

Gunnar Johanses gives us the following notes on the music and individual works: "The majority of the works on this disc have rarely been heard or recorded. The fascination of these many early compositions is far from resting with completing or exhausting all possible sources of Bach keyboard material, it is rather a matter of going from one surprise to the next with the resultant cumulative elation over such finds, over so much untried music literature opening up to the roving ear of a probing interpreter.

1: Prelude in a minor – Bass Passus. From "*Clavier-Büchlein*" for W.F. Bach, 1720.

2: Prelude & Fugue in a minor, BWV 897. This could well have been written by Mozart himself during his period of great enthusiasm for J.S. Bach during the years 1781-2.

3: Fugue in A Major, BWV 949. Certainly an early piece with the repeated note pattern characteristic of the Lübeck influence. The fugue broadens out dramatically towards its end, with a surprise cadence and an organ point bringing it to a dramatic close. This is characteristic of Bach's free "Toccata" style.

4: Fugato in e minor. Mozart asked in a letter to his father: please send the Eberlin Fugues. Gunnar Johansen comments "I have long had the feeling that this piece could well have been originally by Eberlin".

5: Fugue in e minor, BWV 956. The theme recalls Jan Adam Reinken, indicating that this could be an early period Bach Fugue.

6: Fugue in a minor. Schmieder estimates approximately 1709 as the time of origin of this work, that is, from the early Weimar years. It seems already clearly to show Vivaldian influence, and indeed Vivaldi himself was active not too far away at the Court of Darmstadt until 1713. Schweitzer further attests that Bach while in Weimar especially occupied himself with the Italian composers - Frescobaldi, Legrenzi, Vivaldi, Albinoni and Corelli.

7: Prelude & Fugue in a minor, BWV 895. Schmieder suggests composition as possibly taking place at Cöthen, circa 1720, although Gunnar Johansen considers it be to be a work dating from the mid-Weimar years.

8: Fugue in B-flat Major, BWV 954. Schmieder again places this Fugue in Bach's Cöthen period, giving the approximate date as 1720. Johansen feels it belongs ten years earlier: to the first years in Weimar. Derived from Jan Adam Reinken's "*Hortus Musicus*" this Fugue is based on the *Allegro* from the 6th Sonata of this collection of the then famous Hamburg master.

9: Fantasia & Fugue in d minor, BWV 905. This is the original from which Busoni freely based his composition "*Sonatina brevis in Signo Joannis Sebastiani Magni*".

10: Fugue in a minor, BWV 947. A perfect example of North German music blended with Italian style, deriving no doubt from Bach's early "learning" years.

11: Fugue in A Major, BWV 950. Based on a theme from one of Tomaso Albinoni's Trio Sonatas, Opus 1. Here Schmieder gives the date as circa 1709. Johansen suggests the origin as being based on Reinken's similar work in B-flat.

12: Prelude (Fantasia) in c minor, BWV 921. This work must be an early Bach work and has features reminiscent of Alessandro Scarlatti.

13: Fughetta in C Major, BWV 872a. This is the early form of what many years later, much altered, became the Fugue in c-sharp minor (No. 27) in Book II of the 48 Preludes & Fugues - "*The Well-tempered Clavier*".

14: Fugue in e minor, BWV 945. One of Bach's earliest compositions, probably dating from his time in Ohrdruf, before 1700, when he would have been 14 or 15 years of age.

15: Sonata in D Major, BWV 963. Bach's first Sonata, Arnstadt 1704, is a cross between a *da camera* Sonata and the programmatic Kuhnau type. The last movement, a fugal Gigue "*Thema all' Imitatio Cucca*" imitates a cackling hen.

16: Fugue in B-flat Major, BWV 955. Arnstadt 1703-1707. This reworking of a Fugue by Johann Christoph Erselius differs considerably from the original at the end of the work. The first Fugue of the "*Well-tempered Clavier*" also has a theme strongly akin to this Erselius subject.

17: Fantasia in g minor, BWV 920. Both the North German and Alessandro Scarlatti influence is here present. Alessandro Scarlatti's Clavier Works have been undeservedly neglected, almost entirely eclipsed by his son, Domenico.

18: Concerto & Fuga in c minor, BWV 909. Another work strongly influenced by Alessandro Scarlatti, not only in the Concerto, but also in the Fugue, which is far less strict than Bach's Fugues usually are, maintaining a *concertante* style. The Concerto qualifies as such by the Soli-Tutti plan characteristic of the Italians. It may be looked upon as the first Solo Concerto (without accompaniment), thus belonging with the 16 Concertos for Solo Harpsichord, the "*Concerti in Italienischem Gusto*".

Gunnar JOHANSEN (1906-1991) was one of the foremost keyboard players of his time and an immensely prolific composer. Born in Denmark on January 21, 1906, he was closely associated with the Busoni circle in Berlin in the 1920s and studied with Egon Petri. After tours in Europe, Johansen emigrated to the United States, at first living on the West Coast. He was a major figure in the musical life of San Francisco and gave weekly radio concerts for NBC.

In 1939 he joined the faculty at the University of Wisconsin as the first performing Artist-in-Residence in America. Based just outside Madison, at Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, Johansen had his own professional recording facilities in his home, where he recorded the entire keyboard Works of J.S. Bach, made available to the public on his own record label, Artist Direct. The Sperrhake Harpsichord (of Passau, Bavaria) used in his home studio was a gift, along with a clavichord and spinet, from the Oscar Mayer Foundation.

