

FUGUE STATE

Alan Feinberg



STEINWAY & SONS

- Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750** 1 "Ricercar a 3" from *The Musical Offering*, BWV 1079 | 6:19
- Dietrich Buxtehude 1637-1707** 2 Fugue in C major, BuxWV 174 "Gigue" | 3:01
- Alessandro Scarlatti 1660-1725** 3 Fugue in F minor | 6:09
- George Friedrich Handel 1685-1759** 4 Fugue in B flat major, HWV 607, No. 3 | 2:34
- Domenico Scarlatti 1685-1757** 5 Sonata in D minor, K 417 | 3:42
- Johann Jacob Froberger 1616-1667** 6 Canzona No. 2 in G minor | 5:31
- Dietrich Buxtehude** 7 Fugue in G major, BuxWV 175 | 3:54
- Johann Sebastian Bach** 8 Fugue on a theme by Albinoni in B minor, BWV 951 | 6:07
- Johann Sebastian Bach** 9 Fugue in C major, BWV 953 | 1:18
- George Friedrich Handel** 10 Fugue in A minor, HWV 609, No. 5 | 6:41
- Johann Sebastian Bach** 11 Fugue in A major, BWV 949 | 3:38
- Domenico Scarlatti** 12 Sonata in G minor, K 30 "The Cat's Fugue" | 3:56
- Domenico Scarlatti** 13 Sonata in C minor, K 58 | 5:46
- Johann Sebastian Bach** 14 "Ricercar a 6" from *The Musical Offering*, BWV 1079 | 9:08
- Playing Time | 64:39



FUGUE STATE *Fugue State* features music of two generations of composers from the era of the High Baroque. While the composers each have unique and intriguingly personal styles, they share a compelling range of compositional techniques and musical ideas. They influenced each other in ways rarely presented in the piano world. This recording features some of the links and musical cross-pollination of these composers. And while fugues are generally not designed to surrender their secrets easily, there are many connections to be enjoyed by the avid listener.

Fugues were often the form chosen for intensely personal statements by composers, perhaps because the challenge of merging the emotional and the intellectual in their construction conferred an added gravitas and drama. To modern ears the auditory continuity of Baroque fugues may seem less dramatic or passionate than Classical and Romantic works, where discontinuity, silence, dramatic

changes in dynamics, and varying instrumentation are basic to the style. However, it would be wrong to conceive of pre-Classical composers as less dramatically engaged or passionate than their later counterparts. For instance, in the fabric of the Ricercar for Six Voices, Bach quotes some of his own works from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, arguably incorporates Biblical references and sacred codes, hides a canon that may relate to his father's death in a fugal episode, and signs his name. He imbues it with his identity, his works and his faith. It is a work of organized devotion and heartfelt humanity. The passions evoked by the music of melancholy, pain, suffering, devotion, loss, and triumph are not just Biblical, but personal to Bach.

Each fugue can be thought of as a character piece, each with its own personality, scope, level of complexity, and affect. Performance practice accounts from the Baroque era tell us about the importance of the "affect" within a theme and convey some stylistic conventions of the time. However, the notational practices of the Baroque were

not calculated to ensure long-term definitiveness. An understanding of performance practice was assumed and was not fully documented in the scores. Also, the sheer variety of keyboard instruments that could be employed in performance itself raises issues. Sometimes the original intent is only a “best guess” for us in the 21st century. And sometimes, as is the case with Bach, the notation was designed to hide, from everyone but the initiate, solutions to tuning, tempi, pulse, and meaning — a “hidden art” underlying the surface.

The issues of performance practice or interpretive conundrums for music of this period in our time are somewhat counterbalanced by the multifaceted capacities of the modern piano, which is an especially rich tool for contrapuntal expression. We can thank J. S. Bach for so ardently championing, improving, and writing for Silberman’s pianos: the great-great-grandparents of our modern instruments.

– Alan Feinberg

Alan Feinberg Pianist Alan Feinberg has forged a remarkable career based on musical exploration. He is an experienced performer of both classical and contemporary music and is well known for recitals that pair old and new music.

Mr. Feinberg has received four Grammy nominations for “best instrumentalist” and has recorded a wide range of American repertoire: four solo discs for Decca that survey American music and piano concertos by Milton Babbitt, Mel Powell, Andrew Imbrie, Kamran Ince, Morton Feldman, Paul Bowles, Amy Beach, Charles Ives, Leo Ornstein, Samuel Adler, Don Gilles, and Robert Helps. His 2013 release on the Steinway label, *Basically Bull*, was selected as one of the best classical recordings of the year by Rhapsody and was described as “a revelation” by ClassicsToday. He received his fourth Grammy nomination for his recording of the Amy Beach Piano Concerto with the Nashville Symphony.

Mr. Feinberg has performed as a soloist with the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonia, Montreal Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and many others.

Mr. Feinberg frequently performs in Europe. Appearances include The Proms, Wigmore Hall, festivals in Edinburgh, Brescia Bergamo, Geneva, Budapest, and others. In 2013 he programmed and performed in a series of concerts showcasing American music in Russia: in June, for the White Nights Festival in St. Petersburg and in September, in Moscow.



Fugue State was recorded September 29 – October 1, 2014
at Sono Luminus Studios in Boyce, Virginia.

Producer: Dan Merceruio

Engineer: Daniel Shores

Equipment: Metric Halo ULN-8, DPA 4006 microphones

Executive Producers: Eric Feidner, Jon Feidner

Design: Cover to Cover Design, Anilda Carasquillo

Piano: Steinway Model D #590904 (New York)

Piano Technician: Dan Jessie



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