JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Contents

About Hans Bischoff and This Edition 2

Introductory Notes. 2

Table of Embellishments 3

GOLDBERG VARIATIONS, BWV 988 4

ABOUT HANS BISCHOFF AND THIS EDITION

Hans Bischoff (1852–1889) was a German concert pianist, chamber musician, and music educator. He studied piano with Theodor Kullak (1818–1882) and later taught piano performance and music theory at Kullak's school, Neue Akademie der Tonkunst, in Berlin. Bischoff became a well-regarded music editor, respected for his thorough research, attention to detail, and careful consideration of source materials. His critical editions for the Steingräber publishing house include seven volumes of the keyboard works by J. S. Bach and 11 volumes of the keyboard works by Robert Schumann, as well as editions of works by Clementi, Handel, Mozart, Schubert, and Weber.

Bischoff's footnotes and prefatory commentary have been preserved in this edition, as well as his editorial markings—suggested dynamics, metronome marks, fingering, articulations, and pedaling. Measure numbers and BWV numbers have been added. Square brackets have been used to indicate suspected missing elements from earlier Bischoff editions.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Our main source in preparing this extremely important work for publication was the original printing (*A*). We employed, furthermore, an old copy of the Aria contained in the larger "Clavierbüchlein" of Anna Magdalena Bach (*B*), also the following manuscripts, in part incomplete, from the Royal Library in Berlin: P. 203 (*C*), 212 (*D*), and 214 (*E*). Restoration of the text was not difficult—in view of the prevailing correctness of *A* as well as the relative paucity of variants in the manuscripts. In reference to the ornaments, one must admit that the various trill and mordent signs are often indicated inaccurately. Establishing the accuracy of certain ornaments requires considerable annotation on the part of the editor. Insofar as the text is concerned, we follow our main source fairly literally.

Some of the variations are intended for two manuals. Several movements require two manuals in view of the contrasted dynamics in the melody and accompaniment, e.g., analogously to the slow movement from the Italian Concerto (compare Var. 13 and 24). Most of the variations intended for two manuals contain passages in which

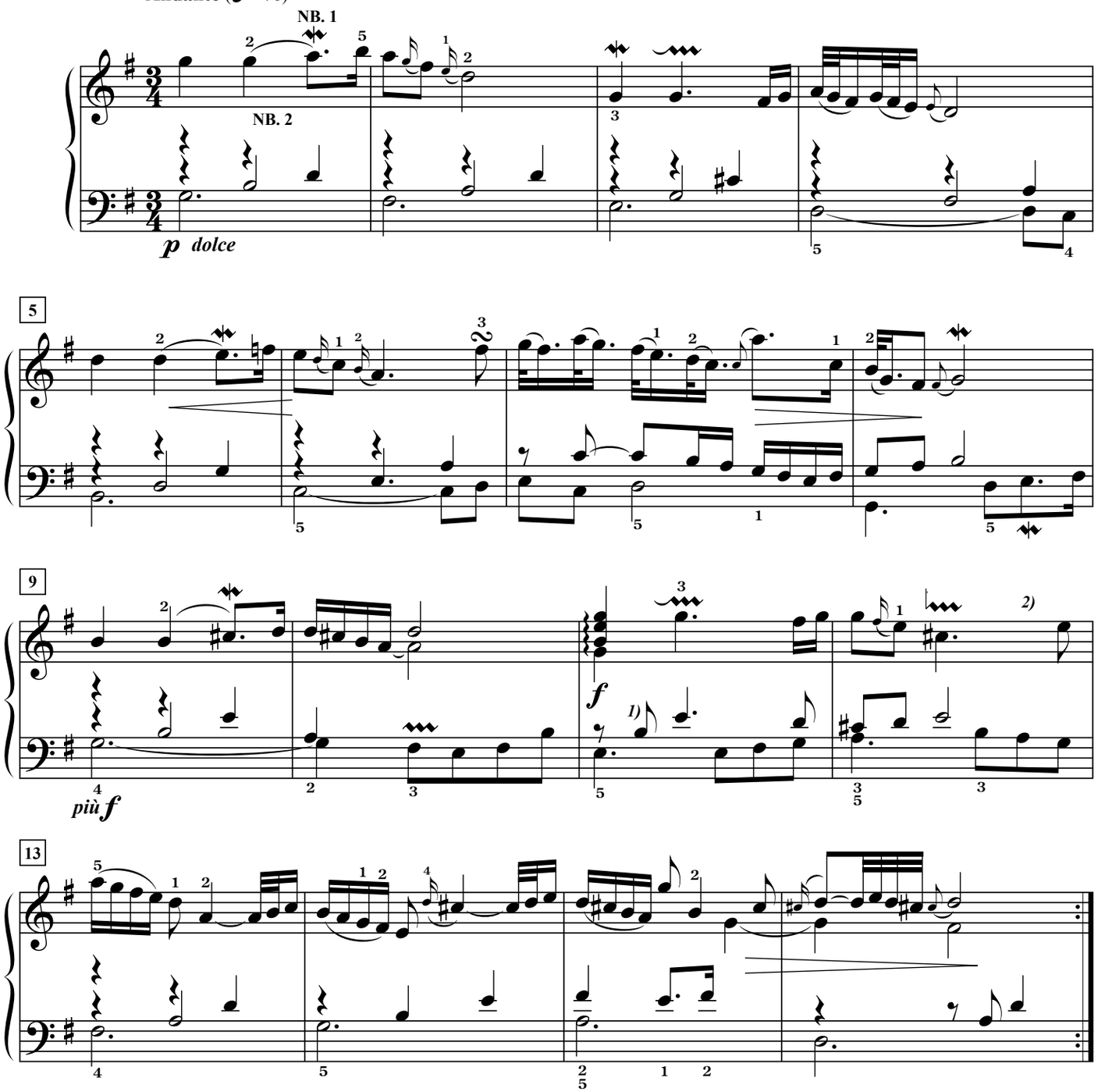
Goldberg Variations

(Aria with 30 Variations)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
BWV 988

ARIA

Andante (♩ = 76)



1) D instead of B, according to *B* and *E*.

2) In *B* there is an appoggiatura on D without any trill—instead of the trill as it appears here.

NB. 1 In *A* the mordents are almost always extended. In view of the presentation of the ornaments in autograph *B*, I consider this to be due to carelessness in engraving.

NB. 2 The ties in the Aria are taken from the original. In the opinion of the editor, even the untied notes should be executed legato.

VARIATION 1 (a 1 clavier)

Allegro moderato (♩ = 100)

mf

4

7

f

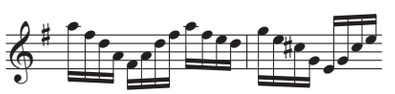
I)

11

p

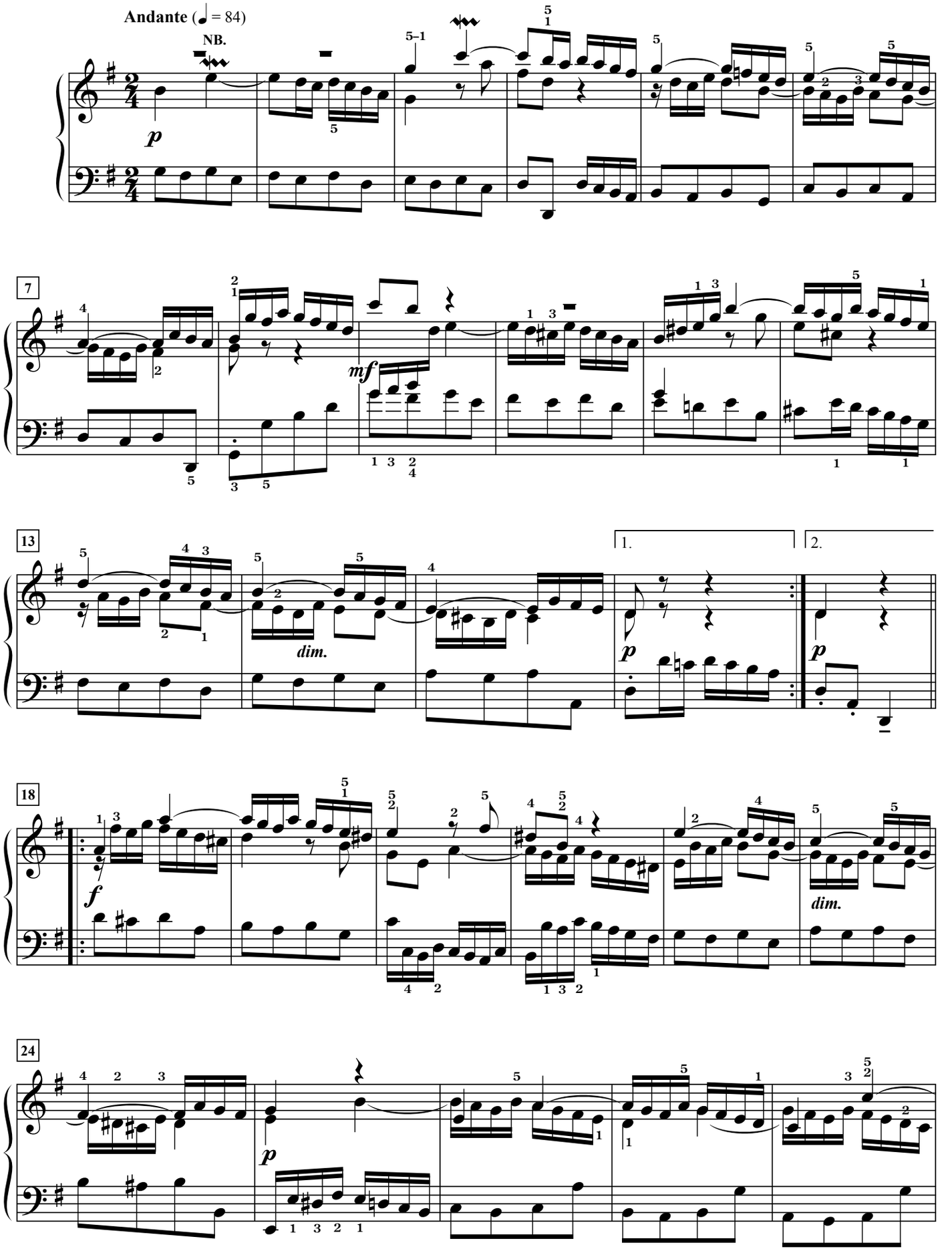
14

I) Variant in *E*:



VARIATION 2 (a 1 clavier)

Andante (♩ = 84)



NB. *A* contains extended mordents. In consideration of the annotation **NB. 1** to the theme proper I believe that short mordents are intended. The latter are indicated in *C*.