

## WTC I/19 in A major – Prelude

This prelude is a polyphonic composition in consistent three-part texture. Its most prominent thematic unit spans 2½ measures. Owing to its complex structure, it appears as a subject rather than a motif. It is imitated on the dominant and recurs frequently throughout the composition, in consistently alternating voices. In other words, this prelude is a fugue.

The initial harmonic progression concludes on the middle beat of m. 3. As it coincides with the end of the first subject statement, this cadential close does not indicate a sectional caesura. The first cadential close of structural importance, i.e., one that occurs outside the confines of a subject statement, emerges in mm. 11-12. It comes as a typical closing formula, complete with a cadential-bass pattern in the lower and a do-si-do figure in the upper voice. This cadence concludes the first section at m. 12<sub>1</sub> in F# minor.

There are only two sections, each spanning twelve measures. The first leads from the tonic to the relative minor key, the second from the tonic relative back to the home key. The sections correspond with one another in great detail. Apart from a small rearrangement in the order of the components, occasional slight variation, and an extended cadential close at the end of the piece, the second section seems like the answer to the first.

Compare	with	
mm. 1-3		mm. 12-14 (U/M/L corresponds with U/M/L)
mm. 4-6	}	mm. 15-17
mm. 7-8		mm. 17 <sub>3</sub> -20 <sub>1</sub> (U/M/L corresponds with M/L/U)
mm. 8 <sub>3</sub> -11 <sub>1</sub>		mm. 20-22 <sub>3</sub> (U/M/L corresponds with L/M/U)
mm. 11	}	mm. 22 <sub>3</sub> -24 (both are cadential closes)

Looking at the pitch pattern and the rhythm for guidance with regard to the composition's character, one finds large leaps both in the longer note values and in the 16th-notes along with a rhythmic pattern that gives the impression of simplicity and regularity. (The frequent syncopations that combine with the quarter-note motion to form a complementary rhythm are not truly perceived as metric displacements.) The basic character of this "three-part fugue" should therefore be interpreted as rather lively. This character, however, accommodates a strong lyrical element.

The ideal tempo is moderate with gently paced quarter-notes and rather swift 16th-notes. The articulation is legato for the 16th-notes and non legato for the eighth-notes and quarter-notes. Among the quarter-notes, those with distinct melodic quality (like the four chromatic steps in L: mm. 1-2) are only softly detached, while notes of cadential character (see, e.g., L: mm. 2-3, where notes proceed in sequencing descending fifths) sound more clearly separated. Among the eighth-notes are several appoggiaturas (U: mm. 7-8 and 15-17), which must be perfectly linked to their resolutions. The only other longer notes that require legato appear in the treble's closing formulas in mm. 11-12 (F#-E# -F#) and 24 (A-G#-A).

The A-major prelude features only one indication for ornamentation, the cadential mordent in m. 3. Since it is approached stepwise, this mordent begins on the main note and can do with only three notes. In m. 14, the upper voice features a similar figure. It also appears in the context of a cadential close and equally consists of a dotted-note group on the dominant before its resolution into the tonic. Although Bach did not indicate ornamentation here, it may safely be assumed that such a typical closing formula would have been decorated with the same cadential mordent (in this case beginning on the upper neighbor note and featuring four notes).

The subject of this "fugue" consists of two subphrases. The first ends with a 16th-note rest at m. 1<sub>4</sub>; the second, consisting exclusively of regular 16th-notes that descend in half-measure sequences, concludes with the C# at m. 3<sub>3</sub>. The fact that the rest in the middle of the subject is of structural importance and not tension-sustaining follows from the relationship among the preceding notes. The F# at m. 1<sub>3</sub> is composed as an appoggiatura that resolves indirectly (i.e., through an artificial leading-note) into the eighth-note E. This resolution concludes a dynamic curve and thus marks the end of the first subphrase. The scalar ascent after the rest picks up the tension and prepares a second climax at m. 2<sub>1</sub>. The 16th-note figures in the second subphrase contain an interesting feature. Stripped of what may be recognized as ornamental splitting, the underlying quarter-note pattern performs a descent in consecutive fifth that parallels the ones heard in the middle and lower voices in simple intervals. The example below shows this simplified melodic line.

The subject recurs five times. The only modification it undergoes occurs at the beginning of the second section where the four initial 16th-notes sound an octave higher than the remainder of the phrase. (This is certainly due to the confines of the keyboard in Bach's time: continuing in the high register for even the first subphrase alone would not have been possible).

The image shows a musical score for a fugue in A major. It consists of three staves: the top staff is the Subject (S) in the treble clef, the middle staff is Counter-Subject 2 (CS2) in the middle clef, and the bottom staff is Counter-Subject 1 (CS1) in the bass clef. The Subject is marked '(simplified)'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C).

Faithfully throughout the entire “fugue”—including the initial, normally unaccompanied entry—the subject is supported by two companions. CS1 is introduced in the lower voice. As is revealed by all its later statements, it begins on the second beat of m. 1; the A on the first beat is a harmony-supporting note of no melodic relevance. Like the subject, CS1 also consists of two segments. The first, a chromatic descent through four quarter-notes, recurs regularly, while the second, introduced as cadential steps, is subjected to constant variation but always preserves its cadential character. CS2 is first presented in the middle voice. It begins belatedly, after the end of the subject’s first subphrase. The first two of its prominent syncopations together with their falling fifth remain essential material of this counter-subject throughout the piece, whereas the closing formula undergoes constant variation. Both counter-subjects represent decreasing tension as their overall dynamic design. In their variations, performers will want to modify only the details but never the principal outline.

In addition to this primary material, two of the subject-free passages feature in their treble a three-note episode motif, M1, presenting Bach’s famous upbeat + appoggiatura-resolution figure. This motif is remotely related to the end of the subject’s first subphrase. In mm. 6<sub>3</sub>-8<sub>3</sub>, M1 is underscored by a parallel and accompanied by 16th-note figures in descending sequences; in mm. 14<sub>3</sub>-17<sub>3</sub>, the middle and lower voices create a complementary pattern of descending scales, also in sequences. The reason why this episode is longer than the first lies in the difference of the harmonic processes: while the first episode only links the dominant (reached at the end of the subject answer in m. 6<sub>3</sub>) with the tonic on which the third subject statement is to begin, the episode in the second section modulates from the tonic relative F# minor back to A major.

The structure of this “fugue” is straightforward. Each of its two sections comprises three statements—one in each of the three voices, connected with half-measure links—as well as a bridging episode and a cadential close.

mm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
U	subject			CS2			{ episode }			CS1	{ cadent. }		
M		CS2		CS1			{ with }			subject	{ for- }		
L		CS1		subject			{ motif }			CS2	{ mula }		
mm.	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
U	subject			{ episode }			CS2			subject	{ cadent. }		
M		CS2		{ with }			CS1			CS1	{ for- }		
L		CS1		{ motif }			subject			CS2	{ mula }		

### WTC I/19 in A major – Fugue

The subject of the “official” fugue in this pair is in several regards quite unusual. It begins with a single eighth-note on the downbeat of the first measure, followed by a 3/8 rest. Such a brusque beginning appears almost as a conscious attempt to avoid all melodic characterization. This impression is reinforced by the continuation after the rest. A sequence of five perfect fourths leaping upward in regular eighth-notes mock listeners’ hope for a line while also blurring the 9/8 time signature with their paired grouping. This pattern is interrupted only after 1½ measures. Interestingly, the change happens on three levels at once. Rhythmically, the D on the sixth eighth-note of m. 2 suspends the regularity, if not monotony, of the eighth-note pulse with a syncopation. Melodically, the descending semitone D-C# on the seventh and eighth eighth-notes of m. 2 represents the first interval to express some emotional warmth. Harmonically, the suspension results in an appoggiatura, i.e., a note that is not part of the underlying harmony and therefore requires resolution. The concurrence of these three features allows a satisfactory conclusion of the subject only after this resolution, on beat eight of m. 2. This reveals yet another unusual feature of this subject: the initial statement and its answer already appear in stretto, a device normally reserved for entries outside the exposition.

With regard to the question of subphrasing this subject is probably best understood as consisting of two segments: the initial note with an implied subsiding of the tension during the rest, and a curve from the fifth eighth-note to the end. (Another concept, in which the rest would serve to heighten the tension from the initial downbeat to the continuation of the line, is theoretically possible but in practice somewhat artificial.) The tension within this subject climaxes on the syncopation. The dynamic outline thus

consists of a moderately attacked initial note followed after the rest by a gradual crescendo that sets out from a fairly soft level, leads to a peak on the syncopation, and is complemented by a short relaxation.

Bach's harmonizations of the subject in the course of the fugue show a variety of small changes. They all have in common that the first representative of the subdominant appears with the three-note group at the end of the first measure, followed on the downbeat of the second measure by the dominant (see, e.g., mm. 5 and 24). This leads then into an interrupted cadence (in most cases on the second eighth-note of the subject's second measure), and the return to the tonic only occurs with another S-D-T progression:



The A-major fugue comprises fourteen subject statements.

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. mm. 1-2 U   | 8. mm. 23-24 L  |
| 2. mm. 2-3 M   | 9. mm. 25-27 U* |
| 3. mm. 4-5 L   | 10. mm. 27-29 M |
| 4. mm. 6-7 L   | 11. mm. 31-32 M |
| 5. mm. 9-10 U  | 12. mm. 33-35 L |
| 6. mm. 13-15 L | 13. mm. 42-43 M |
| 7. mm. 16-18 L | 14. mm. 44-46 L |

(\*Note the voice crossing in mm. 25-27: M sounds temporarily above U.)



In the course of the fugue the subject undergoes a great number of changes. In fact the only feature that is reliably stable is the interval structure of the sequenced fourths in its center. The beginning appears modified in various ways. In two instances the initial note appears in a different octave from the remainder of the phrase (see m. 13 where it sounds an octave lower, and m. 27 where it lies an octave higher). In two other instances it belongs to a key that is subsequently given up. This modulation causes the second subphrase to seem harmonically displaced.<sup>1</sup> In a fifth case, the curious one-note subphrase is completely altered. In m. 31, the downbeat-note has become a rest and the ensuing rest is replaced

<sup>1</sup>See m. 16: the initial B is harmonized in B minor but the statement continues as if in F# minor, later modulating to E. See also m. 42: the initial F# is harmonized in F# minor but the statement continues as if in A major, with only the final resolution returning to F# minor.

by notes. As these notes appear in the form of an additional ascending fourth (enhanced by a syncopation), they give the impression to extend the second subphrase, and thus change the subject in this statement into a single indivisible unit.

The subject's center with its consecutive fourths is also modified in detail and in length. Some modifications are tonal. In the answer statements of mm. 2 and 6, the first fourth interval of the second subphrase is placed a whole-tone lower. In m. 13, the first leap appears as a diminished fourth. This is due to the minor mode of this statement and must thus be regarded as another tonal adjustment. In mm. 16-17, the third interval among the consecutive fourths is augmented. This interval modification is an artificial one; it marks the pending modulation to E major. Similarly in mm. 33-34, the augmented fourth E-A $\sharp$  and the diminished fourth A $\sharp$ -D are witnesses of the modulation in this statement from D major to B minor. Furthermore, three statements feature alterations in the extension of the sequenced-fourth pattern. In two instances there is an inner extension: mm. 25-26 contain two and mm. 33-35 three additional eighth-notes in the fourth pattern. By contrast, in mm. 16-17 the consecutive fourths are shortened by two eighth-notes.

The syncopation, seemingly so characteristic in this subject, is not exempt from changes either. It is displaced in various ways or even omitted entirely. In m. 34, it is delayed by three eighth-notes but basically retains its position (with tie suspension and weak-beat resolution). In m. 26, owing to the subject's extension by two eighth-notes, the syncopation appears later, in a different metrical position, and with an unusual strong-beat resolution. In m. 17, after the abbreviation of the consecutive-fourths pattern, the longer note falls on the fourth eighth-note in the measure—which in the compound time of 9/8 is not a weak beat—and thus, despite its tie prolongation, forfeits the character of a syncopation. Finally in mm. 44-45, the second subphrase progresses in uninterrupted eighth-note motion without any longer note value.

And as if all this was not enough, the subject's conclusion also suffers various modifications. In three instances, the resolution after the syncopation is delayed. In m. 28, this occurs without any further changes in the harmonic pattern. In m. 17, the modulation from B minor to E major has already taken place earlier in the subject statement, and the delayed resolution arrives on the expected pitch. In m. 14, however, the deviation leads from G $\sharp$  to an A $\sharp$  that then resolves onto B—instead of the expected A. This alteration is not merely one of melodic detail but entails a modulation

from F# minor to B minor in this final extension of the subject. The fugue's last subject statement (see mm. 44-46) features a freely varied ending.

Oddly, the only true stretto in this fugue is the one between the initial statement and its answer. Further in the course of the composition, subject entries appear neatly separated from one another. There is one instance, however, where the rhythmic pattern of the voices accompanying a subject entry contains a hint of stretto. In mm. 25-26 the middle and lower voices, accompanying the upper-voice entry, feature a single eighth-note on the second of the compound beats, followed by a 3/8 rest and a sequence of eighth-notes in leaps of fourths. Although neither the intervallic connection between the two subphrases nor the end conforms to the subject's original shape, the entry of this rhythmic group gives the impression of a stretto. Owing to the many sequences within this subject, this impression soon turns into one of parallel motion or homorhythmic contrary motion respectively (see m. 26).

In the main body of the fugue, the voices accompanying the subject statements display hardly any characteristic or even recurring features, and true contrapuntal lines are non-existent. The small figures that do appear repeatedly are all derived from the subject in a more or less direct way. Only with the introduction of regular 16th-note motion from m. 23 onward can one distinguish voices to such an extent as to follow more than one longer melodic idea at a time. These 16th-notes create a subject companion that recurs once. In its original appearance, CS spans M: mm. 23<sub>1</sub>-24<sub>8</sub>. When taken up in mm. 27-29, the counter-subject is extended along with the subject; its end now falls on m. 29<sub>1</sub>. This counter-subject does not seem to comprise any features that would distinguish its dynamic outline. The absence of any rhythmic hallmarks within the constantly flowing 16th-notes and of particular intervals or otherwise highlighted melodic features classify it as a passively jingling accompaniment rather than a competing partner. However, in order to distinguish CS from the many other 16th-note figures yet to come, it is possible to stress the hidden line inside the runs.



In the passages of the fugue that are devoid of 16th-note motion one can discern three little motifs that appear repeatedly. M1 first emerges in U: mm. 3-4. With its fourth leap, tied note, and weak-beat resolution it

sounds like a free sequence of the subject's final five notes. This motif recurs at the beginning of mm. 5, 6, and 7, each time in the middle voice. Moreover, variations of this figure can be found in U: m. 43 and M: m. 44. M2 is introduced in U: mm. 5<sub>8</sub>-6<sub>5</sub>. Here an initial tied note and weak-beat resolution are complemented by two notes in zigzag motion (a third or, later, a fourth leap up / a fifth leap down). This figure imitates the end of the subject's answer plus the two notes following it (see M: mm. 3<sub>6</sub>-4<sub>1</sub>). M2 recurs in mm. 7-8 (U/M in parallel), 8-9 (M), 10-11 (M, imitated in U), mm. 11-12 (L, imitated in U), 17 (M, imitated 17-18 in U, then sequenced in M), 18-19 (U), 22 (M), 43-44 (U), 46 (M), 47-48 (U), 51 (U), 52-53 (M). If one allowed for interval modification, many more recurrences could be observed. M3 appears as an emotionally even more intense combination, consisting of two tied-note-plus-resolution pairs in ascending sequence. This figure occurs three times: in mm. 12-13 (M), 13-14 (U), and 16 (U).



There are seven subject-free passages in this fugue.

E1	m. 8	E5	mm. 29-30
E2	mm. 11-12	E6	mm. 35-41
E3	m. 15	E7	mm. 46-54
E4	mm. 18-22		

Several of the subject-free measures use no recognizable melodic material. They fulfill no function other than that of a cadential close. This is true for the extended cadential formulas in B minor in E3 and E6a (mm. 35-36<sub>1</sub>), and for the last measure of E6, which presents a closing formula in F# minor. More frequent are episodes or segments thereof that play with one of the motifs before they give in to the conclusion: E1 begins with an M2 parallel followed by a closing formula in A major. E2 includes two M2 imitation patterns before ending in F# minor with M3 accompanied by a cadential bass pattern. E4a and E7a (the first segments of E4 and E7) both feature M2 with free imitations in the lower voice before leading into a cadential close in E major and A major respectively. E7c (from m. 51) also presents M2 with free imitation, now accompanied by 16th-note motion in the lower voice that also concludes in a cadential-bass pattern.

Three episode segments reveal a particularly close relationship to the primary material by using larger fragments of subject and counter-subject:



E4b (mm. 20-22) exposes in its upper voice a little 6/8-note figure that is imitated in stretto (see U/M: mm. 20-21) before moving on to a rhythmic variation of the subject, also with imitation (see mm. 21-22; owing to the pattern of consecutive eighth-notes, both imitations soon form parallels). E5 features the first half of CS (U: m. 29, imitated in L) as well as freely leaping eighth-notes (L, imitated in U). E7b transposes this combination (mm. 49-50), while E6c recalls it in free variation (mm. 39-41<sub>1</sub>).

The only episode portion to feature a longer motif is E6b, the central segment of E6 (mm. 36-39<sub>4</sub>). This is particularly noticeable since all three voices establish patterns of 12/8 length, thus momentarily weakening the metric order of the 9/8 time.<sup>2</sup> Both motifs are then launched again in their original position, where they break off (see mm. 38<sub>8</sub>-39<sub>4</sub> along with the 16th-note chain of equal extension in L: F#-C#, sequenced as G#-D).

As the above-listed material reveals, several of the episodes are related:

E6a	≈	E3
E7a	≈	E4a
E7b	≈	E5

In a wider sense, E6 and E4 are conceived in structural analogy: both begin with a segment providing a cadential close, after which they proceed to present some genuine episode material that is duly imitated. Both then continue with a variation of primary material (a variation of the subject in E4, a variation of the “counter-subject episode” in E6), and both conclude in another cadential formula.

The role these episodes play in the development of tension within this fugue is determined, on the one hand, by the frequent use of extended cadential formulas and, on the other hand, by the relative independence of the material presented. There are episodes or segments thereof that complement the preceding subject statement with a straightforward relaxation; this is the case in E1, E2, E3, as well as in E4a and E6a. Other episodes serve as bridges. This is true of E5, but less of the passages corresponding with it. Then there are those episode segments that, after a cadential close but before the beginning of the next subject entry, attract attention for their own sake. They are the ones requiring the most radical change of color in order to be fully appreciated. E4b and E6b are obvious examples. The only subject-free passage not to fall into any of these patterns is the final episode (E7). Its three segments, which all allude to different models heard before, seem primarily to express a reluctance to end the fugue.

<sup>2</sup>In mm. 36<sub>2</sub>-37<sub>4</sub> see U: D-B, imitated in M: E-C#, and M: F#-E, imitated in U: G#-F#.

The pitch pattern with its predominance of fourth leaps, and the rhythmic pattern with its regular eighth-notes accompanied in the center sections of the fugue by equally regular 16th-notes, both suggest a rather lively basic character. The tempo may be fairly swift. Bach's 9/8 time should be interpreted as a choice of notation rather than of pulse, to be rendered with the idea of a compound triple time.

Articulation in this piece needs careful planning if it is not to destroy essential musical details. The basic attitude corresponding to the character encompasses distinct non legato for the eighth-notes (in a crispness that comes close to the staccato touch of later musical eras), non legato of more extended duration for the quarter-notes, and a quasi legato of almost classical *leggiero* quality for the 16th-notes. These categories, however, include important exceptions: Within the non legato, all appoggiaturas must be linked to their resolutions. This applies to the appoggiaturas in the subject as well as to those in M1, M2, and (twice) in M3. Moreover, several notes in the cadential formulas demand legato (see mm. 15-16 M: D-C#-D; mm. 19-20 M: E-D#-E, mm. 22-23 U: A-G#-A; mm. 48-49 M: A-G#-A; mm. 53-54 U: A-G#-A). Within the quasi legato of the 16th-notes, a distinction is desirable between the "hidden" melodic notes in the counter-subject and the remaining notes of more directly virtuoso quality.

The tempo proportion between prelude and fugue can be rendered in two slightly different ways. Performers wishing to emphasize the contrast of characters, with a more lyrical prelude preceding a more virtuoso fugue, will opt for a 16th-note in the prelude that corresponds to an eighth-note in the fugue. Conversely, performers seeking to diminish the contrast and to present a prelude in *Allegretto* motion followed by a fugue in *Allegro ma non troppo* tempo will choose a proportion in which a quarter-note in the prelude corresponds with a dotted quarter-note in the fugue.

The fugue comprises two ornaments. One of them, that in m. 8, is a typical attribute of cadential formulas. As such it should be transferred also to the corresponding formula in m. 41 (on the dotted G#). The second ornament is designated in m. 26. All ornaments begin on the upper neighbor note and move in 32nd values. The one in m. 8 comes with a written-out suffix, while its structural counterpart in m. 41 is followed by a weak-beat resolution. The latter thus represents an interrupted trill that stops short on the fourth note of the shake, which is then tied over and sounds as a syncopation to the measure's final eighth-note. The trill in m. 26, like that in m. 8, is a note-filling trill comprising eight 32nd-notes including the suffix notes.

mm. 8-9                      41-42                      26-27

The fugue contains several features that indicate its structure. These appear, in the first instance, in the change of rhythmic pattern, the choice of the episode material, and the texture, and in the second instance, in the order of subject entries and the harmonic design.

The emergence and disappearance of the 16th-note accompaniment results in three differently colored passages. The first ends at m. 23<sub>1</sub>, the second at m. 42<sub>1</sub>. The two structural caesuras are preceded by episodes that, as was shown above, are conceived in structural analogy: E6 and E4 both consist of a segment with a cadential close followed by genuine episode material and a variation of primary material. The fact that the subject statement in mm. 23-24 appears in reduced ensemble further corroborates the first caesura.

Within the first larger passage, the redundant lower-voice entry in mm. 6-7 announces the imminent end of the first section, confirmed by E1 with its cadential formula. The second section, beginning in m. 9, also features a redundant lower-voice statement (a repetition of the preceding entry). Within the second larger passage, the only internal episode, E5, concludes the third section after a complete set of three statements, one in each of the voices. The fourth section then begins in m. 31 and contains two subject entries as well as the closing episode. The relationship between the statements of these sections is also confirmed by the harmony: while the three statements of the third section appear in the keys of tonic and dominant, the two entries of the fourth section belong to the subdominant (D major and its relative B minor). The third passage comprises only two statements followed by a long episode. No further subdivision into sections is possible here. However, three facts demand a slight modification of this notion: the final episode consists of several structurally distinct segments, the first of which ends with a cadence in the home key (mm. 48-49). Above all, the 16th-note motion that is characteristic for the fugue's central passage but abandoned in the fifth section is taken up again from m. 49 onward. All this indicates that one should regard the fifth section as completed at m. 49<sub>1</sub> and followed by a coda in the final six measures.



The harmonic outline confirms the structure described above. The four initial subject statements are in A major, the key in which the first episode concludes the first section. After another entry on the tonic, E2 modulates to the relative minor key. The following two statements each modulate (F# minor to B minor and B minor to E major), but E4 closes the section again in the home key. The third section resembles the first one in that its statements all relate to the tonic. The fourth section, just like the second, leaves the home key area, this time for the subdominant and its relative minor. The episode closing this section re-establishes not the home key but its tonic relative F# minor, leaving the final return to the second, modulating statement in the fifth section.

As a result of their descending order, the four initial entries of the fugue create the deceptive impression of a four-part fugue. The tension grows throughout and is only released in the concluding short episode. The second section features a reverse of this process. Its first entry is the only harmonically stable one in the original major mode, while its second statement begins in minor and ends in a modulating extension. The third entry, conceived again as a redundant statement, is varied to such an extent that it appears much weaker than the preceding one. This section comes to a transitory close in very soft shading on the downbeat of m. 20, after which the remaining segments of E4 create an independent little tension curve. As the third section sets out in reduced ensemble and, what is more, as its three entries in L, U, and M are arranged in such a way that their actual pitch position (particularly that of the initial notes) sounds in ascending order, a gradual increase of tension similar to that in the first section is created. The fourth section recalls the second one insofar as it also proceeds from the major to the minor mode in decreasing tension, and also comes to a transitory close in soft color after the first segment of its concluding episode, after which the remaining segments of E6 attract fresh attention for their motivic material. The fifth section begins in the minor mode. Its second subject statement, although returning to the major mode and even, in its extension, to the tonic, remains comparably inconspicuous. In the coda, however, the prolonged ascent of the leaping eighth-notes in mm. 49-51 engenders a final climax—one that is virtuoso rather than thematic.

The relationship between the sections is an important feature of this fugue and should by all means be conveyed in performance. The increase of tension in the first section and the complementing decrease in the second section, followed by the small tension curve in E4, all find a faithful correspondence in the increase of tension in the third section, the

complementing decrease in the fourth section and the following small tension curve in E6. In the final portion of the composition, the subject statements appear merely as an afterthought of lesser importance, whereas the coda provides an unexpected additional climax.

As can be seen from all that has been said, the A-major fugue features all the structural ingredients of a “real” fugue. Nevertheless, owing to its unusually non-melodic subject, orientation for listeners remains extremely difficult. Only the most exquisite color shading and careful articulation (see particularly the appoggiaturas) can guide them through this apparent jungle of leaping intervals and render this composition as a fascinating experience.