No. 3 in C-sharp major, BWV 872/1	[2:25]
6. Fugue No. 3 in C-sharp major, BWV 872/2	[2:09]
7. Prelude No. 4 in C-sharp minor, BWV 873/1	[3:44]
8. Fugue No. 4 in C-sharp minor, BWV 873/2	[2:38]
9. Prelude No. 5 in D major, BWV 874/1	[5:58]
10. Fugue No. 5 in D major, BWV 874/2	[2:49]
11. Prelude No. 6 in D minor, BWV 875/1	[1:58]
12. Fugue No. 6 in D minor, BWV 875/2	[1:50]
13. Prelude No. 7 in E-flat major, BWV 876/1	[2:52]
14. Fugue No. 7 in E-flat major, BWV 876/2	[2:16]
15. Prelude No. 8 in D-sharp minor, BWV 877/1	[3:49]
16. Fugue No. 8 in D-sharp minor, BWV 877/2	[3:07]
17. Prelude No. 9 in E major, BWV 878/1	[5:46]
18. Fugue No. 9 in E major, BWV 878/2	[2:55]
19. Prelude No. 10 in E minor, BWV 879/1	[4:20]
20. Fugue No. 10 in E minor, BWV 879/2	[3:23]
21. Prelude No. 11 in F major, BWV 880/1	[3:19]
22. Fugue No. 11 in F major, BWV 880/2	[1:58]
23. Prelude No. 12 in F minor, BWV 881/1	[4:05]
24. Fugue No. 12 in F minor, BWV 881/2	[2:24]
Total playing time	[73:03]

DISC TWO

1. Prelude No. 13 in F-sharp major, BWV 882/1	[3:07]
2. Fugue No. 13 in F-sharp major, BWV 882/2	[2:41]
3. Prelude No. 14 in F-sharp minor, BWV 883/1	[2:44]
4. Fugue No. 14 in F-sharp minor, BWV 883/2	[4:29]
5. Prelude No. 15 in G major, BWV 884/1	[3:04]
6. Fugue No. 15 in G major, BWV 884/2	[1:24]
7. Prelude No. 16 in G minor, BWV 885/1	[2:03]
8. Fugue No. 16 in G minor, BWV 885/2	[3:37]
9. Prelude No. 17 in A-flat major, BWV 886/1	[3:43]
10. Fugue No. 17 in A-flat major, BWV 886/2	[2:56]
11. Prelude No. 18 in G-sharp minor, BWV 887/1	[5:04]
12. Fugue No. 18 in G-sharp minor, BWV 887/2	[3:31]
13. Prelude No. 19 in A major, BWV 888/1	[1:56]
14. Fugue No. 19 in A major, BWV 888/2	[1:46]
15. Prelude No. 20 in A minor, BWV 889/1	[4:00]
16. Fugue No. 20 in A minor, BWV 889/2	[2:06]
17. Prelude No. 21 in B-flat major, BWV 890/1	[7:33]
18. Fugue No. 21 in B-flat major, BWV 890/2	[2:22]
19. Prelude No. 22 in B-flat minor, BWV 891/1	[2:47]
20. Fugue No. 22 in B-flat minor, BWV 891/2	[4:41]
21. Prelude No. 23 in B major, BWV 892/1	[2:08]
22. Fugue No. 23 in B major, BWV 892/2	[3:34]
23. Prelude No. 24 in B minor, BWV 893/1	[2:06]
24. Fugue No. 24 in B minor, BWV 893/2	[2:04]
Total playing time	[75:42]



**Johann Sebastian Bach:
Das wohltemperierte Klavier, Volume 2**

Some twenty years after the collection known as *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* Bach completed a second collection of twenty-four preludes and fugues in all keys. Unlike the first collection (hereafter referred to as WTC1), no complete copy exists in Bach's hand and there is no title page for this second collection (hereafter WTC2). What information we have comes from the numerous surviving copies in the hands of Bach's students, particularly that of Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720–1774), Director of the Berlin Royal Kapelle between 1738–1741. The earliest surviving complete copy is in dated 1744 and is in the hand of Johann Christoph Altnickol (1720–1759), another of Bach's talented students and a future son-in-law. The title page of this copy reads:

Des Wohltemperirten Claviers, Zweyter Theil, bestehend in Præludien und Fugen durch alle Tone und Semitonien verfertigt von Johann Sebastian Bach, Königlich Pohlnisch und Churfurstl. Sächs. Hoff Compositeur Capellmeister und Directore Chori Musici In Leipzig.

[*The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Second Part, consisting of Preludes and Fugues in all the tones and semitones, written by

Johann Sebastian Bach, Royal Polish and Electoral Saxon Court Composer, Capellmeister and Directore Chori Musici in Leipzig.]

The similarities between this title page and that of Part 1 from 1722 are striking and implies there was a copy of the earlier book involved in the production of the later one.

Of particular interest is the question of why Bach should return to a monumental undertaking after such a length of time and the answers can only be speculated; however the very act of speculating sheds light on the many aspects of Bach's compositional and teaching methods.

Around the time of completion of Part 2, 1742, some of the great keyboard collections appeared from Bach: the *Clavierübungen* Part 2 (the 'Italian' Concerto BWV 971 and the Overture in the French style BWV 831) and Part 3 (organ works, including the Chorale Preludes BWV 669 – 689 and the E-flat major Prelude and Fugue BWV 552), the 'Goldberg' Variations of 1741 (likely intended as Part 4 of the *Clavierübungen*). In addition the first version of the *Art of Fugue* was prepared – a potent symbol of Bach's desire to encapsulate what he regarded as 'ideal' music in a world where musical taste was changing in different directions at a dizzying rate.

It is more than possible that WTC2 represents a further compilation of works intended to preserve and enhance his legacy. However, the practical side of Bach's musicianship is equally to the fore in this collection.

The previous part of this monumental and almost unique survey of twenty-four preludes in fugues in all keys exists in a fair copy in Bach's hand from 1722. It formed a major part of Bach's teaching and countless students must have been made to study them as exercises in compositional and keyboard technique. The transmission of Part 1 of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* is well documented and of particular note are the copies in Anna Magdalena's hand (with added ornamentation by Wilhelm Freidemann) and a personal copy belonging to Johann Philipp Kirnberger (1721–1783), a student of Bach's, which contains fingering and other annotations.

By the late 1730s, Bach was probably looking for new models to encourage his students and the size and structure of the Prelude and Fugue (a relatively new idea developed primarily by Bach) suited the pedagogical side of Bach's life; both in using compositional methods to challenge and encourage his students in their own

compositional endeavours and in their technical studies of keyboard performance technique.

Unlike WTC1, there is no complete, fair copy in Bach's hand. Instead there are a number of sources containing certain portions and versions of the twenty-four preludes and fugues and a variety of different handwriting. The most interesting and valuable source is a collection of individual sheets each containing a single Prelude and Fugue now housed in the British Library. There are also several copies in the handwriting of Bach's students; curiously many of these were copied from the same source, but a different source from that preserved in the British Library mentioned above. David Ledbetter, in his exhaustive study (*The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Yale University Press 2002) hypothesises the charmingly domestic – and entirely plausible – idea that there were two, separate, boxes of sheets containing the pieces which students were encouraged to use and copy.

The many stylistic differences between WTC1 and WTC2 are mirrored by the many stylistic differences within WTC2. That it is possible to trace early versions of a number of pieces suggests that compilation of WTC2 took place over a long time and was a



Das Wohltemperirte Clavier.

Praeludia, 24

*Fugae Libri I. alla Tona und Semitonia,
D. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.
Musicalische Figuren, als auch Nöthen in etlichen Theilen,
wie sie habet bey dem Wohltemperirtem
Clavier Buchen angeordnet
und verfertiget von
Johann Sebastian Bach.
p. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.
1722.*



Bach's title page for *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* (1722)

complex process. Yo Tomita, amongst others, points out the large number of 'galant-leaning' binary preludes – that is preludes in two halves often with instructions to repeat both halves (<http://www.music.qub.ac.uk/tomita/essay/Tomita-wtc2.pdf>). Clearly this is a precursor to the harmonic arc of so-called Classical Sonata Form and certainly the textures of such preludes are very forward-looking, certainly in the context of Bach's keyboard output. Among the other preludes are fine examples of counterpoint and concerto movements. In WTC2, there are only three- and four-part fugues (there is one two-part fugue and two five-part fugues in WTC1), yet the variety of texture and emotional content is wider and the technical demands are more sophisticated (the majority of fugues lie under the hands much more easily than those in the previous part).

It is clear that many of the compositions had their origins earlier, but virtually none survived unaltered into the final collection. Whereas some preludes were simply transposed (Prelude in C-sharp major, for example), some compositions were thoroughly extended from much shorter original compositions (Fugue in A-flat major, Prelude in D minor). Yet even those pieces which remained largely

intact as they were selected for WTC2, aesthetic considerations were clearly of utmost importance – for example the replacement prelude for the G major Fugue – perhaps reflecting a need for a different affect for the compositional pair.

Frequently mentioned by modern commentators is Bach's desire to show stylistic flexibility: new styles and up-to-date harmonic language are visible alongside new technical demands for the player. In addition Bach writes some of his purest fugal forms (so-called style antico style). The many reports we have of Bach the man – detailing his day-to-day dealings with other musicians, church and town authorities etc – all point to a deeply serious man who took his various roles very studiously, almost stubbornly. The widely reported criticism by Johann Adolph Scheibe (1708–1776) printed in 1737 and accusing Bach of a 'heavy, outmoded style, overloaded with counterpoint' (David Ledbetter) probably exemplified a lot of contemporary feeling and all of this must have affected Bach – despite a number of highly-regarded musicians springing to his defence. In addition, the correspondence extant for 1736–7 shows a serious breach in the relationship with the Rector of the Thomasschule in Leipzig where Bach lived

and worked, and it is not beyond the realms of possibility that Bach sought solace in music for solo keyboard.

The final selection of music for WTC2 will have been made with a desire to maintain his own integrity as well as to prove his ability to adapt – at the same time as preserving that which he regarded as the soul of his own music-making.

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Performer's note

In my recording of Part 1 of *Das Wohltemperierte Clavier*, I based the tuning on Kirnberger's most practical system – his so-called third temperament – modifying thirds slightly if I felt the listening experience was too sour, but preserving the quarter-comma-tuned fifths as a basis. I have done the same for this recording: trying to keep the essential colouration of each key in line with eighteenth-century aesthetics, in addition to allowing this particularly beautiful harpsichord the chance to sound its best.

I would very much like to thank Adam, Libby and Chloe Binks for their help, support, friendship and hospitality during the production of these two volumes of Bach's masterpiece.



Steven Devine

Steven Devine enjoys a busy career as a music director and keyboard player working with some of the finest musicians.

He is the Principal Keyboard Player with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and also the principal keyboard player for The Gonzaga Band, Classical Opera (The Mozartists) and performs regularly with many other groups around Europe. He has recorded over forty discs with other artists and ensembles and made eight solo recordings. His recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations (Chandos Records) received critical acclaim – including *Gramophone* magazine describing it as 'among the best'. The complete harpsichord works of Rameau (Resonus) gained five-star reviews from *BBC Music Magazine* and Steven's recording of Bach's Italian Concerto was voted Classic FM's 'Connoisseur's Choice'. Book 1 of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier was released in 2019 ('it's the one of all I've heard in the past ten years that I am happiest to live with.' *Early Music Review*).

He made his London conducting debut in 2002 at the Royal Albert Hall and is now a regular performer there – including making his Proms directing debut in August 2007 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

He has conducted the Mozart Festival Orchestra in every major concert hall in the UK and also across Switzerland. Steven is Music Director for New Chamber Opera in Oxford and with them has performed repertoire from Cavalli to Rossini. For the Dartington Festival Opera he has conducted Handel's *Orlando* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. He is currently conductor and Artistic Advisor for the English Haydn Festival in Bridgnorth.

Steven works regularly with the Norwegian Wind Ensemble, Trondheim Barokk, the Victoria Baroque Players (BC, Canada) and Arion Baroque Ensemble (Montreal).

He teaches harpsichord and fortepiano at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in London and is Early Keyboard Consultant to the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal Welsh Colleges.

Finally, Steven is thrilled to be a member of the ground-breaking Art of Moog: an electronic music group specialising in the performance of Bach.

www.stevendevine.com





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Recorded in St Mary's Church, Birdsall, North Yorkshire on 29 May to 1 June 2019

Producer, engineer & editor: Adam Binks

Recorded at 24-bit/96kHz resolution

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Johann Sebastian Bach.