



Six Chorales with Descant

Johann Sebastian Bach

Arranged by Peter Billam


for melody instrument and keyboard

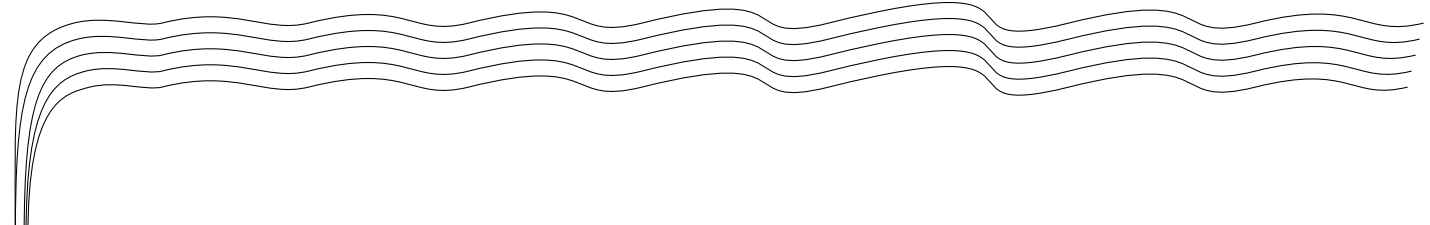
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Bach Chorales, for piano and melody instrument

It is the chorales, not his trademark fugues, that lie at the heart of Bach's technique. Wolff refers to Bach's *collection of 370 four-part chorales that charted the course for tonal harmony*. Donald Francis Tovey observes: *Counterpoint, the art defined by Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley as that of 'combining melodies' . . . This definition is not quite complete. Classical counterpoint is the conveying of a mass of harmony by means of a combination of melodies. Thus the three melodies combined by Wagner in the Meistersinger prelude do not make classical counterpoint, for they require a mass of accompanying harmony to explain them.*

Forkel recounts, in Ernest Newman's translation: *Bach began teaching composition not with dry counterpoint that led nowhere, as was the way with other music teachers of his time; . . . He went immediately to pure four-part thorough-bass, laying much stress on the setting-out of the voices, since in this way the conception of the pure progression of the harmony was made most intelligible. From there he went to the chorale. In these exercises he himself set the original bass, and made his pupils add only the alto and the tenor. Gradually he let them make the bass also. Everywhere he insisted not only on the utmost purity of the harmony in itself, but also on naturalness of progression and a melodic flow of all the separate voices.*

Bach, in other words, was exploring the frontier between voice-leading and harmony; he worked out how voice-leading should be done so as to give the impression of harmony.

The chorales chosen here all use a melody instrument as a descant above the SATB voices; they come from his cantatas BWV's 12 31 85 136 161 and 172. They are offered here for players of flute, oboe, and violin. The vocal parts have been arranged for keyboard. For ease of sight-reading, and with some regret, crossed voices in the keyboard part have been uncrossed.

- *J. S. Bach, 388 Four-Part Chorales* edited by János Dobra, Editio Musica Budapest
- *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Albert Schweizer, Breitkopf and Härtel
- *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Albert Schweizer, translated by Ernest Newmann, Dover
- *The Forms of Music*, Donald Francis Tovey, Oxford University Press
- *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Christoph Wolff, Oxford University Press

BWV 12

Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan

The first system of the musical score for BWV 12. It consists of three staves. The top staff is for Oboe (Ob, VI) in G major, 4/4 time, with a treble clef. The middle and bottom staves are for keyboard accompaniment, with a treble and bass clef respectively. The music begins with a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left hand. The Oboe part features a melodic line with a grace note and a slur over the final two notes.

The second system of the musical score. The Oboe part continues with a melodic line, including a trill-like figure. The keyboard accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

The third system of the musical score, concluding the piece. The Oboe part ends with a trill (marked 'tr') on a note. The keyboard accompaniment concludes with a final chord in the right hand and a half note in the left hand.

BWV 31

Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist

VI, Tr

The first system of the musical score for BWV 31. It consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff for the violin and two grand staff staves (treble and bass clefs) for the piano. The time signature is 4/4. The violin part features a melodic line with slurs and ornaments. The piano accompaniment is in a simple harmonic style.

The second system of the musical score. It continues the violin and piano parts from the first system. The piano part shows more complex rhythmic patterns in the bass line.

The third system of the musical score, concluding the piece. The violin part ends with a final cadence, and the piano accompaniment provides a solid harmonic foundation.

BWV 85

Weil du vom Tod erstanden bist

The musical score is presented in a standard format with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part begins with a 'VI' marking in the first measure of the first system. A trill ('tr') is indicated in the second measure of the first system. The score is divided into six systems, each containing a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and a more active treble line with various rhythmic patterns and ornaments.

BWV 136 Auf meinem lieben Gott

VI.

Musical score for BWV 136, measures 1-4. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features three staves: a vocal line (VI.) and two piano accompaniment staves (treble and bass clef). The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The piano accompaniment consists of a simple harmonic pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

Musical score for BWV 136, measures 5-8. The vocal line continues with quarter notes D5, E5, F5, and G5. The piano accompaniment maintains its harmonic structure, with some chromatic movement in the bass line.

Musical score for BWV 136, measures 9-12. The vocal line concludes with quarter notes A5, B5, and C6. The piano accompaniment provides a final harmonic resolution.

BWV 161 Herzlich tut mich verlangen

The image displays a musical score for the chorale BWV 161, 'Herzlich tut mich verlangen', by Johann Sebastian Bach. The score is arranged for a Flute (Fl.) and keyboard accompaniment. It consists of six systems of music, each with a single staff for the Flute and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for the keyboard. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The Flute part is characterized by a melodic line with many slurs and ornaments, while the keyboard accompaniment provides a steady harmonic and rhythmic foundation. The score includes repeat signs and various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and accidentals.

BWV 172

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

The musical score is presented in a standard format with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (F major), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into five systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a characteristic sixteenth-note pattern in the right hand, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The vocal line is a simple melody with some grace notes and a trill at the end.

Peter Billam was born in London in 1948, studied piano, and lived in Switzerland from 1973 to 1983, where he studied composition, classical guitar, flute and voice, worked as Musical Director of the *Théâtre Populaire Romand*, and as recording engineer, record producer and computer programmer. He moved to Tasmania in 1983, lectured in composition at the Conservatorium, conducted recorder ensembles and choirs, studied recorder, voice and harpsichord. He founded **www.pjb.com.au**, becoming the first composer to sell scores on-line, with on-line delivery, taking scores from Composer to Performer in one immediate step. *Www.pjb.com.au* offers a new approach to music publishing. These pieces are **written to be read, made to be played !**

Compositions at *www.pjb.com.au* include: *Five Short Pieces*, guitar, 1979; *Divisions on an Italian Ground*, flute and guitar, 1980; *De Profundis* and *Nacht*, on poems by Lama Anagarika Govinda, voice and piano, 1980; *Fünf Bagatellen*, piano, 1980; *Five Rounds*, choir, 1986; *Go Forth and Multiply*, choir, 1986; *Three Violin Duets*, 1987; *Fable*, for piano, 1987; *To Erich Jantsch*, SAATB recorders, 1988; *A Suite of Curves*, trombone (or horn) and piano, 1990; *Two Recorder Duets*, alto recorders, or other melody instruments, 1991; *Trombone Quintet*, trombone, flute, piano, bass, and percussion, 1994; *Three Songs*, on poems by Jack Kerouac, Vikram Seth and Dylan Thomas, voice and piano (only the first and third of these are available), 1994; *Piano Study*, piano, 1994; *Four Dances*, various ensembles including recorder quartet, string quartet, 1995; *The Poet in the Clouds*, on a poem by S. T. Coleridge, SATB choir, 1995; *Tres Casidas del Diván del Tamarit*, on poems by Federico García Lorca, voice and piano, 1997; *Three Suites*, for the solo line, piano, and piano and a solo line, 2000; *Die Zeiten*, on poems by Kästner, Bachman and Jünger, choir (only the second and third of these are available), 2000; *Three Duets* for flutes, 2001; *For Four Hands* for piano four hands, 2002; *Three Preludes* for piano, 2003; *Second Solo Suite* for flute, violin, viola or cello, 2003; *Guitar Duet* for two guitars, 2006; *We Who Mourn* for choir, 2007; *Trio With Guitar* for guitar and two clarinets or two recorders or two violas, 2008; *Canons* for two- and four-hand piano, 2009; *Flute Trio*, 2012; *Keyboard Studies*, 2013.

Arrangements include: By J. S. Bach: *Trio BWV 655*, piano and flute; *Vor deinen Thron BWV 668*, piano; *Fugue in F minor BWV 689*, SATB recorders; *Four Duets BWV 802-5*, keyboard; *Flute Sonata BWV 1031* transposed into G major for alto recorder and keyboard; *Flute Sonata BWV 1032* completed by Peter Billam for flute and keyboard, also in C major for alto recorder, and in G major for descant; *Ricercare a 3*, from the *Musikalisches Opfer* for keyboard; *Ricercare a 6*, for sSATBG recorders, or strings, or two keyboards; *Fuga Canonica in Epidiapente* for keyboard and melody instrument; from the *Art of Fugue: Contrapuncti 1, 4 and 9* for keyboard, and *Contrapunctus 14* as completed by D. F. Tovey, for keyboard, or for SATB recorders, or for strings; *Passacaglia and Fugue in c* for piano four hands; *Chorales with Descant* for melody instrument and piano; *Cello Suites I, II and III* for flute or alto recorder, *Forty Chorales* for piano, *Der Geist hilft* for SATB-SATB recorders. By Johannes Brahms: *Fugue in Ab minor for organ*, for SATB recorders and gamba, in A minor; *Choralvorspiele for organ* plus settings by Isaac, Bach, Praetorius, recorders. *John Carr*, *Divisions on an Italian Ground*, flute or recorder and guitar. By G. F. Händel: *Concerto Grosso in A minor op 6 no 4*, harpsichord and recorders; *Recorder Sonata in Bb no 5*, in G for tenor recorder and keyboard. *Claudio Monteverdi*, *Ecco Mormorar l'Onde*, SSATB recorders. By Arnold Schoenberg: *Verklärte Nacht* for piano. By Franz Schubert: *Four Songs*, voice and guitar; *Dances*, recorders and guitar, *Dances*, piano 4 hands. *Scriabin*, *Two Preludes op.67*; *Five Preludes op.74*, piano. *Telemann*, *Twelve Flute Fantasias*, recorder. *John Wilbye*, *Draw on sweet Night*, SSATB recorders, and for flute choir. *Twelve Italian Songs*, voice and guitar; *Fourteen Folk Dance Tunes*, recorder and guitar; *Bushband Dances*, violin, piano accordeon and banjo; *Easy Classical Pieces*, Bb trumpet and piano.

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