

Prelude and Fugue in A Minor

Score (concert pitch)

BuxWV 153

Buxtehude

Praeludium

Moderato

Flexible tempo [~♩=82]

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet

Horn

Bassoon



3



6



9

System 9: Five staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The third staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The fourth staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The fifth staff has a bass clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests.

12

System 12: Five staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The third staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The fourth staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The fifth staff has a bass clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. There are two *f* (forte) markings in this system.

15

System 15: Five staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The third staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The fourth staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. The fifth staff has a bass clef and contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together, and rests. There is a red *f* (forte) marking in this system.

27

System 1 (measures 27-32) features five staves. The first staff has a whole rest for measures 27-29, followed by a melodic line starting in measure 30 with a *f* *Marcato* dynamic. The second staff has a melodic line starting in measure 27, with dynamics *mp* and *f*. The third staff has a melodic line starting in measure 27, with a *mf* dynamic. The fourth staff has a melodic line starting in measure 27, with a *mf* dynamic. The fifth staff has a melodic line starting in measure 27, with a *f* *Marcato* dynamic.

33

System 2 (measures 33-36) features five staves. The first staff has a melodic line starting in measure 33, with a *mp* dynamic. The second staff has a melodic line starting in measure 33, with a *mp* dynamic. The third staff has a whole rest for measures 33-36. The fourth staff has a whole rest for measures 33-35, followed by a melodic line starting in measure 36 with a *f* dynamic. The fifth staff has a whole rest for measures 33-36.

37

System 3 (measures 37-42) features five staves. The first staff has a melodic line starting in measure 37, with a *f* dynamic. The second staff has a melodic line starting in measure 37, with a *mp* dynamic. The third staff has a whole rest for measures 37-41, followed by a melodic line starting in measure 42 with a *f* dynamic. The fourth staff has a melodic line starting in measure 37, with a *mp* dynamic and a *Leggiero* marking. The fifth staff has a melodic line starting in measure 37, with a *ff* dynamic.

42

f *Leggiero* *f*

47

f *f*

52

mp *f* *f*

57

f

f

f

f

f

Recitativo Flexible tempo

62

Rit.....

f

f

f

f

ff

Fuga 2 Con moto
strict tempo [$\sim \text{♩} = 165$]

67

mp

f Marcato

f Marcato

mp

f Marcato

f Marcato

74

p

f

mp

f

f

81

pp

f

mp

pp

mf

f

mp

f

pp

f

89

poco rit..... a tempo

ff

crescendo

ff

mp

crescendo

ff

ff

f

crescendo

ff

8vb

97 Rit.....

mp f mp ff mp ff f mf ff

ossia:
Fine

Toccata Presto [$\sim \text{♩} = 120$]

104

mf ff ff

107

ff ff ff

[Poco meno mosso]

110

Maestoso

Presto

112

115

Presto, accelerando al fine

118

118

122

Maestoso

ff

ff

(ad lib)

122

Diderich Buxtehude was born at Helsingborg, now in Sweden but then part of Denmark, probably in 1637. His father was an organist in Helsingør (Shakespeare's Elsinore), and Diderich followed in the profession, first at Helsingborg and then succeeding his father in Helsingør. In 1668 he moved to his final job at the Marienkirche in Lübeck, where he remained until his death in 1707, eventually Germanizing his name. As well as organist, Buxtehude was church treasurer, and he also developed his predecessor's tradition of promoting regular 'Abendmusik' concerts of both secular and religious music.

When Buxtehude wrote down his music it was in 'tablature' (alphabetic note names in long strings, one for each part in the counterpoint), a style that had some ambiguities and was perhaps more an aide-memoire to the composer or rough guide to the performer, and one which was already becoming old-fashioned. Everything that survives now (a fraction of his total output) was either copied by other composers, written out as training material for pupils or sent as presents to Buxtehude's friend Gustav Düben in Sweden. Famously, the young JS Bach walked 300 miles to Lübeck to hear the master performer /composer, to copy his music and learn all he could about the practicalities of the job: Bach's one month's approved leave of absence extended to three, to the annoyance of his employer. Buxtehude's "Praeludia" are divided into those with pedal parts, which were written for organ but probably practised at home on a pedal clavichord, and those written for hands only (e.g. harpsichord). The more complex pedal pieces alternate contrasting episodes: free improvisatory or recitative-like passages, and formal fugues. The influence of this 'fantasia' style on Bach's early organ music is very clear. Buxtehude played before the advent of compromise tuning, which Bach helped to cement as the standard we know today. However some of the Schnitger organs Buxtehude played on had ingenious 'alternative' semitones for the different sounds of G[#] and A^b (for example), and he pushed the boundaries of the less flexible mean-tone tuning of his organs with complex modulations and pieces in unusual keys (one famous Prelude is in F[#] minor).

This energetic prelude demonstrates Buxtehude's fondness for repeated notes in his fugue subjects. After a rhapsodic introduction with repeated suspensions, there are two formal fugues which are closely related - the second differentiated (as often) by its compound time – separated by only 3 'free' bars. The second fugue modulates to C major and terminates triumphantly (forming an alternative ending to the piece in transcription), but there follows a fiery Toccata-like virtuoso tailpiece full of contrast, which finally resolves in a resounding A major.