

Produced by Andrew Kazdin

BACH  
THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVIER  
Book II, Volume 2  
GLENN GOULD, Piano

Side 1

PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 9 IN E MAJOR,  
BWV 878 (4:00)  
PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 10 IN E MINOR,  
BWV 879 (4:00)  
PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 11 IN F MAJOR,  
BWV 880 (3:40)  
PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 12 IN F MINOR,  
BWV 881 (3:17)

Side 2

PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 13 IN F-SHARP  
MAJOR, BWV 882 (4:00)  
PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 14 IN F-SHARP  
MINOR, BWV 883 (4:00)  
PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 15 IN G MAJOR,  
BWV 884 (3:00)  
PRELUDE AND FUGUE NO. 16 IN G MINOR,  
BWV 885 (3:30)

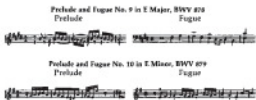
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In the year 1722, while serving as Kapellmeister at the small court of Prince Leopold in Cöthen, Johann Sebastian Bach completed his first volume of twenty-four preludes and fugues, entitled *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* (The Well-Tempered Clavier). One year later, Bach left his position at Cöthen to become Cantor of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, and there, in 1742, he finished a second series of these works. The later preludes and fugues have become known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II*, although Bach himself did not specify this. He did provide a detailed title page on the first volume, however, and this clearly defines his aims—aims which were surely similar when he composed the second series. The title page from Book I states:

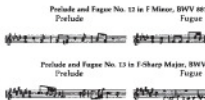
The Well-Tempered Clavier, or Preludes and Fugues in all the major and minor keys. For the use and profit of the musical youth desirous of learning, as well as for the pastime of those already skilled in this study.

The preludes in Book I generally display a free, nearly improvisatory style, unbound to any set form. In Book II, however, Bach occasionally chooses various standard keyboard structures as a basis for the preludes, with the result that they contain many late-Baroque keyboard forms as well as employing outstanding diversity of style and mood.

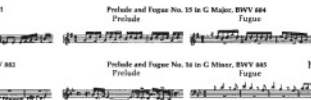
The following is a thematic index of the Preludes and Fugues, Nos. 9-16, of the Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II:



Prelude and Fugue No. 9 in E Major, BWV 878  
Prelude Fugue



Prelude and Fugue No. 11 in F Major, BWV 880  
Prelude Fugue



Prelude and Fugue No. 13 in F-Sharp Major, BWV 882  
Prelude Fugue



Prelude and Fugue No. 15 in G Major, BWV 884  
Prelude Fugue



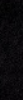
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Prelude Fugue



Prelude and Fugue No. 15 in G Major, BWV 884  
Prelude Fugue

MS 7409  
G010003290547F



ing three-voice fugue displays Bach's free use of the fugal technique, for each of the three developments presents the subject in two voices only. The intervening homophonic episodes consistently employ the same motive, which creates a round-like effect.

Prelude and Fugue No. 13 in F-Sharp Major, BWV 882

A joyful two-voice prelude, whose dotted rhythmic figure creates the aura of a French overture. A sequential 16th-note motive alternates with the dotted one as modulations, variations and embellishments occur.

The fugue, for three voices, is symmetrically constructed around a subject that opens with a unique leading-tone trill. Two countersubjects derived from the subject provide thematic material for alternately long and short episodes.

Prelude and Fugue No. 14 in F-Sharp Minor, BWV 883

This famous lyrical prelude is characterized by a melody made up of triplets and syncopations, the latter coming to the fore in a final reprise.

The three-voice fugue, whose first subject features complex rhythms and a closing embellishment, becomes a triple fugue by the introduction of a second subject (a descending motive with a dotted eighth) and a third (a sequential 16th-note figure). In two instances all three subjects are combined contrapuntally.

Prelude and Fugue No. 15 in G Major, BWV 884

This two-part prelude presents a non-stop 16th-note melody at a rapid tempo as it migrates between the soprano and bass. The concise, brilliant, three-voice fugue that follows has a long, driving 16th-note subject of broken chords. It appears three times after the exposition, but does not lend itself to intricate counterpoint. A pedal point with trills and a three-voice run achieves a climax before the close.

Prelude and Fugue No. 16 in G Minor, BWV 885

A melody with a dotted rhythm and trills pervades the four voices of the stately prelude. The accompanying fugue employs a declamatory, declaratory subject that ends with six repeated 8th notes. An upward-moving 16th-note countersubject adds to the four-voice texture, and when Bach doubles both themes at the third and sixth in the ensuing developments the zenith of his polyphonic writing has been reached.

—Jean K. Wolf

Engineering: Fred Plaut and Raymond Moore

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Book 2  
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# Johann Sebastian Bach 1685–1750

## The Well-Tempered Clavier II BWV 878–885

Das Wohltemperierte Clavier II · Le Clavier bien tempéré II

### Prelude & Fugue No. 9 in E major BWV 878

E-Dur · en *mi* majeur

<b>[1]</b> Praeludium	2:18
<b>[2]</b> Fuga	1:47

### Prelude & Fugue No. 10 in E minor BWV 879

e-Moll · en *mi* mineur

<b>[3]</b> Praeludium	2:04
<b>[4]</b> Fuga	2:44

### Prelude & Fugue No. 11 in F major BWV 880

F-Dur · en *fa* majeur

<b>[5]</b> Praeludium	2:09
<b>[6]</b> Fuga	1:31

### Prelude & Fugue No. 12 in F minor BWV 881

f-Moll · en *fa* mineur

<b>[7]</b> Praeludium	1:46
<b>[8]</b> Fuga	1:31

### Prelude & Fugue No. 13 in F-sharp major BWV 882

Fis-Dur · en *fa* dièse majeur

<b>[9]</b> Praeludium	2:13
<b>[10]</b> Fuga	1:46

### Prelude & Fugue No. 14 in F-sharp minor BWV 883

fis-Moll · en *fa* dièse mineur

<b>[11]</b> Praeludium	3:23
<b>[12]</b> Fuga	2:46

### Prelude & Fugue No. 15 in G major BWV 884

G-Dur · en *sol* majeur

<b>[13]</b> Praeludium	1:10
<b>[14]</b> Fuga	0:53

### Prelude & Fugue No. 16 in G minor BWV 885

g-Moll · en *sol* majeur

<b>[15]</b> Praeludium	3:10
<b>[16]</b> Fuga	2:27

Total Time 34:12

## Glenn Gould piano

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In the year 1722, while serving as Kapellmeister at the small court of Prince Leopold in Cöthen, Johann Sebastian Bach completed his first volume of twenty-four preludes and fugues, entitled *Das Wohltemperierte Clavier* (The Well-Tempered Clavier). One year later, Bach left his position at Cöthen to become Cantor of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, and there, in 1742, he finished a second series of these works. The later preludes and fugues have become known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book II, although Bach himself did not specify this. He did provide a detailed title page on the first volume, however, and this clearly defines his aims – ones which were surely similar when he composed the second series. The title page from Book I states: “The Well-Tempered Clavier, or Preludes and Fugues in all the major and minor keys. For the use and profit of the musical youth desirous of learning, as well as for the pastime of those already skilled in this study...”

The preludes in Book I generally display a free, nearly improvisatory style, unbound to any set form. In Book II, however, Bach occasionally chooses various standard keyboard structures as a basis for the preludes, with the result that they exemplify many late-Baroque keyboard forms as well as employing astounding diversity of style and mood.

The fugues, coupled to the preludes by use of the same key, represent a stricter form of composition, but here, too, Bach maintains masterful variety and interest throughout. The basic principle of a fugue is imitation, i.e., the successive presentation of a theme or subject in all voices of the composition. The main divisions are the exposition, in which the subject is presented by each voice in turn (frequently in combination with a secondary or countersubject); various developmental sections, in which the composer treats the subject

contrapuntally, often altering it by means of inversion, augmentation, or diminution; and episodes, sections in a lighter style that frequently employ a motive from the second part of the subject or the countersubject.

Bach wrote solely three- and four-voice fugues in Book II of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, refraining from the two- or five-voice variety found in Book I. His skill in the fugal technique reaches its height in the late works of Book II, and in the words of musicologist Alfred Einstein, Bach “made of the fugue what it stands for today: a contrapuntal form of the highest concentration in which a single characteristic subject in continuous expansion pervades a thoroughly unified whole.”

### **Prelude & Fugue No. 9 in E major, BWV 878**

The three-voice prelude is in two parts, the first featuring imitative treatment of the gracious opening theme and a pedal point created by 8th-note octave leaps. The second part modulates to minor, treats the motivic material more freely, and concludes with a second pedal point. The accompanying fugue employs a subject that stems from the Renaissance and has become traditional in music literature. As if in respect to the past heritage of the theme, Bach treats the four-voice work like a solemn and stately motet.

### **Prelude & Fugue No. 10 in E minor, BWV 879**

This two-voice prelude, moving at a fast tempo, resembles a two-part invention. The main running-16th-note motive is transposed and developed in various ways, appearing in inversion in the second part. The following three-voice fugue has the longest subject in the entire volume, but its length is warranted by its

energetic character and rhythmic diversity. A distinctive countersubject enters at various points during the ensuing polyphony.

### **Prelude & Fugue No. 11 in F major, BWV 880**

An opening legato 8th-note melody permeates the five voices of the prelude and receives polyphonic treatment in different keys before a reprise in the tonic key. A triplet subject rising and falling through an octave supplies the thematic material for the three-voice fugue. A final statement of the subject by the soprano voice in minor is accompanied by full harmony.

### **Prelude & Fugue No. 12 in F minor, BWV 881**

In contrast to the previous preludes, this work maintains a relatively simple texture throughout its two sections. The accompanying three-voice fugue displays Bach's free use of the fugal technique, for each of the three developments presents the subject in two voices only. The intervening homophonic episodes consistently employ the same motive, which creates a rondo-like effect.

### **Prelude & Fugue No. 13 in F-sharp major, BWV 882**

A jovial two-voice prelude, whose dotted rhythmic figure creates the aura of a French overture. A sequential 16th-note motive alternates with the dotted one as modulations, variations and embellishments occur. The fugue, for three voices, is symmetrically constructed around a subject that opens with a unique leading-tone trill. Two countersubjects derived from the subject provide thematic material for alternately long and short episodes.

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This famous lyrical prelude is characterized by a melody made up of triplets and syncopations, the latter coming to the fore in a final reprise. The three-voice fugue, whose first subject features complex rhythms and a closing embellishment, becomes a triple fugue by the introduction of a second subject (a descending motive with a dotted eighth) and a third (a sequential 16th-note figure). In two instances all three subjects are combined contrapuntally.

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A melody with a dotted rhythm and trills pervades the four voices of the stately prelude. The accompanying fugue employs a decisive, declamatory subject that ends with six repeated 8th notes. An upward-moving 16th-note countersubject adds to the four-voice texture, and when Bach doubles both themes at the third and sixth in the ensuing developments the zenith of his polyphonic writing has been reached.

*JEAN K. WOLF*