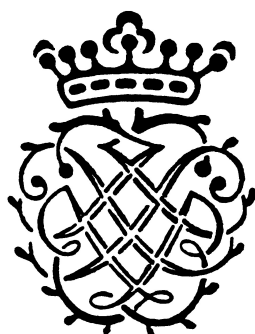


Tilman Hoppstock

Bach's Lute Works
from the Guitarist's Perspective



Vol. II

BWV 998/999/1000

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Introduction by Hopkinson Smith

The Scientist, a world-famous marine biologist, sits in his laboratory. On the table before him lies a specimen: a small aquatic animal neatly dissected. All the internal organs are clearly visible and the scientist explains them and their interconnected functions in great detail. He seems to have limitless knowledge of life in the stream where this animal made his home. But his vision goes far beyond, for he sees the unending wonders of God's creation within it and relates it to other creatures great and small that live on this earth, fly in the skies or swim in the seas.

In the adjoining office, sits the university's Poet who sees the world with the same sense of wonder. He reshuffles the words we use in everyday life and forms interesting and sometimes surprising passages which open our sensitivities and delight us with their innovation and relevance. He is an observer of life and a creator in rhythm and sound, structure and meaning.

Not far from the Poet, we find the University Theatre where a ballet performance has just come to a close. The Dancing Master has shown extraordinary energy, coordination, and the greatest control of detail combined with freedom of movement. The members of the public, filled with the magic of the evening, feel that their lives have truly been enriched with this moment of heightened artistry.

And, of course, Tilman is the Scientist, the Poet and the Ballet Master. His study is exhaustive without ever being pedantic and his creativity is certainly refreshing. He deals with the "molecular structure" of the music of Bach and at the same time opens the door of his musicologist's office and lets a fresh wind blow through, scattering musical scores and bits of paper outlining his ideas all over the room, before he brings them all together in a new order.

But I think the title of his book is something of a misnomer: "*From the Guitarist's Perspective*" implies a somewhat narrower point of view and a more technically limited approach. His work, even though it relates time and again to the guitar, grows out of a much broader and more universal musicality.

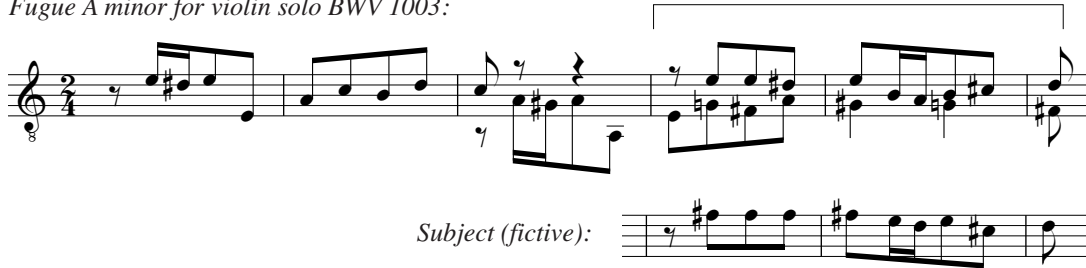
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hopkinson Smith". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Hopkinson Smith
Basel, 15th April 2012

Thematic affinities in the violin fugues

At the end of this chapter, I would like to forge a link between the two other fugues included in the Sonatas for Violin Solo (BWV 1003 and BWV 1005). As Bach's works regularly display structural similarities from thematic and harmonic aspects across a variety of genres, a comparison of the violin fugues can also reveal a number of remarkable features. The first thing to catch the eye is the counter-subject in the upper voice accompanying the "comes" in the violin fugue in A minor BWV 1003:

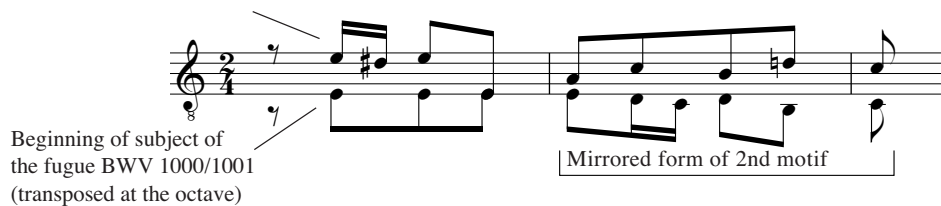
Fugue A minor for violin solo BWV 1003:



The exact rhythmic image of the fugue subject from BWV 1000/1001 is already astounding as a sign of a closer relationship, but an even clearer sign of a link between the two themes is displayed by the next example:

Beginning of subject of the fugue BWV 1003

7



A comparison with the subject of the C major fugue from the third Sonata for violin solo BWV 1005 is particularly striking; here it is possible to superimpose the pattern of the theme of "our" fugue adapted to a major key and in augmented form directly on the theme of the other work. Both subjects also display a similar radius of movement:

Fugal theme from the 3rd Sonata for violin solo BWV 1005:



Fugal theme from BWV 1000/1001 (in major):

8



Could these similarities all be serendipitous? The three sonatas are all part of a cycle also containing three partitas: a single unit which on the inside also reveals a formal network of connections (the three sonatas each consist of four movements and all contain a fugue). If we dig down to the next layer, we can discover further affinities (e.g. the formal structure of the final movements). The congruities between the three fugal subjects can be considered as deliberate on the part of Bach.

The subject entry in bar 76 is not ended in real form in any of the three versions. The composer takes advantage of the opportunity in the organ version for additional thematic entries to intensify the compositional structure. It is interesting that the subject entries in alto and tenor both appear in truncated form. Here are the three versions of bars 76 to 77 supplemented by a fictitious form for the organ with (almost) complete thematic entries:

20

Bars 74-75 (violin):

Bars 76-77 (lute):

Bars 76-77 (organ):

Bars 76-77 (organ, fictitious):

The image displays four musical staves, each representing a different instrument's version of a musical passage. The first staff, labeled 'Bars 74-75 (violin)', shows a single melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff, 'Bars 76-77 (lute)', is a single-line tablature with various rhythmic values. The third staff, 'Bars 76-77 (organ)', consists of two staves showing a complex harmonic texture with many beamed notes. The fourth staff, 'Bars 76-77 (organ, fictitious)', also has two staves and shows a similar but slightly different harmonic arrangement. Arrows on the left side of the staves indicate a downward sequence.

Bars 78-79: Harmony, melody, notation error + development of a middle voice (organ)

We are confronted by highly interesting notation variants in bars 78/79. In the lute version, the chord on the third beat of bar 78 has been reduced (omitting the fifth note A), probably to retain the three-voice structure throughout the entire passage. In Bach's arrangement for organ, this moment gains further brilliance through the added leap of a sixth in the upper voice (additional semiquaver).

The *E* at the end of the second beat of bar 79 should be identical in all three versions. The *B* in the lute tablature instead of *E* is most certainly a notation error. This mistake can be easily explained

The three versions – score

The reproduction of all three versions notated above one another and all transposed into A minor permits a direct comparison and the swift identification of all divergences.

The few notes in small print or brackets in the lute part originate from the violin version and were presumably forgotten by the intabulator. I have not adapted other dubious passages to facilitate a better comparison, particularly as all problematic aspects have already been discussed at length and in great detail on the previous pages.

In the organ part, the correct reproduction in A minor without the utilisation of the bass clef was no simple undertaking. As some readers welcome a reproduction in treble clef, I have divided the fugue over two staves (both in treble clef). At certain points, it was necessary to notate several bass and middle voice notes at the octave. The original organ version (in D minor on three staves) can be consulted for a more exact comparison of individual details.

The image displays a musical score for BWV 1000, titled 'The three versions'. It is arranged in three staves: Violin, Lute, and Organ. The score is divided into two systems. The first system begins with the title 'Fuga.' and the tempo 'Allegro'. The Violin part is in treble clef, the Lute part is in treble clef, and the Organ part is in treble clef. The Organ part is split across two staves. The score contains various musical notations, including triplets, sixteenth notes, and rests. The second system continues the fugue with various musical notations, including triplets, sixteenth notes, and rests. The Organ part is split across two staves.

thematic foundations are however unmistakeable (I thank Piera Dadomo for the discovery of this augmentation).

Bars 82-84, original:

32 ↓

Bars 82/83, theme fictive (1):

↓

Bars 82-84, theme fictive (2):

(32)

Bar 86:

In this bar, the lute version reveals a thematic entry generated by the upper and middle voices of the violin original: a more detailed explanation and musical example can be found on p. 92 (and p. 107) in the chapter “A comparison of all three versions”.

Bar 88:

Here Bach has embedded the subject with consummate invention in the final cadence of the first final phase. This same idea can also be found in the Fugue BWV 998,2 prior to the beginning of the recapitulation. Here, Bach also interweaves the subject into the texture, but in this example somewhat more visibly. In bar 88 of the Fugue BWV 1000, it is initially the repetition of four notes on A which immediately attracts attention. Below is a decoded version of this wonderful thematic charade (for reasons of clarity, the B at the end of the third beat has been omitted):

33 ↓ *Bar 88 (original):*

Bar 88 (theme visible):

What could help us to articulate the fugue subject in an appropriate fashion? And once a specific structural model has been selected, should this then be binding for the entire movement or can the diction of the recurring theme also be altered?

The great diversity of possibilities on a particular instrument becomes more accessible if we imagine music as a sung language. Johann Jacob Froberger's famous Tombeau for the deceased lutenist Blanchrocher provides a striking example. This piece is possibly an imaginary funeral oration whose (naturally imaginary) text is brought to life through the emotionally charged music. The words of the orator are as it were translated into notes sounding on the harpsichord; it cannot be denied that the aspect of articulation plays a major role in this case.

Drei Beispiele aus Bachs Vokalwerken sollen die unterschiedliche Wirkung im Zusammenspiel von Text und Artikulation bei einer ähnlichen rhythmischen Tonabfolge verdeutlichen.

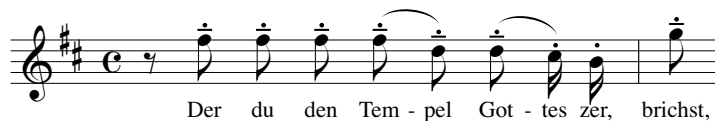
*St. John Passion BWV 245,
Choral aria "Weg, weg":*



*St. John Passion BWV 245,
Choral aria "Wäre dieser
nicht ein Übeltäter":*



*St. Matthew Passion BWV 244,
Choral aria „Der du den Tempel
Gottes zerbrichst“:*



If we now add a number of different texts to the fugal subject, it becomes clear how much the character and phonetics of words and even the entire meaning of the text phrase combined with the appropriate articulation can exert an influence on the expressive quality of a melody.

1) <i>proclaiming</i>	
2) <i>proclaiming</i>	
3) <i>uniform</i>	
4) <i>gentle</i>	

Perhaps we should not limit our options of presenting the fugal subject somewhat differently in accordance to the dramatic structure of the piece.

Could this concept also be applied to the Prelude BWV 999? Do the upper notes of the arpeggiated figures in this piece even provide a sufficiently melodic line? An attempt could at least be made in the passage from bar 16, at the latest from bar 19, while the upper voice ascends stepwise:

Prelude BWV 999, from bar 16, upper voice split polyphonically:

46

The melodic and initially even contrapuntal aspect is illustrated particularly well in the following musical example, clearly demonstrating that the prelude does not merely consist of arpeggiated chains of chords. Although the outer voices cannot “survive” without the middle voices, the dialogue between the soprano and the bass plays an essential role in the seemingly improvised work. As previously on page 149, I have removed the bar lines and allotted the duration of a crotchet for each bar.

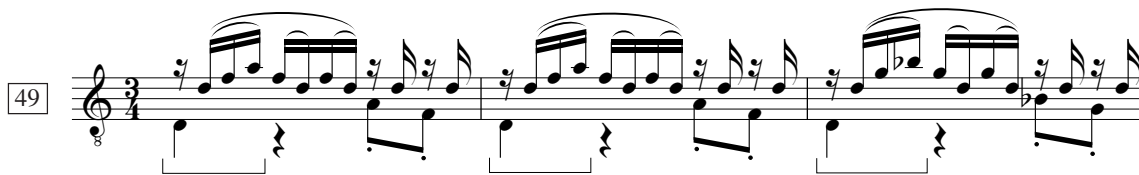
Prelude BWV 999, structural model of the outer voices:

lance of both pieces: the modest dimensions of the prelude are juxtaposed with a large-scale fugue. If we compare this with the introductory movement of the Violin Sonata BWV 1001 which is placed before the fugue, the discrepancy is even more conspicuous. The majority of guitarists now either perform the fugue as a separate entity or as the second movement of the Violin Sonata.

Articulation and dynamics

Numerous performers observe the crotchet rests in the bass (2nd beat) and play both quavers on the third beat with a short articulation:

Articulation model 1:



Should the rests in the upper voice logically also receive the same attention? Do the shorter articulated bass notes then still achieve the same contrapuntal effect? In recollection of the polyphonic compositional structure (see p. 154), an interesting form of articulation presents itself, slightly reminiscent of Glenn Gould, which would permit the upper voice structure to shine through with no accentuation whatsoever. In this case, I would then enhance the sound spectrum and contrapuntal concept by playing the quavers in the bass on the third beat in legato. It would then be far easier to perceive the different voices inherent in the structural texture and notate the movement accordingly on three staves:

Articulation model 2:

As is frequently the case with such complex interpretation models, it can be queried whether the intellect is not excessively dwarfing the natural musical feeling. Why not instead interrupt the monotony of a single model and produce a flexible interpretation of the piece during the 43 bars of its duration? Both articulation models can easily be integrated in different passages of the prelude.

PRELUDE, FUGUE AND ALLEGRO BWV 998

HISTORY OF ORIGINS AND GENERAL REMARKS

The Prelude, Fugue and Allegro BWV 998 *¹ and the Suite BWV 995 (the composer's own arrangement based on the Cello Suite No. 5 BWV 1011) can both be counted as original lute works by Johann Sebastian Bach. Back in 1950 when research into Bach was already at an advanced stage, the musicologist Hermann Keller (1885-1967) conjectured in his book "Die Klavierwerke Bachs": "*It is perhaps a bold presumption, but not entirely impossible in analogy to the E minor suite, to consider this tender work which must have sounded charming on the lute as a fragment of a suite; the »Allegro« could have been classified as a Corrente (32 + 64 bars)*" (41, p. 179, Par. 2). He even went as far to dispute the authenticity of the work due to the unorthodox harmonic twist at the end of the Prelude in bars 39/40 (we will return to this subsequently). Franz Julius Giesbert also terms the composition as a Suite in Eb major in the musicological publication "Die Musikforschung" issued in 1972 (also cf. 24, p. 485 ff.). The work was subjected to an intense examination for the first time in a dissertation by the musicologist Thomas Kohlhase whose findings were incorporated into the NBA Critical Report (1979) accompanying the musical edition of the work printed by Bärenreiter (1976).

The source

Autograph

(Ueno-Gakuen-Musikakademie, no signature)

The existence of an autograph in the hand of Johann Sebastian Bach is a great stroke of luck in comparison with numerous other works by the composer only surviving in copyists' manuscripts which have provoked all manner of presumptions, rumours and hypotheses. Although the original manuscript of BWV 998 is perhaps only a concept autograph and not a final fair copy, we have the advantage of gleaning many interesting facts on the basis of the verification of almost all notational aspects which are discussed in the following investigation.

We can be certain that the Prelude, Fugue and Allegro is not a torso but a complete work, alone from the fact that the transitions between the three movements both continue seamlessly (the end of the Prelude and the beginning of the Fugue are on page 2 of the manuscript and between Fugue and Allegro on page 4). Bach also inscribed the word *Fin* at the culmination of the Allegro.

The composition is notated on four pages in soprano and bass clefs. Towards the end of the last movement, Bach switches to the space-saving organ tablature, probably because he was unwilling to start a new page for the end of the final movement. The score bears the following (autograph) inscription:

Prelude pour la Luth. ò Cembal. par J. S. Bach *²

According to the NBA, a supplement with the transcription of the last 19 bars by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach was attached to the autograph, but this however "*did not survive and cannot there-*

*¹ Below, the movements Prelude, Fugue and Allegro will be mentioned collectively as a short suite in the singular.

*² Strictly speaking, "pour le Luth" is correct and not "pour la Luth".

Instead of the constant reference point D major, the temporary transitions are clearer between the first step of:

D maj. (b. 36) → **G min.** (T. 37-39) → **A maj.** (b. 40) → **D maj.** (from end of bar 40)

The question is whether the E major two-four chord on the 3rd beat of bar 40 perhaps intends to dominate the new intermediate tonic of A major more intensively, e.g. as displayed below...

From bar 39, first version 1 (fictive):

... or even like this:

From bar 39, second version (fictive):

Back in 1950, Hermann Keller even expressed doubts regarding the authorship of the composer on the strength of this passage in his book devoted to the composer's keyboard works! "*The harmonic connections in the Prelude...also appear so illogical that one cannot assume that they were actually created by Bach*" (41, p. 179, Par. 2). He views the more likely solution as being a two-four chord built up on A instead of E, probably leading in more convincing fashion back to D major. Keller's idea unfortunately makes no mention of the corresponding cadence in the recapitulation. Here is one attempt:

From bar 39, third version (fictive):

Prelude BWV 998,1 as chorale prelude (from bar 20)

(by T. Hoppstock)

65

20

23

26

29

33

68 Chorale



*Herr, wie Du willst,
so schick's mit mir
(from Cantata BWV 156):*

CHORALE: Herr, wie du willst, so schick's mit mir

(68) Fugue subject
from BWV 998,
adapted as a
4-part chorale:

FUGUE SUBJECT:

The fugue theme displays a particular affinity to the chorale melody “*Vom Himmel, hoch, da komm ich her*”. The melody is based on a well-known ancient folk song (*Ich komm' aus fremden Landen her*) which Martin Luther used for a setting of his 15-verse text in 1535. Bach’s harmonisation of this chorale is known by a different name as he utilised a different text by Paul Gerhard (*Schaut, schaut, was ist für Wunder dar?*). Verses 1 and 8 appear in the Christmas Oratorio:

69 Chorale



*Schaut, schaut, was
ist für Wunder dar?
(Vom Himmel hoch,...)
(from Christmas
Oratorio BWV 248):*

CHORALE: Schaut, schaut, was ist — für Wun - der dar?

(69) Fugue subject
from BWV 998,
adapted as a
4-part chorale:

FUGUE SUBJECT:

The harmonic congruence is in all three cases amazing (for further examples see section “Two more chorales” on p. 250ff.). In the second chorale, it is the beginning which is identical with the alternating note figure of the fugal subject; in the two other chorales, this figure forms the ending and in the third chorale additionally the beginning. I consider it very likely that when Bach created

- 1 - We hear the first entry (on the soprano note A) in bar 21. This official theme marks the beginning of the stretto passage.
- 2 - The second entry in bar 22 (oriented to the *dux*) also begins on A.
- 3 - The subject appears as the *dux* on G in bar 23 (the initial note is in the upper voice, the F# in the middle part and the theme continues from the D in the bass).
- 4 - The initial A of the fourth entry is absent from the original, but the theme can be recognised from its second note G in the upper voice; the fourth note B is found in the middle voice and the remaining four notes round off the theme in the bass line. The subject corresponds to the second entry (with the alteration G# in the second half).
- 5 - The fifth thematic entry commences with G in the middle voice, is then transferred to the bass line and returns to the middle voice for the second half of the figure. This eight-note motif with its leap of a sixth has the loosest connection with the actual theme, is however clearly recognisable as such.

From the first beat of bar 24 (i.e. with a shift of emphasis), an additional, barely tangible subject makes its presence felt within the regular theme in stretto (circled notes).

The five thematic entries from bar 21:

89

1st entry: original

2nd entry: *dux* (tonal) on A

3rd entry: *dux* on G

24

4th entry: *dux* (tonal) on A

5th entry: on G (tonal)

(continuation of third entry)

HIDDEN MESSAGES ?

Numerical symbolism

The following pages devoted to the fascinating subject of numerical symbolism and hidden messages in the fugues in BWV 1001:II and BWV 539:II lead us into a highly sensitive minefield and a controversial area considered according to individual opinion to be either closely associated with religiosity and the profession of faith or with sacrilegious and profane games with numbers. Right from the start, I would like to suggest that readers not interested in this topical subject to cease reading the book at this point. Simultaneously, I would advise committed apologists who are deeply convinced of the symbolic messages concealed by Bach in his music to ignore the not always serious intentions of my proof theories and perhaps recommend that they turn to a different part of the book. I offer a cordial invitation to those readers who feel able to approach this subject with an open mind and a touch of humour to accompany me into the mystical field of numbers and convoluted messages.

Messages concealed in the form of numbers, letters, signs and codes naturally existed long before the time of Johann Sebastian Bach and have their origins in the symbolic power of particular numbers. Within the realms of nature and in the magic kingdom of mathematics (which is principally derived from nature itself), we encounter a series of meaningful numbers and number combinations; in Greek antiquity for example or also in the Bible, certain numbers were considered to possess particular significance. Within the field of music, certain notes transformed into letters can convey additional textual information; vice versa, the gematric calculation of letters can in certain circumstances reveal particularly symbolic numbers. The keyword is “gematria”, a term for assigning numerical value to letters or letters to numbers.

It would be going too far beyond the dimensions of this book to present the entire history of numerical symbolism and hidden messages, as different cultures possess highly variegated interpretations. A good example is provided by the number 5 which does not enjoy a unanimously symbolic significance (in biblical history which is so rich in numerical significances, this figure plays for instance a minimal role). In China, the number 5 is allocated a variety of different meanings of which the most familiar is the representation of the five elements: wood, fire, water, earth and metal. The Babylonian sexagesimal system (a denominational number system based on the number 60 utilising only two different signs) saw 5 as the mystic pentagram (the planets of the four corners of the world with Venus as the fifth dimension; also see 28c, p. 126) and for the Ancient Greeks the number 5 was a symbol of masculinity and sexuality.

Doxology in BWV 1001:2 and a refutation

First of all, I would like to discuss the work undertaken by the violin professor and musicologist Prof. Helga Thoene from Düsseldorf who following years of research formulated a highly interesting theory concerning the history of origin of Bach's three sonatas and partitas for violin solo. In her volume entitled “*Johann Sebastian Bach, die Sonate g-moll, Der verschlüsselte Lobgesang*” (“...the encrypted doxology“), she expounds her findings on the first Sonata in G minor (BWV 1001), particularly on the second movement (Fuga), in around 100 pages.

The general architecture of the three sonatas is described as follows: “...*This is constructed from the bar number values of the total of twelve individual movements ...the individual architectural ele-*