



Gayle h. Martin, organ
**Partners in Time:
Boundless Notes**

PART II

Buxtehude, J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach,
Mendelssohn, Liszt & Eben

Performer's Notes

Composers search for inspiration in the past—they study and learn from their predecessors, often borrowing ideas and taking them in new directions. The two *praeludia* by Dietrich Buxtehude, both composed in the *stylus phantasticus* (fantasy style) serve as a basis for us to follow some such musical borrowings. Buxtehude's compositional style had a direct influence on J. S. Bach and his successors. New ideas grew out of the *stylus phantasticus*, influencing later composers such as Franz Liszt and Petr Eben, who heralded the past and proclaimed the future by writing new forms of the *praeludium* inspired by Buxtehude's style.

Buxtehude's C major **Praeludium** (BuxWV 137) is constructed in the typical North German *stylus phantasticus* of the early–mid Baroque, alternating relatively short improvisatory sections with structured ones that make use of imitation. Buxtehude grabs the listener's attention from the start with a rhythmic pedal solo punctuated by chords and rapid descending scalar flourishes. Free and imitative sections follow in alternation. The final section, a *ciacone*, begins with the idea stated in the pedal and repeated throughout the section. However, just as a good speech ends on a high note, Buxtehude closes with a flurry of thirty-second notes over pedal tones.

Buxtehude's five-section **Praeludium** (BuxWV 148) is more serious than BuxWV 137. The fugal sections are devoid of dance-like rhythms, and the subjects of the imitative sections are darker. Similar to BuxWV 137, however, the following sections alternate free and imitative material. The second section is unusual in its combination of chromatic, imitative, and free material. The subsequent fugal section is characterized by an angular melody comprised of repeated eighth notes and expressive intervals—the final one, a minor seventh. This quirky theme is what Eben chooses to quote in his "Homage." The final imitative section opens with a two-measure pedal motive that returns throughout under constantly moving sixteenth notes in the manuals, a technique that Eben borrows in his work.

Petr Eben's **Hommage à Dietrich Buxtehude, Toccatenfuge** (1987) is based on both works of Buxtehude, BuxWV 137 and BuxWV 148. The opening pedal motive is close to BuxWV 137, yet Eben intersperses the idea with surprising chords before settling into a section for hands only that expands the opening first beat, a sixteenth-note rest followed by three sixteenth notes. For the following sections, Eben borrows the angular melodic fragment from the fugue of BuxWV 148, creating a variety of harmonic and rhythmic variants. In the second section, for example, the fugal melody appears in a repeated-note formation, punctuated by off-beat chords and notes, rests, crunchy seconds, and two-against-three patterns. The third section, *scherzando*, is characterized by a four-measure theme in spritely dotted rhythms. At times, three different rhythmic patterns sound simultaneously, a trait of Eben's that challenges both performer and listener. The fourth and final section is toccata-like and highly dramatic. The rhythmic opening idea returns, and large chords are played rapidly, ending in emphatic pedal octaves. As with Buxtehude, Eben employs a pedal ostinato with four notes taken from the previous fugal theme, increasing the dramatic effect with the addition of faster notes and more sounds and colours (he specifies all registrations). All in all, Eben pays tribute to Buxtehude with a brilliant and satisfying work.

Bach's **Toccat, Adagio and Fugue** (BWV 564), a fairly early work, is unlike his preludes and fugues, demonstrating the influence of the Italian style (concerto) in its addition of a middle slow movement. The **toccat** opens with two *solo* sections that can be heard as an introduction to a full-voiced or *tutti* section that employs concerto form, alternating ritornellos and episodes. Emulating Buxtehude, the first free *solo* for the manuals includes dramatic rests and flying thirty-second notes, followed by an unusually lengthy pedal solo, again punctuated by rests. The concerto-like form continues with full manuals and pedal. The **adagio**, in the minor mode, is a lyrical, embellished aria-like solo over a continuo-style accompaniment with "pizzicato" octave leaps in the pedal. The ending *Grave* section with slow-moving, dark diminished chords is quite unusual. The joyful and elegant dance-like **fugue** in 6/8 time has a climbing subject in four segments, each divided by rests, and in contrast, the countersubject is flowing.

J. S. Bach's second son, C. P. E. Bach, wrote six sonatas for house organ. The **Sonata V in D major** highlights that the Classical period had little in common with the *stylus phantasticus*. In stark contrast to his father's works, he makes little use of imitation. The three-movement work opens with an *Allegro di molto*, contrasting loud against soft through manual changes. The following *Adagio è mesto* is calming and unassuming; the final *Allegro*, spritely and refreshing in its simplicity.

Following the lighter music of the later eighteenth century came the bold expressions of the German Romantic period. One figure at the forefront was Felix Mendelssohn, who studied, admired, and revived the works of J. S. Bach—the latter's influence being apparent in Mendelssohn's **Sonata VI**, with its use of a chorale tune and intense fugal writing. Published in 1845, the work has five movements, or variations, opening with a hymn setting of the chorale tune *Vater unser im Himmelreich* (Our Father who art in Heaven). Marked *Andante sostenuto*, the first section is gentle, with the tune in the upper voice set over running sixteenth notes. The second section in 12/8 has a moving pedal line under the chordal theme, and the third is again gentle in character, with the melody in the tenor accompanied by a pizzicato-like pedal. *Allegro molto*, the center movement, is fast and dramatic, with the tune in the pedal at the beginning and a homophonic statement of the chorale at the end. The *Fuga* in 3/4 is subdued and unpretentious; the *Finale/Andante* in 6/8 ends the work in a gentle manner.


Franz Liszt's training and skill as a pianist are reflected in the writing of his **Praeludium und Fuge über B-A-C-H**: rhapsodic and dramatic passagework, pianistic arpeggios, running octaves, large chords, double-pedaling techniques, pedal trills, and sudden changes of note value. We may assume that Liszt was honouring Bach just as Eben honoured Buxtehude, given that the notes BACH (German notation for what we would call B-flat, A, C, B) comprise the main motive of the piece. The *stylus phantasticus* is on full display with this work of boundless notes and virtuosic flourishes.

Gayle h. Martin, edited by Linda Pearse

Gayle h. Martin is Associate Professor of Music at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, where she is University Organist and teaches organ performance, musicianship, choral conducting, introduction to conducting, and music history. She also directs the Elliott Chorale, and coaches the early music group, Opella Nova. Martin's passion for music, animals, and nature began in the countryside of the Green Mountain State of Vermont where she grew up. She holds the degrees BMus (Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam), MMus (McGill University), and DMus (University of Alberta). Further studies included a three-year stay in France, where Martin was organist at the American Cathedral in Paris and lived in the cathedral tower. She received a premier prix à unanimité from the Conservatoire de Rueil-Malmaison, studying under the renowned organists Jean Langlais and Susan Landale.



Martin has accompanied the University of Alberta Madrigal Singers, Université de Moncton choir, Chorale Beauséjour, Choeur Louisbourg, Halifax Camerata Singers, and Cantabile Singers of Truro. This is her third solo recording. She has also collaborated with piper Ian Mackinnon on the East Coast Music Award nominated album "Air Races" and has performed as organist/accompanist for several other recording projects in the maritimes. She regularly adjudicates for festivals and competitions and plays basso continuo for the early music ensemble ¡Sacabuche! (Linda Pearce, artistic director), whose recent touring included a collaboration with the Houston Chamber Choir. Other performances with ¡Sacabuche! have taken Martin to Macau, Hong Kong, British Columbia, and Minnesota.



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| 1. | Praeludium, Fugue e Ciacone in C Major, BuxWV 137 (Dietrich Buxtehude) | 5'59 |
| 2. | Praeludium and Fugue in G minor, BuxWV 148 (D. Buxtehude) | 7'06 |
| 3. | Hommage à D. Buxtehude (Petr Eben) | 9'09 |
| | Organ Sonata in D minor, Op. 25 No. 6 (Felix Mendelssohn) | 13'50 |
| 4. | 1) Chorale, Andante sostenuto, Allegro molto | |
| 5. | 2) Fugue, Sostenuto e legato | |
| 6. | 3) Finale, Andante | |
| 7. | Toccata, Adagio e Fugue in C Major, BWV 564 (J.S. Bach) | 16'40 |
| | Sonata V in D Major, Wq 70,5 (C. P. E. Bach) | 9'23 |
| 8. | 1) Allegro di molto | |
| 9. | 2) Adagio e mesto | |
| 10. | 3) Allegro | |
| 11. | Praeludium und Fugue über Bach (Franz Liszt) | 13'15 |



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