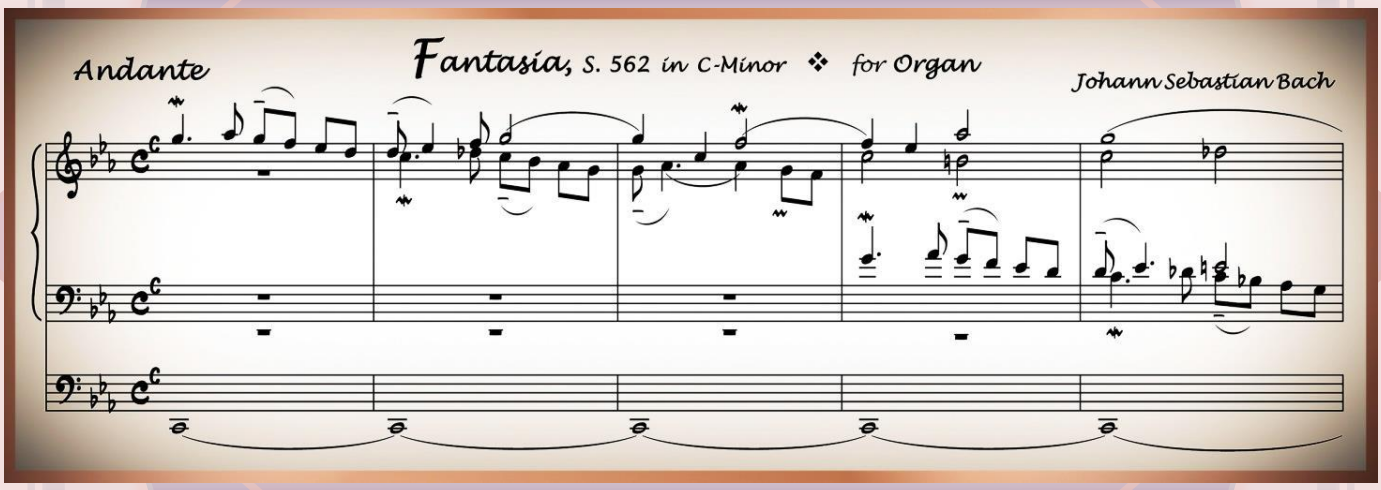
Johann Sebastian Bach

Fantasia

in C-Minor, S. 562



for Organ

A Performance Edition

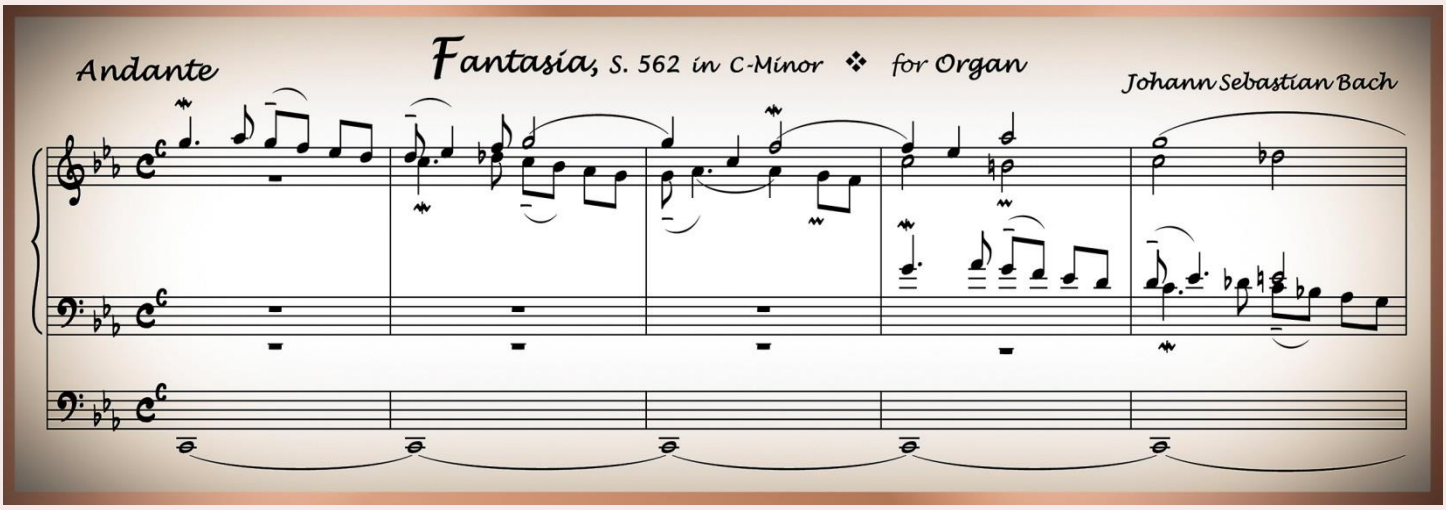
Fruhauf Music Publications

2018

Johann Sebastian Bach

Fantasia in C-Minor, S. 562

for Organ



Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach's Fantasia with Fugue (fragment) in C-minor, S. 562, is drawn from an autograph manuscript dating from ca. 1747–8 and earlier. In this instance 'and earlier' applies to the fantasia, a work ascribed by some to his second Weimar term of employment or early years in Cöthen. The sublimely somber five-voice fugal composition presents a motivic subject, one measure in length, that migrates imitatively from one voice to another as it weaves its way through extensive thematic and episodic excursions and modulatory peregrinations. The eventual return to C-minor is confirmed by an extended tonic pedalpoint underpinning the closing flourishes of upward-cascading chords, followed by an abbreviated *recitativo* and cadence. The manuscript displays frequently recurring thematic *appoggiatura* figures, appearing as diminutively sized grace-notes; they are perhaps a reflection of international tastes garnered by Bach from the ducal library's music holdings. While they might hint at French notational influences, their presence could also be the result of ongoing *ad lib.* recraftings of the autograph by the composer over a period of time, with symbols inserted individually—and extemporaneously—from one reprise to another.

The autograph score also presents the first 27 measures of S. 562's fugue on one full page; it is paired with the three-page fantasia, but there is no indication of whether subsequent pages were intended and/or lost. The single page's fragment is dated ca. 1747–48 by RISM (*Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*), and by Bach Archive Online.

Publication of the fantasia and fugue marks the 333rd anniversary of Bach's birthday, an impressive span of time, and perhaps a phenomenon of significance to scholars of numerology in the composer's life and musical output. Both scores offer theoretical interpretations of Bach's original intentions: the fantasia consistently notates each grace-note as an eighth-note; the fugue presents an entirely speculative realization of the fragment. Both compositions are 'flights of fancy', both are fugues and/or *ricercare*—each one in its own right—and both are intended for performance.

Sources: Widor, Charles-Marie, and Albert Schweitzer, ed. *Johann Sebastian Bach, Complete Organ Works, Vol. III.* New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1913, 1940, p. 29-31. To access an Internet link for download and viewing of a high-resolution PDF document copy of the original four-page Bach autograph, visit **Bach Archive** online at: www.bach-digital.de/receive/BachDigitalSource_source_00001543.

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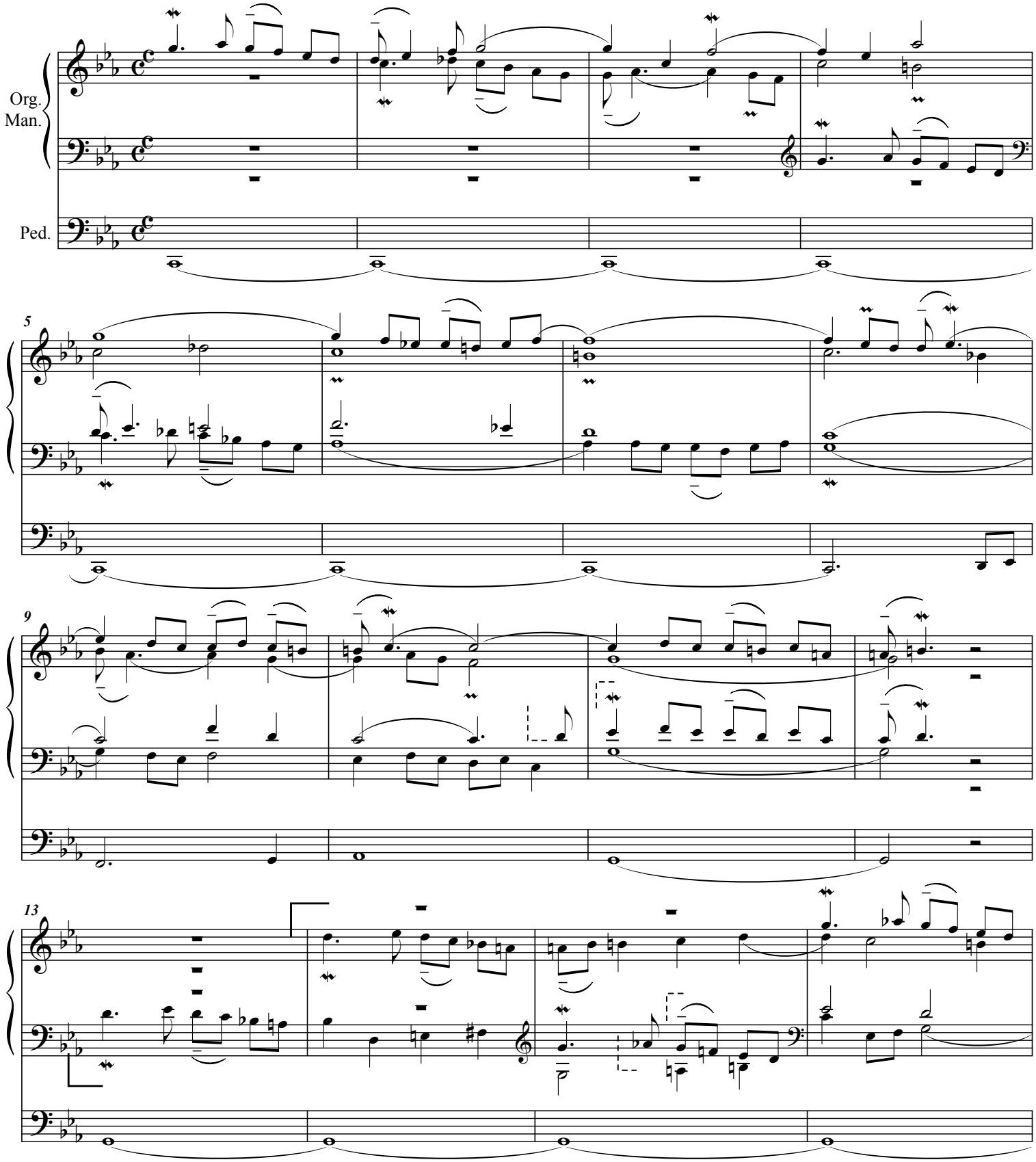
Edited by
Ennis Fruhauf



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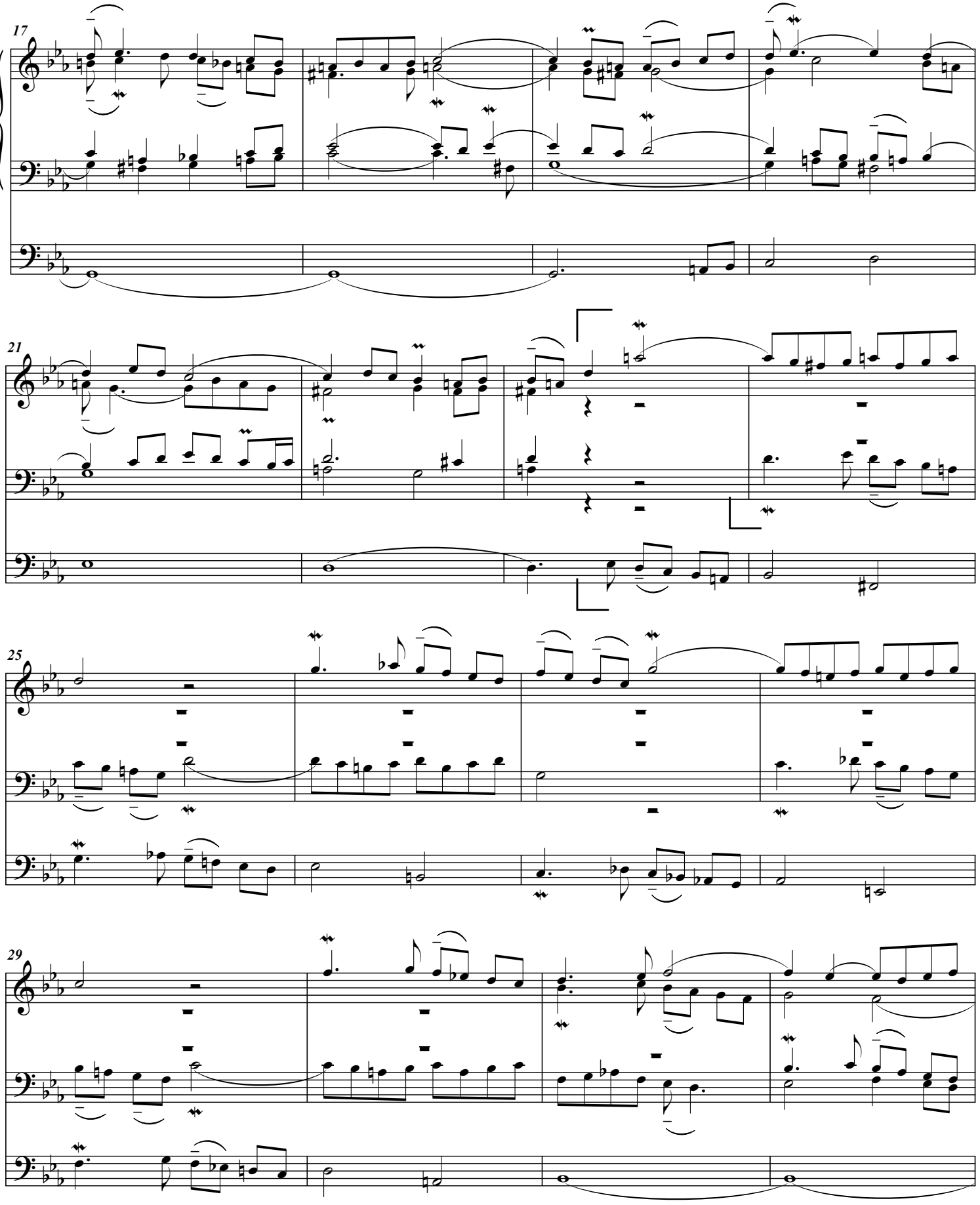
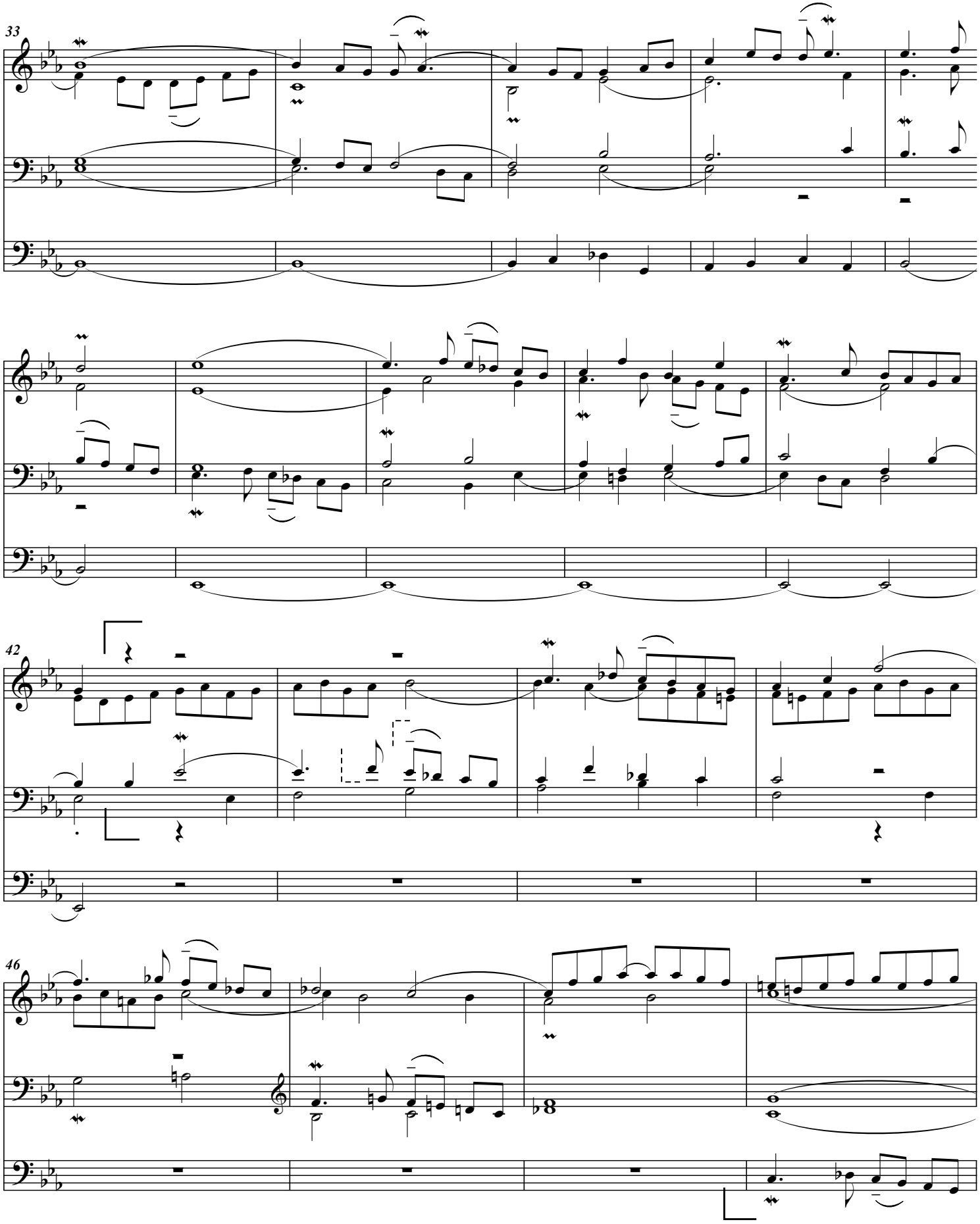
Johann Sebastian Bach ~ Fantasia in C-Minor, S. 562

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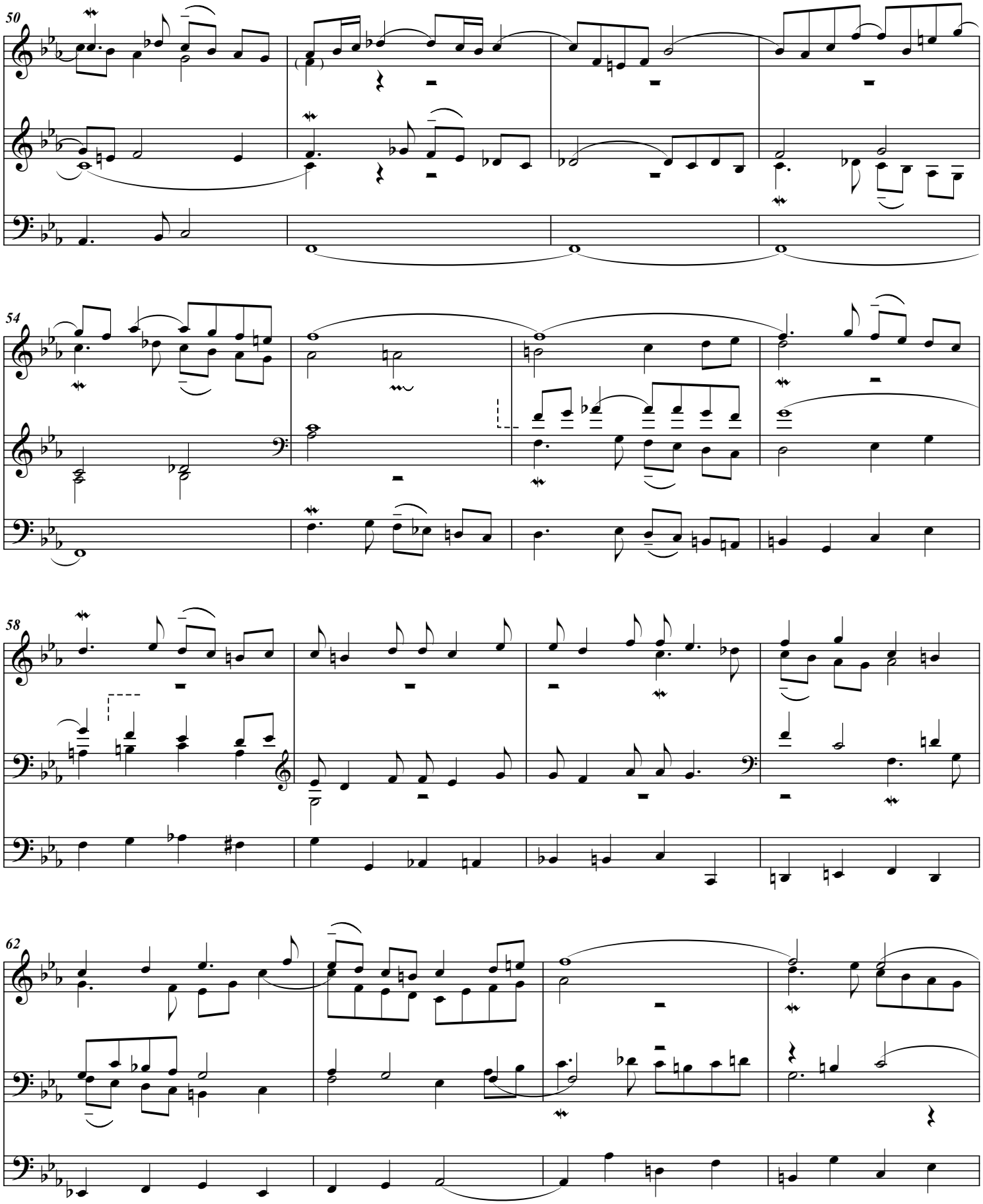
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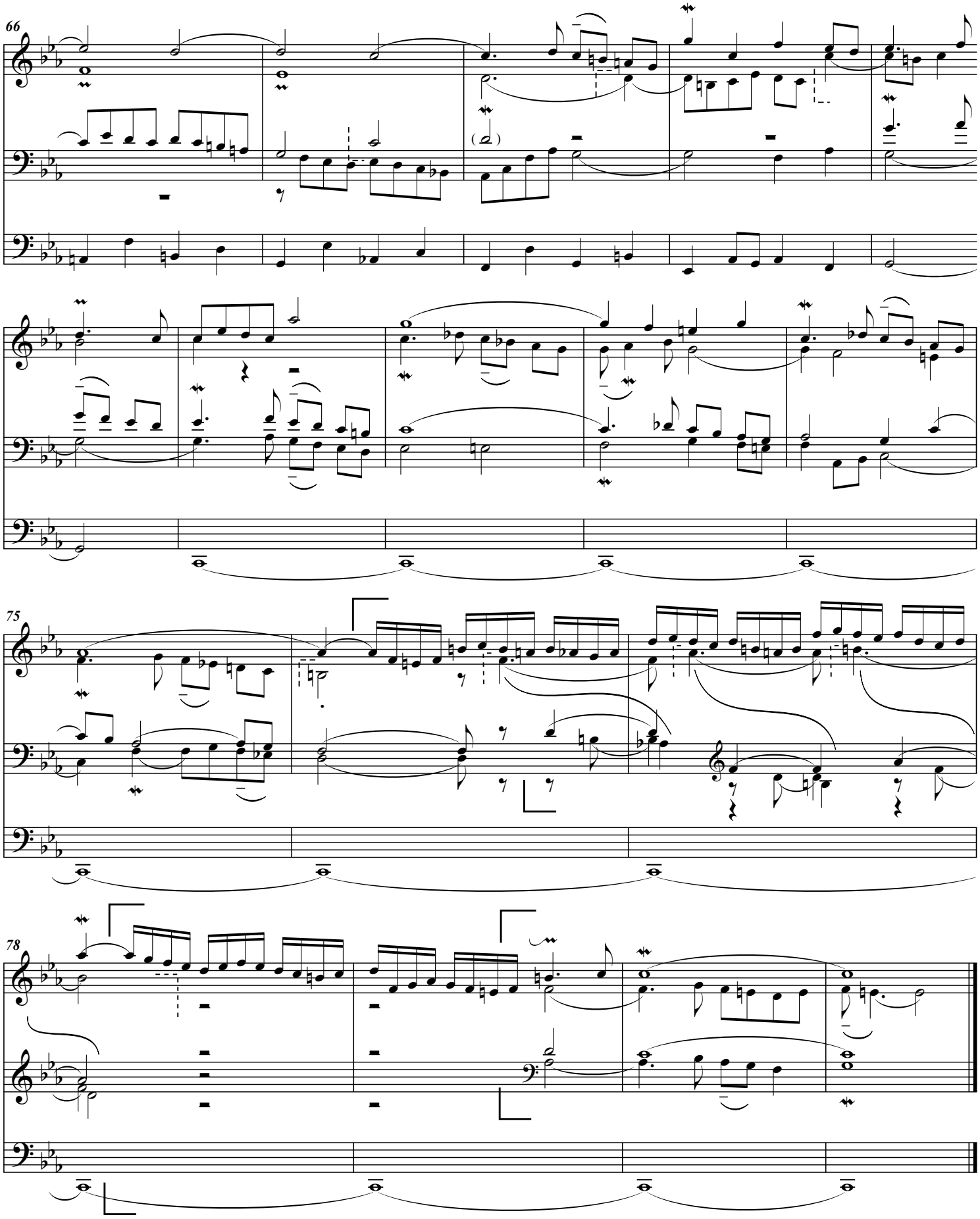
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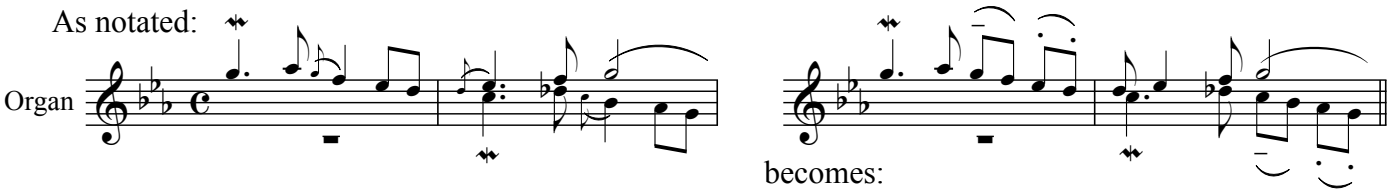
Appendix

Notation *of the* Recurring Grace-Note Appogiatura Figurations



Closing Comments

A Few Words *about the* Performing Edition

The fantasia's preparation includes renotation of the ever present grace-notes that appear to have been added incrementally by Bach, perhaps over a number of years and in the course of multiple revisitations. The first two measures are displayed above, for the sake of clarification. The presence of the multiple accretions might encourage additional carefully improvised ornamentation, such as can be seen throughout the composition, including upward- and downward-resolving *appogiaturas* and occasional application of mordants.

The time signature presented in the autograph manuscript is a doubled C, with the second symbol placed above the upper right corner of the primary character. The implied interpretation suggests that the composer intended cut-time, or two half-notes per measure, even though notated and beamed for convenience and clarification as four quarter-notes per measure. The overall mood and esthetic of this soulfully sublime work will be enhanced by an unrushed tempo and subtle application of varying degrees of legato and non-legato touches.

Of historical interest, the initial six pitches presented in the pedal part of the fantasia (c, d, e-flat, f, g, and a-flat) outline a C-minor hexachord, offering evidence of Bach's intent to adhere to the precepts of a classical hexachord fantasy in his preparation of S. 562. This occurence is also to be found in the first six pedal-note pitches of his Fantasia in G-major, S. 572 (specifically and in order of appearance: g, a, b, c, d, and e). While perhaps no more than coincidental, the similar observances of a formalized compositional tradition suggest that the two works, whether improvisatory fantasias, fugues or ricercars, might both date from his second Weimar tenure.

There are several structural divisions apparent in the body of the fantasia that have been demarcated by bold L-brackets, hinting at possible manual changes that might allow for contrasting dynamics and registrations. For the purpose of this edition, specific assignments have been avoided so as to preclude any one preferred reading or interpretation over another, given the extraordinarily expressive potential inherent in the composition's overall arch form.

Ennis Fruhauf
2018

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