

A Kalmus Classic Edition

Johann Sebastian

BACH

**TWO and THREE-PART
INVENTIONS**

Edited by

Dr. Hans Bischoff

Translated by Alexander Lipsky

PIANO SOLO

K 03044



PREFACE

The publication of the Inventions and Symphonies was based on two manuscripts belonging to the Berlin State Library. The first of these, inherited from the Spohr legacy, has been utilized in the Bach-Gesellschaft edition. Its literal title is as follows:

“Auffrichtige Anleitung, Wormit denen Liebhabern des Claviers, besonders aber denen Lehrbegierigen, eine deutliche Art gezeigt wird, nicht alleine (1) mit 2 Stimmen reine spielen zu lernen, sondern auch bey weiteren progressen (2) mit dreyen obligaten Partien richtig und wohl zu verfahren, anbey auch zugleich gute inventiones nicht allein zu bekommen, sondern auch selbige wohl durchzuführen, am allermeisten aber eine cantable Art im Spielen zu erlangen, und darneben einen starcken Vorschmack von der Composition zu überkommen. Verfertigt von Joh. Seb. Bach, Hochf. Anhalt-Cöthenischen Capellmeister. Anno Christi 1723.”

A free translation follows:

“A proper introduction, whereby lovers of the Clavier and especially those with thirst for true knowledge, are shown a clear way not only (1) of learning to play cleanly in two voices, but (2) also with further progress to proceed with three obligato parts correctly and well — at the same time not only receiving good ideas (i.e., inventions) but also utilizing them for the development of a cantabile style of playing, and for the procurement of a thorough foretaste of composition. Completed by Joh. Seb. Bach, etc. etc.”

Rust presents a critique of the second manuscript, which had passed through Griepenkerl's hands, in the appendix to the third series of the above-mentioned edition. Even though the representation of the note-text in this copy creates no important difficulties, still the presentation of the ornaments does awaken serious misgivings. In this respect the two manuscripts differ from one another to such an extent that some pieces contain few if any ornaments in one copy, and an altogether excessive number in the other. Moreover, there appear in both manuscripts certain subsequent additions, which do not seem to stem from Bach, although I have no definite means of determining the authenticity of some of the individual ornaments in question. In the interest of the performer's orientation I have, therefore, indicated in large type the ornaments authenticated by their appearance in both copies; those appearing in only one of the copies are printed in small type. In several instances I am unable to assume the responsibility for the completeness of the ornaments because of the difficulty in deciphering the original text. Moreover, I have in certain instances — in a particular piece or section of a piece — completely eliminated the overabundantly appearing ornamental signs of doubtful authenticity; however, this is always mentioned in our text.

For the practical utilization of the volume, it will suffice if one observes all the ornaments printed in large type, and perhaps occasionally interjects one of the others — according to one's individual taste. However, the fingerings given do not take into consideration any of the ornaments in the latter category.

Small notes are bracketed when their authenticity is doubtful. On the other hand, we have placed in parentheses those ornaments which seem absolutely necessary despite the fact that they are missing in both manuscripts; in this instance we use the term “necessary” insofar as it can be applied to matters of indubitably good taste.

In addition to the two sources mentioned above we have also perused the copies of Forkel and Gerber, also a manuscript found in the legacy of the Princess Amalie. I have also listed several important variants taken from an old Hoffmeister printing.

P.S. — A supplementary source is to be found in the autograph contained in the “*Klavierbüchlein*” of Friedemann Bach, which we were able to secure through the courtesy of Mrs. Krug, of Naumburg. However, this source reached us after the engraving of the current volume had been completed. We, therefore, list below all the belated references to the “*Klavierbüchlein*,” indicated in the various Inventions and Symphonies by capitalized letters.

FRIEDEMANN BACH'S "KLAVIERBÜCHLEIN," begun by Johann Sebastian Bach in the year 1720, contains — among other works for teaching purposes — an almost complete compilation of Inventions and Symphonies.


The arrangement is unusual in that the Symphonies appear before the Inventions; the sequence of the individual pieces is different from the one finally adopted by Bach in the Spohr manuscript. The countless number of corrections, the passages rewritten time and again to the point of illegibility — these definitely place the manuscript as a first draft, lacking many of the finer points of detail and maturity to be found in the two later manuscripts belonging to the Berlin Library. These latter agree on all essential points; yet the Griepenkerl autograph (we have referred to it as the second — in view of its relative value) has been prepared much more superficially; it also stands in closer relationship to the conception found in the "Klavierbüchlein" than to the one in the Spohr autograph. This is due not only to the final sequence of the compositions but also to the working out of certain details in the text.


The careful revision evident in the Spohr manuscript (dating from 1723) definitely endows it with the greatest importance to an editor. In the infrequent instances where errors in script do occur, I have been compelled to reconstruct the reading of the Griepenkerl autograph and the "Klavierbüchlein."

The following collection of variants from the "Klavierbüchlein" is important only in the sense that it contributes to a clearer understanding of the tirelessly industrious character of the composer. These also demonstrate how rash it would be to interpret the deviations of text found in the Hoffmeister edition (these are indicated in our text) as mere arbitrary alterations on the part of the editor.


The "Klavierbüchlein" contains considerably fewer ornaments than are to be found in the later copies. However, this in itself should not cast any doubt as to the authenticity of the ornaments in the later manuscripts — unless there are other grounds for suspicion.

EXAMPLES OF VARIANTS FROM THE "KLAVIERBÜCHLEIN":


A) **Inv. VI.** The lower voice has been altered by superscription, and the figure  is discernible. Similarly in measures 7 and 23.

B) **Inv. VII.** The 3½ measures following are replaced by: 

C) **Inv. VIII.** The 4 measures following are missing; the 5th measure commences with a **G** in the bass, the 6th with an **F**, the 7th with an **E**.

D) **Inv. XI.** There are many corrections. The original form of the motive appears to have been  In place of

the final 2½ measures one finds: 




E) **Inv. XIII.** In place of the 6¼ measures following one finds: 

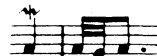

Dr. Hans Bischoff.


TABLE OF EMBELLISHMENTS


For the uninitiated performer the following indications will suffice — in reference to this volume.

1) Grace notes, like all other embellishments, enter ON the beat — not before it. Unless indicated otherwise, they should be executed quickly.

2) The trill (**tr** or \sim) generally begins on the auxiliary note. There is usually an after-beat, unless this is replaced by one or more indicated notes. The after-beat is unnecessary before a descending second. The symbol for the trill with an up-beat is \sim or \sim . The trill starting on the lower note \sim  and the one starting on the upper note \sim  usually both end with an after beat. The following symbols may also be used to indicate the same: \sim and \sim . The short trill \sim  is usually tied to the upper second preceding. Its symbol frequently takes the place of \sim and **tr**.

3) The mordent  or  often takes the tone a minor second lower as the auxiliary note, although the neighboring note is sometimes a major second lower. (Compare Turk, Ch. IV p. 61.)

4) The turn ∞ placed over a note is executed , placed between two notes it is played . In dotted rhythm, the turn proper ends on the dot .

5) The slurred note \sim is played .

6) Other embellishments are explained in the annotations.

Dr. Hans Bischoff.

INVENTION I (1)

Allegro ♩ = 96

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system features a diminuendo (*dim.*) dynamic. The third system includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) dynamic and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth system includes a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fifth system also includes a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score contains various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings (1-5).

1) The Bach-Gesellschaft edition, in the appendix to its third series, contains a variant of this piece which extends the 16th note figures into 16th note triplets. The first (i.e., Spohr) autograph apparently contains the same form; yet the added notes were evidently superscribed later.