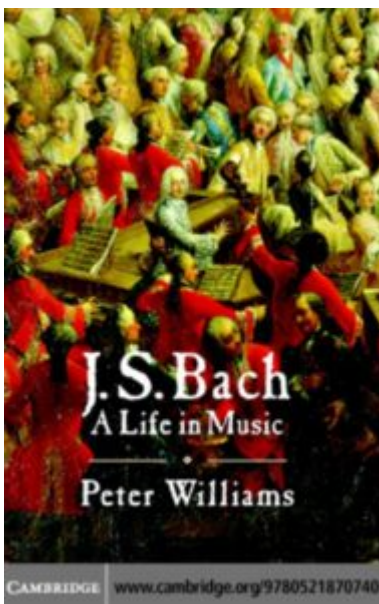


J.S. Bach (BWV 543) Prélude – Piano arr. by Liszt (S.462)

[J.S. Bach \(BWV 543\) Prélude – Piano arr. by Liszt \(S.462\) with sheet music](#)



[Bach's sheet music](#)

Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543 is a piece of organ music written by Johann Sebastian Bach sometime around his years as court organist to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar (1708–1713).

There are two versions of the Prelude, both dating from the same period in Weimar (1708–1713). The versions of the fugue

are identical, whereas the two versions of the prelude are distinct, the first version BWV 543/1a is shorter and presumed to be the earlier.

The differences between the two versions of the prelude are discussed in [Williams \(2003\)](#): the earlier version is 43 bars long, while the later version is 53 bars long. The main differences occur in bars 1–6 of BWV 543a/1 and bars 1–9 of 543/1 where the descending semiquaver broken-chord figures are altered and truncated.

The same applies for the corresponding passages for bars 17–18 in BWV 543a/1 and bars 26–28 in BWV 543/1. In addition the triplet semiquavers in the later prelude are notated as demisemiquavers. As [Beechey \(1973\)](#) observes, “The more serious question concerning the opening passage of the prelude in its early and later versions is the fact that Bach changed his demisemiquavers to semiquavers [...] and in doing so preserved a calmer mood and a less rhapsodic feeling in the music; this change, however, does not and cannot mean that the early version is wrong or that the composer was mistaken.

In the later version, Bach was thinking on a larger scale and was considering the fugue and companion movement on a similarly large scale [...] The simplest way of extending the early prelude was to double the note values of the passages cited, and thus make its flow more even.”