Two Bach Preludes and Fugues Transcribed for Wind-Band

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TWO BACH PRELUDES AND FUGUES
TRANSCRIBED FOR WIND-BAND

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Music
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Douglas Duane Nott
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Transcriptions for wind-band have been done since the earliest beginnings of the band. Many of these transcriptions were from piano and organ works. Another source of material for the transcriber was orchestral compositions. These transcriptions were somewhat anti-climactic after the listener had heard the original orchestral performance. This writer chose to transcribe from organ to wind-band in order to achieve some creativity rather than to replace woodwind instruments for stringed instruments as done in many orchestral transcriptions.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to transcribe for the modern wind-band Prelude and Fugue in G Minor and Prelude and Fugue in D Minor. Both compositions were originally written for organ by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is threefold: (1) to give a brief history of Johann Sebastian Bach, (2) to give a brief history of the wind-band, and (3) to
examine the methods and reasons this writer chose for transcribing two Baroque preludes and fugues for the wind-band.

Definition of Terms

**Bombard.** A member of the shawm (q.v.) family. A double-reed instrument more lengthy than the shawm. "... it was given an S-shaped tube like that of a bass recorder so as to facilitate handling; this tube was called a crook and the double reed was fixed to the end of it" (2:105).

**Clarion.** "An ancient English Trumpet, ... without valves, ... a low-pitch and long tube instrument" (1:154).

**Couplers.** "... every organ possesses devices which make the various divisions available on other keyboards than their own." For example: "... any manual can be coupled to the Pedal and the Pedal can be coupled to the main manuals or to all of them" (1:525). The purpose, then, of couplers is to facilitate registration.

**Fillers.** A musical term meaning the duplication of the chordal tones placed above, between, or below the original chord tones.

**Hautbois.** See **Shawm**.
Pipes (or Bagpipes). "... a blowpipe leading into a bladder, on another part of which were two reed-pipes, one being the chanter, the other the drone" (2:59).

Shawm. A high pitched double-reed instrument with a narrow, conical bore. It had seven holes, the last of which was fitted with an open key (2:105).

Transcribe (arrange). "The adaptation of a composition for instruments other than those for which it was originally written ..." (1:54).

Wait. A double reed instrument characteristic of the shawm.

Wind-band. A musical organization consisting of wind and percussion instruments with some use of the string bass.
CHAPTER II

THE COMPOSER: JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Lutheran Germany in the year 1685. He died in Leipzig on July 28, 1750, after suffering a long illness (6:100). Ironically, Bach left his wife, Magdalena, to subsist on the charity of the city of Leipzig. She was to die ten years later as an alms woman and was given the lowest class funeral (6:103).

Bach was the greatest of excellent musicians in the Bach family that existed for six generations from 1580 to 1845. His earliest training in music came from his father, a town musician, followed by further studies with his older brother Johann Christoph. In composition Johann Sebastian Bach was completely self-taught, and studied from other composers by copying or transcribing their scores, a method of study he followed throughout his life (9:383).

Bach was a great organist as well as a composer and transcriber. He first served as organist in Arnsadt (1703-1707) and Muhlhausen (1707-1708); followed as court organist in the Chapel of the Duke of Weimer (1708-1717); then Music Director at the court of a prince in
Cothen (1717-1723); and finally as Cantor of St. Thomas School in Leipzig (1723-1753), "... a position of considerable importance in the Lutheran World" (9:382).

The organ Prelude and Fugue in G Minor was written prior to 1708 while the Prelude and Fugue in D Minor was written some time between the years 1723 and 1750. Both are listed as two of several little preludes and fugues found in the Peters Edition, Number 247, Volume 8. These are just two organ works this writer transcribed out of approximately 250 works written by Bach for the organ. Most of Bach's compositions, whether instrumental or vocal, were written for liturgical purposes.
CHAPTER III
A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE HISTORY
OF THE WIND-BAND

In the development of European music, nearly all mixed ensembles of musical instruments were called bands. An example of the early band's structure is indicated in the following examples:

King Edward III of England could boast of five trumpets, two clarions, five pipes, three waits and a drum available for outdoor purposes (4:14).

A representative town band is portrayed by Durer at Nuremberg consisting of a shawm, two bombardas, two trombones, a fife and drums (4:16).

During the 16th century in France, there developed a most interesting and popular type of band. This was the band of hautbois, or oboes. A band of this type consisted of eight oboes (two treble, two alto, two tenors, two bass), two cornets and two trombones (4:20).

The wind-band as we know it today began during the French Revolution and developed during the 19th century (5:20). The average size band of the Napoleonic era consisted of 19 reeds and 23 brass with five percussion. Though there was much enthusiasm for the early wind-band, the performers had to battle archaic instrumental mechanisms.
Between the years 1800 to 1900, Theobold Boehm and Adolphe Sax developed the woodwind instruments almost to the near-perfection of today's construction. In the early 19th century, either Heinrich Stolzel or Friedrich Bluhmel developed the valve-system and early piston mechanism for the trumpet (3:64). "The modern wind-band, therefore, may be said to date from about 1850 . . ." (5:22).

The founder of the concert band in the United States, and one of the most original and influential bandmasters of all time, was Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore (7:54). Much of the music Gilmore's band performed consisted of transcriptions of orchestral compositions, such as William Tell Overture or the Anvil Chorus from Il Trovatore. Gilmore used a band of 1,000 performers for the production of the Anvil Chorus, plus 100 Boston firemen pounding on anvils.

The successor to Gilmore was John Philip Sousa, who was appointed leader of the United States Marine Band in 1880, and who resigned that post in 1892 to form his own famous band. Again transcriptions of orchestral compositions were used for performance. In addition to this, however, Sousa wrote several famous marches of great quality for his band. The most popular of them are Manhattan Beach, Liberty Bell, The Stars and Stripes Forever, Hands Across the Seas, King Cotton, The Bride
Elect, Fairest of the Fair, Invincible Eagle, Directorate, and El Capitan. "It was a European critic who named him 'The March King', a title which by popular verdict was justly his" (7:59).

Other early band directors and composers of renown were Frederick Innes, Bohumur Kryle, Alessandro Liberati and Dr. Edwin Franko Goldman.

The wind-band today is made up of the complete wood-wind family, the brass family, and most forms of percussion instruments. The contemporary band varies in size as well as in instrumentation. An average concert band today would consist of four flutes and piccolos, two oboes, one Eb clarinet, 12 Bb clarinets, one bass clarinet, two bassoons, two alto saxophones, one tenor saxophone, one baritone saxophone, six cornets, two trumpets, four French horns, two baritone horns, six trombones, three tubas, two string basses and four percussion (8:136).

Though composers of renown such as Mozart, Handel and Haydn scored for the earliest wind-bands, the first compositions of any significance prior to the 20th century were the Grand Symphony for Band by Hector Berlioz and Trauersinfonie by Richard Wagner. In 1909, Gustav Holst wrote the First Suite for Band in Eb, and in 1911, he wrote his Second Suite in F. These two major compositions brought the wind-band rightfully into the 20th century as
a musical organization capable of performing music other than transcriptions and marches. The quality of Holst's First Suite in Eb was so great that it was the first band composition ever transcribed for orchestra.

Another early 20th century composer for the band was Ralph Vaughan Williams. In 1924, he wrote the English Folk-Song Suite, in three movements, and a Toccata Marziale. "The latter is a solid and vigorous work exceptionally suited in character to the wind-band medium and brilliantly scored to exhibit its possibilities" (7:196).

The following is a partial list of composers and arrangers from 1940 to 1960 that have written for the modern wind-band:

Roy Harris: Cimarron Overture
William Schuman: George Washington Bridge
Morton Gould: Jericho
Paul Creston: Prelude and Dance
Virgil Thomson: A Solemn Music
Henry Cowell: Festive Occasion
Aaron Copland: An Outdoor Overture
Walter Piston: Tunbridge Fair
Vincent Persichetti: Pageant
Robert R. Bennett: Mademoiselle, Ballet for Band
Vittorio Giannini: Praeludium and Allegro
Howard Hanson: Chorale and Alleluia
Clifton Williams:  **Symphonic Suite**  
Peter Mennin:  **Canzona**  

Some of these composers, such as Paul Creston, Clifton Williams and Vincent Persichetti, have written more than one band composition. There are also a number of European composers currently writing some excellent scores for band.
Transcribing from one medium to another is no simple task. Mozart described the difficulties involved with transcribing when he wrote:

"I have now no light task to get my opera (Il Seraglio) arranged for military band, . . . . You cannot imagine the difficulty of arranging an opera for military band, to make it fit for wind instruments without sacrificing any of the effects" (4:34).

Before transcribing any music for a certain medium, the transcriber must consider the following: (1) the original medium for which the composition was written, (2) whether the music is technically possible, and (3) the style in which the music of the particular era was composed.

Both preludes and fugues were written for the organ. In Example 1, there is given a soprano, a bass line, and a pedal line from the organ score. The top line is for octave and two octave couplers, which would be played on four-and two-foot stops. The middle line is for eight-foot stops, which would sound the actual pitch. The bottom, or pedal line, is for the 16 foot stop, which would sound an octave lower than written. In further explanation, the longer the stop, or
resonating tube, the lower the pitch; the shorter the stop, the higher the pitch. The organ score calls for

![Musical notation for Example 1](image)

the soprano line to be played an octave higher and the third bass line an octave lower. With this in mind, the soprano should be doubled an octave above by the four foot coupler and the bass doubled an octave below by the pedal part. Example 2 is the result of this consideration.
Many times the lines are thinly spaced; that is, a two or three note chord may be the only harmonic outline on the three staves, such as in Example 3 from the organ score.
In order to achieve a fuller sound, yet not a cluttered sound, the arranger may double certain tones in the original chord. As shown in Example 4, the outermost lines are extended another octave while the original notes of the chord are doubled for clarity and emphasis.

Before adding "fillers," the writer must carefully establish the components of the chord and insure correct voice leading.

These two preludes and fugues were quite adaptable to the wind-band for two reasons: first, the organ produces its tones by means of a vibrating column of air, and second, because the range of the original music was within the range of the band instruments. Example 5
shows the maximum range of both organ works. Example 6 shows the maximum range of the modern wind-band.

Although both ranges are maximum, the wind-instrument range is well within that of the organ. This gives the lower and upper octaves instruments the necessary strength to bring out those lines.

Both compositions were written during the Baroque period, which approximately existed from 1600 to 1750 (9:266). The music during that era was written for one group of performers and/or one performance. Usually the music was composed in a very short time and in condensed form. Although Bach was one of the few Baroque composers who wrote out most of the notation, he did not include dynamics, tempo or phrase markings as we know them today. These were usually left to the performer. In this case Bach was usually the performer.

The tempo in the transcriptions was determined by the tempo of the Baroque Period, which was relatively slower and less moving than that of the 20th century.
The phrasing was determined by the rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic inflections, or a combination of all three. Example 7 is an example of phrasing derived by the movement and resolution of the melody.
The dynamic markings shown in Example 8 exemplifies dynamics in terraces, by which the music becomes suddenly loud or soft rather than gradually getting louder or softer.

In review, the original medium, the technical possibilities, and the stylistic characteristics of the time are the important factors an arranger must consider before attempting a transcription for any medium. In this case the medium is the pipe organ, suitable for band transcription because both depend on wind-tubes for sound production. The organ music was technically within the range of the wind instruments, and careful examination of the harmonic, metric, and rhythmic movement of the musical lines indicated it would be possible to transcribe
the preludes and fugues for band. Below and on the following two pages the full course of transcribing is shown. First the organ part, Example 9; second, the condensed score, Example 10; and third, the full score, Example 11.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Although many covering papers are concerned with the harmonic analysis of the composition, the recital, or the transcription, this writer decided to include some words about the original composer of the music and give a brief review of the medium for which the music was transcribed.

Another objective was to explain the steps necessary for transcribing a musical composition for a medium different from the original and to enumerate the philosophy and processes in transcribing the two compositions comprising this paper for wind-band.

It is desired by the writer that this paper might serve as a possible method for the student interested in composition and arranging, as well as provide some background of the history of the wind-band.
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PRELUDE AND FUGUE IN G MINOR

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PRELUDE AND FUGUE IN D MINOR

by

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Fuque (d = c. 80)