

Baroque fugue  
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)  
WTK I, 16, g Moll  
a 4 voci (S, A, T, B)

## CORE CONCEPTS

### FUGUE

## Fugue

(from Lat. *fuga*: 'flight', 'fleeing'; Fr. *fugue*; Ger. *Fuge*; It. *fuga*).

A term in continuous use among musicians since the 14th century, when it was introduced, along with its vernacular equivalents *chace* and *caccia*, to designate a piece of music based on canonic imitation (i.e. one voice 'chasing' another; the Latin *fuga* is related to both *fugere*: 'to flee' and *fugare*: 'to chase'). Like 'canon', fugue has served since that time both as a genre designation for a piece of music and as the name of a compositional technique to be introduced into a piece of music. Imitative counterpoint in some fashion has been the single unifying factor in the history of fugue, but as compositional approaches to imitation changed so did the meanings and usages of the word 'fugue'. Between 1400 and 1700 the word held a wide variety of meanings and was employed in a great many contexts, with the idea of fugue as a compositional technique predominating. By the early 18th century musicians had come to prefer its use as a genre designation, in which guise fugue has continued until the present. It is generally distinguished on the one hand from canon, which involves the strictest sort of imitative counterpoint, and on the other from mere imitation, which involves the least strict.

(Grove Online)

### DUX, COMES

Theme en Theme-forms: Dux (leader), Comes (companion)

Answer: real, tonal

The beginning of the theme is modified a little at the second entry. This has been done to make a smooth connection to the second entry of the theme. The answer is tonal.



### STRETTO

In case of a stretto entries of the theme follow so quickly that they overlap. A stretto is seen and counted as one theme-entry.



### COUNTERSUBJECT

A countersubject is a permanent accompanying voice in combination with the theme. It can be set above and below the theme:



### "EXPOSITION" (DURCHFÜHRUNG),

In this fugue we can discern four rounds of theme-entries. The theme is presented in different voices. This first round is called the exposition, in German each group of theme-entries is called a Durchführung. As far as I know there is no English equivalent for this last term. The term Durchführung should not be understood as the equivalent of the Durchführung (development) in the sonata-allegro form, but literally as "leading" the theme through different voices.

### DIVERTIMENTO (EPISODE WITHOUT THEME)

A divertimento is an episode without theme-entries. It can have different functions (often harmonic): for example realizing a modulation. In this fugue the two long divertimenti are used to mark points of segmentation in the harmonic scheme of the fugue.

### HARMONIC STRUCTURE OF THE THEME (HARMONIC BACKGROUND)

A fugue-theme has a clear melodic structure and shape with a clear key. Every fugue-theme should provide space and possibilities for harmonic and contrapuntal variation, for example the use of motives that remain recognizable in a polyphonic context. The example below is an illustration of the harmonic background of the theme of this fugue.



(Source: Ludwig Czaczkes: Analyse des Wohltemperierten Klaviers)

### IMPORTANT POINTS OF SEGMENTATION

- bar 12: modulation to Bb major completed, full cadence, returning to just one voice, change of colour (minor to major), metric/rythmic resting point
- bar 28: half cadence in G minor (main key), return to one voice, metric/rythmic resting point
- bar 20: change in colour; major to minor
- bar 24: return to the main key, full cadence in G minor (ending on the third beat) no metric/rythmic resting point; the music moves on.

### STRUCTURE

As said before we encounter in this fugue four rounds or groups of theme-entries. In a schematic overview:

<b>I</b>	voice	A	S	B	T
	key	g <sup>1</sup>	d	g	d
	theme form	Dux	Comes	Dux	Comes
	bar	1	2	5	6
	Long divertimento (episode)				
<b>II</b>	voice	A	B	S	/B <sup>A</sup> / <sup>2</sup>
	key	Bb	F	F	/Bb/
	theme form	Dux	Comes	Dux	/Dux <sup>Dux</sup> /
	bar	12	13	15	17
<b>III</b>	voice	B	S	A	
	key	c	c	g	
	theme form	Dux	Dux	Comes	
	bar	20	21	23	
	Long divertimento (episode)				
<b>IV</b>	voice	S, T, B	A	T	
	key	g	g	g	
	theme form	Dux <sup>Dux, Dux</sup>	Dux	Dux	
	bar	28	31	33	

On the basis of this structure we can conclude that this fugue has a binary form. Group of theme-entries 1 + 2, and 3 + 4. Between 1 and 2 and between 3 and 4 there is a long divertimento.

<sup>1</sup> lowercase = minor, capital = major

<sup>2</sup> the signs // indicate a theme-entry for the second time in the same voice within one group of theme-entries