

Fugue No. 13

F-Sharp Major

Well-Tempered Clavier Book I

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Subject: Fugue No. 13, *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I

This one is really a three-part fugue *and* invention rolled into one. The invention motive that begins its exposition in m. 7 vies with the subject for its memorability.

The invention motive often sounds in its melodic inversion (m. 8). Melodic inversion happens when the interval directions of a motive are reversed. You will hear melodic inversion of the motive again in mm. 25-27). Three of the melodic inversions are in *false sequence* (mm. 12, 21, 29). They are false because the pattern is broken by a return to the same pitch each time it is repeated. In other words, the pattern is not entirely repeated at another pitch level; only half of it is.

The subject's head motive is four notes long. In the second development it accompanies the invention motive in two lovely sequential episodes. The first of these (mm. 23-24) is a canonic sequence in which the head motive is heard in the higher voices. Soon it will be heard again in the low voice of mm. 26-27.

Almost lost in the counterpoint between subject and invention there is a little countersubject (high voice of mm. 3-4). You'll recognize it for its sixteenth notes that seem to splash around like birds in a bath. You'll hear it again in the middle voice of mm. 5-6.

In the exposition the countersubject is always heard in a higher voice than the subject. But in development the countersubject is heard three times in a lower

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voice. This is called *double counterpoint*. It involves an exchange of registers; the high voice moves to the low and vice versa.

Double counterpoint first occurs in m. 12 where the subject, countersubject, and melodic inversion of the invention motive can be heard simultaneously. Measures 15 and 31 also employ double counterpoint of the subject and counter.