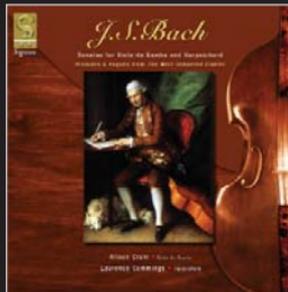


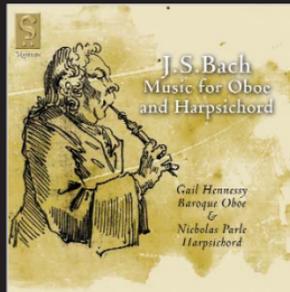
ALSO ON SIGNUMCLASSICS



J. S. Bach: The Six Partitas BWV 825-830
SIGCD012
Lucy Carolan



J.S. Bach: Sonatas for Viola da Gamba &
Preludes and Fugues from the Well-tempered
Clavier SIGCD024
Alison Crum & Laurence Cummings



J.S. Bach: Music for Oboe and Harpsichord
Oboe Sonatas & Preludes and Fugues from
The Well Tempered Clavier
SIGCD034
Gail Hennessy & Nicholas Parle



Brahms and Schumann
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CLASSICS

2 CD SET

J.S. BACH

Well-tempered Clavier, Book 1

Jill Crossland



WELL-TEMPERED CLAVIER, BOOK 1

J.S. BACH

DISC 1

No. 1 in C major BWV846	No. 7 in E flat major BWV852
1. Praeludium [2.10]	13. Praeludium [3.43]
2. Fuga a 4 voci [2.32]	14. Fuga a 3 voci [1.50]
 No. 2 in C minor BWV847	 No. 8 in E flat minor BWV853
3. Praeludium [1.41]	15. Praeludium [4.37]
4. Fuga a 3 voci [1.36]	16. Fuga a 3 voci [6.28]
 No. 3 in C sharp major BWV848	 No. 9 in E major BWV854
5. Praeludium [1.16]	17. Praeludium [1.27]
6. Fuga a 3 voci [2.17]	18. Fuga a 3 voci [1.15]
 No. 4 in C sharp minor BWV849	 No. 10 in E minor BWV855
7. Praeludium [3.25]	19. Praeludium [2.21]
8. Fuga a 5 voci [5.48]	20. Fuga a 2 voci [1.10]
 No. 5 in D major BWV850	 No. 11 in F major BWV856
9. Praeludium [1.19]	21. Praeludium [1.02]
10. Fuga a 4 voci [2.08]	22. Fuga a 3 voci [1.19]
 No. 6 in D minor BWV851	 No. 12 in F minor BWV857
11. Praeludium [1.18]	23. Praeludium [2.23]
12. Fuga a 3 voci [2.35]	24. Fuga a 4 voci [5.57]
Total Timings	[62.12]

DISC 2

No. 13 in F sharp major BWV858	No. 19 in A major BWV864
1. Praeludium [1.39]	13. Praeludium [1.22]
2. Fuga a 3 voci [2.22]	14. Fuga a 3 voci [2.35]
 No. 14 in F sharp minor BWV859	 No. 20 in A minor BWV865
3. Praeludium [0.55]	15. Praeludium [0.56]
4. Fuga a 4 voci [3.18]	16. Fuga a 4 voci [4.47]
 No. 15 in G major BWV860	 No. 21 in B flat major BWV866
5. Praeludium [0.47]	17. Praeludium [1.11]
6. Fuga a 3 voci [2.22]	18. Fuga a 3 voci [1.47]
 No. 16 in G minor BWV861	 No. 22 in B flat minor BWV867
7. Praeludium [2.43]	19. Praeludium [3.51]
8. Fuga a 4 voci [2.48]	20. Fuga a 5 voci [3.47]
 No. 17 in A flat major BWV862	 No. 23 in B major BWV868
9. Praeludium [1.20]	21. Praeludium [1.08]
10. Fuga a 4 voci [3.18]	22. Fuga a 4 voci [2.11]
 No. 18 in G sharp minor BWV863	 No. 24 in B minor BWV869
11. Praeludium [2.05]	23. Praeludium [6.52]
12. Fuga a 4 voci [3.19]	24. Fuga a 4 voci [8.25]
Total Timings	[66.44]

A note from Jill Crossland

Bach's music represents the richness of both the everyday and the devotional, its sense of vitality and life as important as its all-absorbing, cerebral complexity. For me, no other music is so perfect an integration of emotional expression and intellectual rigour.

Bach is often spoken of as the father of Classical music and I originally owe my discovery of Bach to my own father, who, despite having no musical training, deeply appreciated how great and indeed sacred, Bach's music is. As a small child, I played much Bach, including the more popular preludes, but I wondered how all the voices in the fugues could be played with just two hands. Later, my teacher Mr. Bakst saw how much I loved Bach and was insistent I should study the Well-tempered Clavier in its entirety.

Words will always be inadequate for me when trying to encapsulate Bach's complexity. Bach's solidity gives me what I can only describe as spiritual nourishment and solace, lifting me above the mundane yet remaining absolutely rooted. He is the only composer to whom I can return infinitely often.

This recording is dedicated to my parents Audrey and Norman.



Bach's Well-tempered Clavier, Book 1

One of the great landmarks of the keyboard repertoire, Bach's own description of the Well-tempered Clavier, from the title page to his own copy of Book 1, is as good as any:

Preludes and Fugues through all tones and semitones, including [both] major and minor [keys]. For the profit and use of musical youth desiring instruction, and for the particular delight of those already skilled in this discipline.

Bach's copy comes from 1722, when he was Kapellmeister at Coethen in Saxony, and during the period when his work permitted him to write extensively for instruments and instrumental ensembles (such as the Brandenburg concertos and the unaccompanied violin works) and to revise and assemble what he had already written; a few of the preludes and fugues are likely to date from the time of Bach's previous employment, in

Weimar, and even from his short period of imprisonment there when he had annoyed his employers with his demands to leave. We colloquially know the Well-tempered Clavier as the '48,' from two books of twenty four preludes and fugues each.

Predecessors, style and character

There are at least three relevant forbears of the '48,' Frescobaldi's *Capricci* (1626), which is often echoed, and stands for the '48's' value as a primer on how to write fugues, Mattheson's *Exemplarische Organistenprobe* (1719), which used all 24 keys, but just for figured bass exercises, and Fischer's *Ariadne musica* (1713, possibly earlier), which has preludes and fugues, but in twenty keys. As so often with his keyboard music, Bach developed and integrated diverse influences into a distinctive personal style, which now serves as our pattern for all Baroque music.

The '48' is a collection, even a compendium, not a cycle, but there is some sense of progression and intensification; Prelude 1 is apparently simple, Fugue 24 is one of the longest and deepest; its serenity resolves the mounting emotional tension of the work. We know Bach did not compose No. 24 until 1722, and rejected one suitable B

minor fugue he had already written. He might well have wished to bring the work to a grand, fitting conclusion.

We do not know exactly how much juggling Bach did to fit a combination of new and existing pieces into the '24 key' format, but we can guess that this happened sometimes, such as with Nos. 7 or 20, where either prelude or fugue seems to unbalance the other, and we know some of the preludes existed in earlier versions, for example written for Bach's son William Friedemann. Elsewhere, thematic links (Preludes 4 and 18, Fugues 4 and 13, Prelude and Fugue 23) seem to suggest that individual pieces were composed together.

As a textbook on how to write fugues, the '48' is not intended to be systematic. In general, the fugues for more voices are written in an older style; conversely, the preludes are variously dances, inventions and free improvisatory pieces.

Among the preludes, a number are primarily built out of arpeggios, including 1 and 2, but none later than 15. Of the invention-like preludes, 13 and 18 are especially good examples. More unusually, 9 is an innocent pastoral, 16 is bell-like, and 21 an improvisatory cadenza. 4, 22 and 24 surely have intentionally spiritual resonances and 7 even has its own fugue built-in.

Attempts to categorise the fugues are neither historically nor musicologically helpful, but it is remarkable how much expressivity, whether in terms of *galant* style or sonata form elements, Bach manages to introduce - such as in the liveliness of 3 and 8.

What does 'Well-tempered Clavier' mean?

It is easy to answer very simply but not completely; "well-tempered" meant any system of tuning that allowed the use of remote keys, keys with many sharps and flats. In contrast, the tuning of baroque strings and wind instruments was appropriate only for a limited range of keys. And "Clavier" simply means "keyboard." The balance of opinion is that Bach did not intend the '48' for one particular kind of keyboard.

Bach probably did not mean equal temperament by 'well-tempered,' as one finds on a modern piano, which would in turn have fitted badly when playing continuo with period instruments. But he did intend tunings that allowed remote, seldom-used keys to sound well. This is especially apposite as musical style was evolving to make greater use of modulation into remote keys, and musical theory to show an interest in the affective, emotional properties of different keys.

It is equally unlikely, although plenty of candidates have been put forward, that any of the 'good temperaments' was the single 'best,' or that Bach assembled the '48' in order to participate in a debate about tuning. For example, some of the '48' have been transposed from their original keys and there is some evidence that by the time of Book 2, Bach was happy with equal temperament. Peter Williams cuts the Gordian knot. He rightly suggests a composer with Bach's gigantic musical grasp is unlikely to have been primarily interested in temperament for its own sake.

Even subsequent to the widespread use of period instruments, the modern piano is widely accepted as an instrument on which to play Bach; the composer's complexity and depth mean the music transcends the medium. Indeed, the '48,' something that was obviously an educational and private work, but which is generally heard today in public performance, is the starting point for a different, more wide-ranging scholarly debate about whether performance is about reconstructing the composer's own intentions and experience, or about re-interpreting the music for the changed conditions, assumptions and outlook of the world in which it is heard.

Sources, Reception and Editions.

From anecdotal evidence of what later great composers said about the '48,' and from the dozens of 18th century manuscript copies that survive, we know that the work was always held in the highest esteem, and maintained its reputation even when Bach's work was little-known and generally regarded as archaic. Mozart and Beethoven, for example, copied out fugues to study, Chopin examined the preludes carefully before writing his own, and Schumann referred to the work as his 'daily bread.' The work was not actually published until 1801, when three different editions appeared; it is again significant this happened at such an early moment in the so-called "Bach revival." Today, the '48's canonical status, as the greatest pedagogical work ever written for keyboard... and still so much more, is endlessly cited. The most famous quote remains Hans von Bülow's description of it as the pianist's Old Testament (with the Beethoven sonatas as the New.)

As with the *Orgelbuechlein* and the Inventions, Bach made a "fair copy" of the Well-tempered Clavier, with explanatory notes on the title page but made many revisions both before and after the autograph - throughout his life he constantly tried

to perfect the details of his compositions as well as to systematise their presentation. However, such a definitive copy greatly simplifies the task of editors and performers, and as early as the volume (1862) within the first complete edition of the Bach Society, we have something close to an acceptable modern text. Book 2 of the '48' has no such autograph, and thus has innumerable textual problems, but that is another story.....

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Bach and the Divine

Familiarity with Bach breeds, certainly not contempt, but awe more than intimacy. Bach is far more remote as a man and as a composer than, say, Mozart or Beethoven. Some reasons for this are intellectually trivial; for example, the numerical catalogue of his works is not a single chronological list, but divided by genres and categories; we cannot know at a glance which works were contemporary with which others. Then, there are simply so many cantatas and organ pieces, well-known only to performers and a few listeners, that it is difficult to have an overview of the music. At the most generous estimate, only a tenth of Bach's output is well-known to the committed listener, as against something like

double that of Beethoven's output. And this is in playing time, counting the very long *St. Matthew Passion* and *Mass in B minor*, not even in terms of the number of works.

There also happens not to be, in Bach, the same written self-revelation found in Beethoven's *Heiligenstadt Testament* or in the intimacy of Mozart's letters. Nor are the memoirs and accounts of those who knew the composer nearly as reliable. Then, in terms of musical style, Bach shows a remarkable consistency from early to late. There is certainly a process of distillation, recombination, increasing sophistication and chromaticism, but there is nothing like the periodisation, the development from immature to ripened wisdom we see so often in great composers.

We do not speak of Bach as we do of 'late Beethoven,' 'the last Schubert masterpieces,' nor of Schumann's 'flight into madness,' let alone a movement from -say- expansive to concentrated (Brahms) or diatonic to twelve-tone (Schoenberg). In Louis XIV's France, it was said that *le style est l'homme*, (the style is the man). For Bach, the man was the style - our conception of Baroque music is indissoluble from the Bachian sound-world; and from Bach's own work in integrating and refining the music of different European traditions.

Above all, whereas the archetypal Romantic artist (and in music, Beethoven is already this) explores his own existential situation in his work, Bach's music, as is widely commented, is about a man's (and therefore mankind's) relationship with God, rather than with himself or another person. We still live in a post-Romantic age; when Beethoven explores the limits of human intellect and will, we instantly identify with him. Bach's age was more stylised, but his own music is opaque as an elucidation of the composer's own soul; it is rather a window on the infinite and on eternity.

Bach hardly lacked drama in his life. He was orphaned at ten, he had a legendary ability to walk for his art - two hundred miles to boarding school in Luneberg, later another two hundred to hear Buxtehude in Luebeck, he was married twice and widowed once, and fathered twenty children, half of whom died before him, he suffered blindness. He was even once imprisoned for leaving his job too insubordinately, during which time he worked on the *Well-tempered Clavier*. But, crucially, Bach did not dramatise any of this in his music; he wrote operatically, but he did not write opera, and least of all opera that might be a metaphor for his own life. Nor would Bach's temperament, emotional and irascible, but still highly disciplined and God-fearing, suit an *Amadeus*-like drama. Bach clearly

had a strong ego (as his performer needs to have), but he put it entirely at the service of a higher calling (just as his performers today must subordinate theirs to Bach's music).

We live in a world widely condemned as materialistic, shallow, even empty. No doubt such debates between idealism and power have existed since the dawn of civilisation; however, there seems no doubt that Bach represents a sense of constancy and consistency in the apprehension of

something beyond, something that can only be described as a spiritual world. Many eminent observers, irrespective of the nature of their faith or lack thereof, comment that when playing or listening to Bach, they are drawn into this other world. While the music and lives of Mozart and Beethoven recall the miracles and struggles of the human spirit, Bach reminds us of its humility.

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BIOGRAPHY

Jill Crossland studied at Chethams School of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music with Ryszard Bakst, and in Vienna with Paul Badura-Skoda and Sally Sargent. She performed the complete Well-tempered Clavier from memory as a student in Manchester and has always been closely associated with the work.

Jill pursues an active concert and recording career in the UK and abroad, including regular appearances at the Wigmore Hall and South Bank in London. She is particularly known for her

performances of eighteenth century music. Jill has also played at Bridgewater Hall, Fairfield and Blackheath Halls, St George's Bristol, the Sage Gateshead, Vienna Musikverein, Vienna Konzerthaus and Leipzig Gewandhaus. She gave the John Ogdon memorial concert which also celebrated Mozart's 250th birthday, in his home town of Mansfield, and her performances at festivals have included Carlisle and Stafford.

Jill is a member of the Musicians in Residence scheme, supported by funding from Arts Council

England. She also participates in audience development projects in her native Yorkshire and the surrounding region. Her chamber work has included piano duets with her brother, pianist and composer Neil Crossland.

Book Two of the *Well-tempered Clavier* is forthcoming on Signum, and Jill has made other recordings of works by Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, Rameau, Mozart and Beethoven, including the Bach *Goldberg Variations*. Among many critical plaudits: She 'well deserves her enviable reputation as a Bach pianist.' (*BBC Music Magazine*) and has been called 'a highly individual [Bach] player' and a 'natural Mozartean' (*Penguin Guide to CDs*), her playing described as having 'intensity and real pathos' (*International Record Review*), and her Beethoven as 'delightful' and 'magnetic' by turns (*American Record Guide*).

Jill has appeared on radio and television, including performing on BBC Radio 3 and 4 and on RTE's *Late Late Show*. She has also recorded a number of film and TV soundtracks, including work for the BFI and ITV. Jill featured in the Classic FM Hall of Fame 2005.



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