

# THE ART OF FUGUE

## BWV 1080

✦ JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH ✦

1685-1750

In the last decade of his life, Bach withdrew from many of his long-standing activities as a composing cantor. Now, alone with his genius, he joyfully and purposefully immersed himself in one self-assigned project after another—the culmination of a life's work—intending to place his own indelible stamp on the vanishing art of pure counterpoint.

*The Art of Fugue* is Bach's final major instrumental composition, a unique and prodigious demonstration of contrapuntal craft and imagination. Its fourteen fugues and four canons form a fascinating, thematically united family—and, at the same time, a comprehensive illustrated manual of counterpoint. But what we hear in the work's slow and deliberate unfolding is the miracle of a vast and moving meditation. *Mirabile dictu*: the textbook is a poem! And a farewell testament for the ages.



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ANDREW RANGELL

PIANO



Playing time: 74:26



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