

Bach Piano I

Italian Concerto • 4 Toccatas
Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue



Judith Lambden



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

- 1 Toccata in C minor BWV 911 11'38
- 2 Toccata in D major BWV 912 14'07
- 3 Toccata in E minor BWV 914 8'09
- 4 Toccata in D minor BWV 913 14'33
- 5 Chromatic Fantasia & Fugue BWV 903 12'37

Italian Concerto in F major BWV 971
6 [] 4'20 7 Andante 5'54 8 Presto 4'06

Toccatas

The toccata originated in Italy about a century before Bach's time. The name comes from "toccare" meaning "to touch". Italian composers would improvise, or use these to try out a new harpsichord or organ. The virtuosic fast runs and brilliant cascading passages (with chordal accompaniments) also displayed the player's skill. Several were published around 1590. They were then developed into a longer form with defined sections. A flourish as introduction, followed by a fugal section, a slow chordal adagio, possibly more of the fugue section with embellishments, then finally, a lively gigue. Like the heights of extravagance and almost overwhelming decorative detail, of the baroque architecture of the day, toccatas were similarly full of virtuosity and intensity, yet retained their improvisational feeling. Bach wrote seven toccatas for harpsichord. They are amongst his earliest works. His later toccatas for organ, followed by a fugue, are magnificent. The most famous is the Toccata and Fugue in D minor.

Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue BWV 903

This shows Bach at his most inventive with flights of imagination and many flourishes and daring modulation into relatively remote keys. There is a dramatic "Recitative" interspersed with chords. The Fugue has a chromatic subject, and is tightly knit, including light episodes. All builds up to grandeur and magnificence.

Italian Concerto BWV 971

Bach wrote the "Concerto in the Italian taste" for two manual harpsichord and it was published in 1735. It is unusual in that a concerto is usually for orchestra contrasting with a solo instrument. Bach was influenced by the concerti of Vivaldi and Corelli. He transfers this idea writing for a single keyboard player. The lower keyboard would be loud and the upper keyboard softer. He marks "forte" and "piano" accordingly. There are three movements (fast-slow-fast). The outer movements, in the Italian exuberant, good humoured spirit flank a slow aria-like movement, with a beautiful, rhapsodic melody with florid embellishments above a repeating, calm and steady bass.



Judith Lambden

Judith was born in Creswick, Victoria in Australia. She graduated from the Melbourne University Conservatorium with a B.Mus(Hons) degree. While still in Melbourne for a further seven years, her teachers were Gordon McKeown for piano and John Ingram for theory and composition. She won many prizes and made national broadcast performances for ABC radio.

Having been awarded the Clarke Scholarship for three years of study at the Royal College of Music, Judith travelled to London. In her final year there, she won the Hopkinson Gold Medal and the Norris Prize. She then studied harpsichord in Siena, Italy, with Ruggiero Gerlin, who had been a pupil and associate of Wanda Landowska for twenty years.

Judith also studied under some of the great pianists and pedagogues of our times, including Kendall Taylor, Lamar Crowson, Nadia Boulanger and Paul Badura-Skoda. Later she was awarded a grant by the Dutch Government for one year of study with Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam. Aided by an ability to play a substantial number of Bach's keyboard works and other repertoire from memory, Judith has given many recitals in England, where she lived for 23 years, and throughout Europe. She broadcast for the BBC and Radio Hilversum. Recital venues included the Universities of Oxford, Durham, Colchester, Leicester, Surrey and London. Judith played and recorded, as harpsichordist, with the Dolmetsch Ensemble.



Since her return to Australia, concerts have included a performance of the Schumann Piano Concerto with the Camberwell Camerata and several solo piano recitals including two at the Castlemaine Festival. As harpsichordist with the group 'II Sole Barocco' there have been many tours and recitals including some at Monash University.

Judith taught at the Victorian College of the Arts and at other tertiary institutions, and became an AMEB examiner in 1985 as well as being an assessor for VCAA. She has adjudicated at more than sixty eisteddfodau throughout Australia.

Judith has recorded the Great B flat Sonata of Schubert, Bach's English and French Suites, the six Partitas, and is currently recording more J.S. Bach keyboard works, and other repertoire.

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