



CHANNEL CLASSICS

CCS 12698

Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet  
THE ART OF FUGUE | **DIE KUNST DER FUGUE**

*Johann Sebastian Bach*



- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 1  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 1</b><br>Simple fugue on the subject in its original form <i>Einfache Fuge über das Thema in seiner Urgestalt</i>  | 3:13 |
| 2  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 3</b><br>Simple fugue on the inverted form of the subject <i>Einfache Fuge über die Umkehrung des Themas</i>   | 3:00 |
| 3  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 2</b><br>Simple fugue on the subject in its original form, counterpointed with a dotted rhythm<br><i>Einfache Fuge über das Thema in seiner Urgestalt, mit Contrapunkt in punktiertem Rhythmus</i>                                 | 2:57 |
| 4  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 4</b><br>Simple fugue on the inverted form of the subject <i>Einfache Fuge über die Umkehrung des Themas</i>   | 5:02 |
| 5  | <b>CANON ALLA DUODECIMA IN CONTRAPUNTO ALLA QUINTA</b><br>Canon at the twelfth, two voices <i>Canon in der Duodezime, zweistimmig</i>   | 4:11 |
| 6  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 5</b><br>Counterfugue on a variation of the subject and its inversion, in equal note values<br><i>Gegenfuge über das variierte Thema und seine Umkehrung in einer Wertgröße</i>  | 3:31 |
| 7  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 6 A 4 IN STYLO FRANCESE</b><br>Counterfugue on a variation of the subject and its inversion, in two different note values<br><i>Gegenfuge über das variierte Thema und seine Umkehrung in zwei verschiedenen Wertgrößen</i>        | 3:18 |
| 8  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 7 A 4 PER AUGMENT ET DIMINUT</b><br>Counterfugue on a variation of the subject and its inversion, in three different note values<br><i>Gegenfuge über das variierte Thema und seine Umkehrung in drei verschiedenen Wertgrößen</i> | 4:47 |
| 9  | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 8 A 3</b><br>Three-voiced triple fugue on two new subjects and a variation of the main subject<br><i>Dreistimmige Tripelfuge über zwei neue Themen und das variierte Hauptthema</i>  | 6:30 |
| 10 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 9 A 4 ALLA DUODECIMA</b><br>Double fugue on a new subject and the main subject <i>Doppelfuge über ein neues Thema und das Hauptthema</i>   | 2:22 |
| 11 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS A 3 C</b><br>Three-voiced mirror fugue on a variation of the subject and its inversion<br><i>Dreistimmige Spiegelfuge über das variierte Thema und seine Umkehrung</i>   | 2:16 |
| 12 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS INVERSUS A 3 d</b><br>Complete inversion of the previous piece <i>Volständige Umkehrung des vorigen Stückes</i>  | 2:16 |
| 13 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 10 A 4 ALLA DECIMA</b><br>Double fugue on a new subject and a variation of the main subject<br><i>Doppelfuge über ein neues Thema und das variierte Hauptthema</i>   | 4:18 |
| 14 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS INVERSUS 12 A 4</b><br>Mirror fugue on variants of the subject in 3/2 time <i>Spiegelfuge über Varianten des Themas in 3/2 Takt</i>  | 2:27 |
| 15 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS INVERSUS 12 A 4</b><br>Complete inversion of the previous piece <i>Volständige Umkehrung des vorigen Stückes</i>   | 2:04 |
| 16 | <b>CONTRAPUNCTUS 11 A 4</b><br>Triple fugue on two new subjects and a variation of the main subject<br><i>Tripelfuge über zwei neue Themen und das variierte Hauptthema</i>   | 6:47 |
| 17 | <b>CANON ALLA OTTAVA</b><br>Two-voiced canon at the octave <i>Zweistimmige Canon in der Oktave</i>  | 4:04 |
| 18 | <b>FUGA A 3 SOGGETTI</b><br>Incomplete fugue on three new subjects <i>Unvollendete Fuge über drei neue Themen</i>   | 8:44 |

Total time: 73:05

\* all arrangements by Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet

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Made in Germany

In 1978 while still students at the Sweelinck Conservatory Amsterdam, Daniel Brüggen, Bertho Driever, Paul Leenhouts and Karel van Steenhoven founded **The Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet**. Their efforts toward exploring the boundaries of the recorder consort were rewarded at the 1981 Musica Antiqua Competition in Bruges when they, challenging the competition rules with the performance of an unusual arrangement of a Stevie Wonder song, emerged as the winners of the competition. With it the Quartet also won the recognition as a serious ensemble of unparalleled virtuosity.

Today the Quartet enjoys an international career and many recordings have confirmed the groups reputation as the world's most innovative and exiting recorder consort; two of them won the prestigious Edison Award.

In addition to the 'classic' consort music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the Quartet's repertoire includes significant works of the twentieth century. Since many composers have been inspired to write for the Quartet, a new repertoire has been created which proves the instrument to be also an important voice of our time. "Pictured Air" was a recording dedicated entirely to music written for the ensemble.

The Quartet has been involved in the development of recorder instruments, consort instruments in particular. By now the group has assembled a unique collection of over a hundred Renaissance, Baroque and modern recorders, ranging from the 8 inch sopranino to the sub-contrabass, measuring over nine feet. The Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet has published a series of new recorder music for the Moeck Verlag.

## Johann Sebastian Bach - The Art of Fugue

The collection of fugues and canons, based on a single theme, which was published in 1751 after Bach's death under the title of 'The Art of Fugue', constitutes one of the great masterpieces in the history of music. It is the acknowledged result of ultimate and uncompromising artistry, a summit of the Baroque period and of the fugal writing style. It was originally thought to be Bach's last work, for the manuscript breaks off with the words "NB. While composing this fugue, where the name B.A.C.H. is introduced in the counter-subject, the Composer departed this life". Bach's eldest son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, who wrote these words, also appended the four-voiced organ chorale prelude 'Wenn wir in Hoehsten Noethen sein', probably to compensate for the missing end of the final fugue, and also to put his father's life and death in perspective. Carl Philipp, who must have been acquainted with his father's intentions, could in all likelihood have completed the final fugue, but chose instead the dramatic symbolism of an unfinished work of art.

In the intervening years, it has become clear that we are not really dealing with Bach's last work, but rather that the greater part of The Art of Fugue was composed during the early 1740s. The Art of Fugue was not a commissioned work. Bach worked on the project during various different periods, changing and amplifying his ideas as he worked. The final fugue was written in the last year of his life, at about the same time as the B minor Mass. His contemporary Johann Mattheson wrote in praise of the work immediately after it was published, and Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach describes it as:

“the most perfect example of applied fugal technique”. In 1774, J.Ph. Kirnberger, in ‘The art of proper musical composition’, wrote: “Perhaps nothing is more difficult in the entire science of composition than this, that each of the four voices have not only its own fluent melody, but also that in all of them, a uniform character be maintained, so that in their union, a single perfect whole be created. In this respect, the late Leipzig Capellmeister Bach of Leipzig has probably surpassed all other composers of the entire world.” Despite the greatness of the work, relatively few copies were sold. A foreword by Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg in the second print of 1752 was intended to alter this, but when only 30 copies had been sold by 1756, Carl Philipp Emanuel found himself obliged to put the engraved copper plates up for sale.

The Art of Fugue is a virtuoso exposition of all the possible implications of a basic musical idea. With this, Bach personified the theoretically and practically accomplished ‘vollkommene Capell-Meister’ as described by Mattheson in 1739. He was familiar with many different musical styles and was able to combine and meld these with his own deeply beloved art of fugue and canon, taking playability on a keyboard instrument as his practical point of departure. As an ‘instruction book’, it might be seen as a continuation of the tradition of other didactically conceived keyboard works like ‘Das Wohltemperirte Clavier’. Many composers after Bach have treated the work as an important object of study; among them was Beethoven, who admired Bach as ‘the immortal God of Harmony’.

Except for the final one the fugues in The Art of Fugue are all entitled 'Contrapunctus', an indication of their contrapuntal character: independence of voices, with at the same time consideration of proper voice-leading. A fugue is a free compositional form in two or more voices. One of the voices begins the principal subject, after which the other voices do the same in a given order. When one voice has completed the subject, then it passes on to a counter-subject. The subject can appear several times during the piece. For a long time, The Art of Fugue was considered as a virtually mathematical work of art, which did not require performance. Not until the early 20th century did this attitude change, with more frequent performances of the music. The perfection of the counterpoint between voices, Bach's notation of the work in open score on four staves, and the lack of any indication of instrumentation, has tempted various instrumental groups to organize performances with forces including string quartet, oboe ensemble, brass, and even a symphony orchestra.

It is uncertain whether Bach ever expected a complete performance of the entire work. The title, which incidentally is not demonstrably of Bach's own choosing, suggests something like a methodical study. The almost obsessive presence of the d minor tonality strengthens the impression of an artistic investigation in which insight and increasing profundity are of central importance.

Every performance of the work thus constitutes a tour de force in every respect both for listener and performer. The abstraction and clarity of The Art of Fugue mean that any kind of Romantic interpretation seems

inappropriate to the music. For performers on a somewhat abstract and non-Romantic instrument dating from Bach's time, then, such a tour de force is unusually challenging.

### **The performance**

The present recording, in the matters of instrumentation and order of movements, is based on a concert performance. It derives from numerous practical sources of inspiration, with clarity of articulation and voice leading being of primary importance. Authenticity in the strictest sense has not been attempted. This would have involved a keyboard instrument. This is also the reason that we have only recorded two of the four canons. The two others, for us, are not realistically performable on our instruments. One might ask whether a sound recording on CD is perhaps even more appropriate to this work than a concert performance. It offers the listener the option of selecting separate fugues, the possibility of programming one's own order of performance; in this way it could be seen as somewhat related to a practical use of the edition which Bach's original admirers had in their possession. The printed version differs in from the manuscript in various matters of order and notation. However, Bach was certainly involved in the printing of the work, and the changes relative to the manuscript must be considered as originating with him. For this recording, the printed version has been used as our primary source.

There are several places to be found in the music where Bach has altered the logical movement of the voices, by means of octave transpositions or abbreviation, to make it playable for a keyboard instrument. In a performance with recorders, it is also necessary to use octave transposition here and there, though this, of course, takes place in other parts of the music.

In the matter of instruments, we have used faithful copies of late baroque examples, but also 'adapted' baroque recorders. The lowest instruments have been provided with keywork, based on the later Böhm system, for The Art of Fugue makes demands on the instruments which are barely within the limits of possibility. To satisfy these demands as well as introducing variety into the 'registration', we have made use of 17 different recorders, from soprano to great bass, in the keys of c'', b' flat, f', d', b flat, g, f, c, and F.

*Daniel Brüggen (Translation: David Shapiro)*



# COLOPHON

Production  
Producer, recording engineer, editing  
Cover design  
Photography  
Liner notes  
Recording location

Recording dates

Channel Classics Records B.V.  
C. Jared Sacks  
Ram Vormgeving, Asperen  
Camilla van Zuylen  
Daniel Brügger  
Doopsgezinde Kerk, Haarlem,  
The Netherlands  
April & June 1998

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Microphones  
Digital converter  
Speakersystems

Schoeps, Bruel & Kjaer  
24 Bit Prism/ Genex Recorder  
Monitor Audio, Studio 6 & AKG  
K1000 Headphones

## RECORDERS USED FOR THE ART OF FUGUE | DIE KUNST DER FUGUE

Soprano inc'' after Terton	Friedrich von Huene 1978
Soprano inc'' after Terton	Friedrich von Huene 1990
Soprano inc'' after Bressan	Fred Morgan 1993
Fourth flute in b' flat after Bressan	Fred Morgan 1984
Thirth flute in a' after Bressan	Fred Morgan 1996
Alto in f' after Bressan	Fred Morgan 1972
Alto in f' after Stanesby	Friedrich von Huene 1993
Alto in f' after Denner	Friedrich von Huene 1978
Alto in f' after Denner	Fred Morgan 1986
Voice flute in d' after Bressan	Fred Morgan 1993
Tenor in c' after Bressan	Friedrich von Huene 1989
Tenor in c' after Bressan	Friedrich von Huene 1993
Tenor in b flat after Stanesby	Tim Cranmore 1993
Basset in g	Friedrich von Huene 1989
Basset in f	Yamaha 1989
Bass in c	Friedrich von Huene 1988
Great bass in F	Friedrich von Huene 1998