

Glenn Gould (2)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 16 March 2012 16:59 - Last Updated Tuesday, 04 June 2013 16:23

Glenn Gould

1. 1932 - 1982 Bach The Well-Tempered Clavier. Book I Preludes And Fugues 1-24 (Mp4)

470 MB



*No.1 in C major, BWV 846 (alternative version: BWV 846a) No.2 in C minor, BWV 847
No.3 in C \sharp major, BWV 848 No.4 in C \sharp minor, BWV 849 No.5 in D major, BWV 850 No.6 in
D minor, BWV 851 No.7 in E \flat major, BWV 852 No.8 in E \flat minor, BWV 853 No.9 in E major,
BWV 854 No.10 in E minor, BWV 855 (alternative version: BWV 855a) No.11 in F major,
BWV 856 No.12 in F minor, BWV 857 No.13 in F \sharp major, BWV 858 No.14 in F \sharp minor, BWV
859 No.15 in G major, BWV 860 No.16 in G minor, BWV 861 No.17 in A \flat major, BWV 862
No.18 in G \sharp minor, BWV 863 No.19 in A major, BWV 864 No.20 in A minor, BWV 865
No.21 in B \flat major, BWV 866 No.22 in B \flat minor, BWV 867 No.23 in B major, BWV 868
No.24 in B minor, BWV 869*

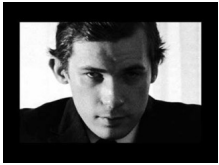
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2. 1932 - 1982 Bach The Well-Tempered Clavier. Book II



No.1 in C major, BWV 870 (alternative versions: BWV 870a, BWV 870b) No.2 in C minor, BWV 871 No.3 in C \sharp major, BWV 872 (alternative version: BWV 872a) No.4 in C \sharp minor, BWV 873 No.5 in D major, BWV 874 No.6 in D minor, BWV 875 (alternative version: BWV 875a) No.7 in E \flat major, BWV 876 No.8 in E \flat minor, BWV 877 No.9 in E major, BWV 878 No.10 in E minor, BWV 879 No.11 in F major, BWV 880 No.12 in F minor, BWV 881 No.13 in F \sharp major, BWV 882 No.14 in F \sharp minor, BWV 883 No.15 in G major, BWV 884 No.16 in G minor, BWV 885 No.17 in A \flat major, BWV 886 No.18 in G \sharp minor, BWV 887 No.19 in A major, BWV 888 No.20 in A minor, BWV 889 No.21 in B \flat major, BWV 890 No.22 in B \flat minor, BWV 891 No.23 in B major, BWV 892 No.24 in B minor, BWV 893

The music of JS Bach is extremely interesting, and one thoughtful listening to his works has the power to change the way you hear and perceive music forever more. Bach's keyboard works are typically polyphonic, and that basically means two melodies, or more accurately stated, two musical thoughts, are presented simultaneously. The resulting musical edifice has the potential to sound like, how does one say? "too many notes". Because of the very nature of counterpoint, the simple elegance of Mozart, or the heart-tugging in-your-face-passion of Beethoven, are not as accessible to the average listener. But there is an unmistakable breadth and vitality found in Bach's musical counterpoint, conjoined with a unique grandeur and nobility, that can move and uplift the spirit in a way that is entirely unique.

The Well Tempered Clavier (WTC) consists of two books, both of which are comprised of a prelude and fugue written in each of the major and minor keys of western music. Because there are twelve major keys, and twelve related minor keys, each book of the WTC is comprised of 24 prelude and fugues. One enjoyable aspect of the WTC for the new listener is that, because all of the major and minor keys are presented in a systematic way, one is able to discern what is most appealing to the listener's unique sensibilities. Perhaps you will find that you prefer major to minor, or vice versa. Perhaps you will find a handful of key signatures that you think are preferable, and that can be the foundation for further exploration into other pieces of music written in the same key.

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I own a number of recordings of J.S. Bach's WTC. I happen to like book II better than book I, and this rendition is undoubtedly my favorite of them all. Gould's sense of rhythm is impeccable, and it is that aspect that makes this recording so stunning. The pulse is extraordinary, the ornamentation is played with extreme verve, and Gould's technical abilities and musicianship are more than adequate to keep strict time throughout. I also really appreciate the fact that Gould keeps his foot off the pedal, unlike Richter, or Fischer, or any number of the other standard recordings. A powerful and distinct rhythmic momentum should be felt throughout these works. It is also essential to maintain the clarity of each voice, and the pedal, or reverberation in general, can obscure both rhythm and clarity in the context of polyphonic music. Gould is able to bring distinctness to each voice in a way that is entirely unique.

With that said, Gould does have some singular ideas about tempo. Sometimes it works, sometimes not. For an incredible example of when it works, listen to his remarkable rendering of the prelude and the fugue in C#-Major. Both, but particularly the fugue, are taken at extremely slow tempos. The result is extraordinary. This is hands down my favorite recording of Bach's WTC. In my opinion, no other recording compares to this one. --- Frank DeLaglio (Staten Island, New York USA) - March 25, 2003

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