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**The Solo Violin Works of Bach and Telemann: A Comparison of  
Formal and Stylistic Models and Fugal Writing for Solo Violin**

Chi Lui Flora Wong

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GCMusSt

GradDipPMus

A Mus A

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## **Abstract**

Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Philipp Telemann both composed sets of works for solo violin. Bach's Six Solos for Violin without Accompanying Bass, BWV 1001–1006 (commonly referred to as his Six Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin) and Telemann's Twelve Fantasies for Violin without Bass, TWV 40:14–25 were written only fifteen years apart, yet vary greatly in their scope and the challenges that they present the performer. This study aims to guide the modern performer towards a deeper technical, stylistic and structural understanding of the works, as well as providing practical performance suggestions for some of the technical challenges presented by the music. Outlines of how each composer achieved a balance of unity and variety in the structure and style of their works are provided, while particular attention is given to the fugal movements in each set. The idiomatic violin techniques employed by each composer to achieve variety, polyphony and harmonic complexity in their fugues for solo violin are examined.

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None.

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## Introduction

Johann Sebastian Bach's cycle of Six Solos for Violin without Accompanying Bass, BWV 1001–1006 (commonly referred to as his Six Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin) occupy a prominent place within the instrument's repertory, lauded by performers and scholars for its synthesis of instrumental mastery and compositional innovation. However, it is by no means the only contemporary example of a set of harmonically and contrapuntally compelling works for solo violin, a primarily melodic instrument with limited capacity for chordal and contrapuntal textures. Georg Philipp Telemann's Twelve Fantasias for Violin without Bass, TWV 40:14–25 were written almost contemporaneously to Bach's Six Solos, and display remarkable variety in both instrumental and formal compositional techniques. This study, prompted by the practical components of the Master of Philosophy (Music Performance) degree and offering the perspective of a performer undertaking research, compares the instrumental writing of Bach and Telemann in their respective solo violin works. It examines their formal and stylistic features, as well as the idiomatic violin techniques used by each composer to achieve variety, polyphony and harmonic complexity in their fugal writing for a solo string instrument. It seeks to guide the modern performer towards a deeper technical, stylistic and structural understanding of the works, as well as providing practical performance suggestions for some of the technical challenges presented by the music.

By the early eighteenth century, the influence of the Italian school of virtuoso violin playing had given rise to a tradition of Austro-German violinist-composers which included Johann Heinrich Schmelzer, Johann Jakob Walther, Johann Paul von Westhoff, and Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber, all of whom composed works or sets of works extending the musical and technical possibilities of the solo instrument (Ledbetter 18–35; Stowell 12). While it is difficult to ascertain the degree to which Bach and Telemann were familiar with the solo violin works of their contemporaries and predecessors, most scholars acknowledge the works of the aforementioned performer/composers as possible sources of inspiration (Williams 141–42; Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 427). Arcangelo Corelli's *Sonate a violino e violone o cimbalò*, op. 5 of 1700, alleged by Allsop to be “the most commercially successful volume of music ever to have been published,” should also be considered a significant influence with regard to both establishing the *sonata da chiesa* and *sonata da camera* forms and containing the first fully-fledged fugal movements for violin, albeit for the less restricted duo sonata instrumentation (120, 132; Schröder 53).

Given the violin's restricted capacity for rendering chords and polyphonic textures, a thorough understanding of the instrument and idiomatic techniques such as multiple-stopping and

devices implying polyphony<sup>1</sup> are required in order to write music for unaccompanied violin that is harmonically and contrapuntally complex. This critical commentary will begin with an overview of Bach's Six Solos and Telemann's Twelve Fantasias that will discuss the background of the works, the composers' engagement with the violin and the surviving sources from which modern editions are prepared, followed by a survey of the principal literature.<sup>2</sup> The following chapters compare the formal and stylistic models and the fugal writing in the two sets of works, and examine the way in which idiomatic techniques such as multiple-stopping and different types of implied polyphony were used by the composers. The similarities and differences in formal and stylistic design and technical challenges, revealed by a comparison of these works, provides valuable insight into not only the compositional processes of Bach and Telemann but also some of broader issues presented to performers by mid eighteenth-century violin repertoire.

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<sup>1</sup> Alternations in tessitura, timbre and/or note values can suggest the presence of multiple voices on a single melody instrument, and on bowed stringed instruments this can be achieved through devices such as style brisé and bariolage, which will be discussed below.

<sup>2</sup> The secondary literature consulted and discussed is limited to English-language sources; the examination of German and other language sources is beyond the scope of this critical commentary. In particular, the observations of Ledbetter, Lester, Schröder and Zohn provided a fundamental point of departure for the devising and development of this study.

## Chapter 1: Background to the Works

Bach's autograph fair copy of the Six Solos is dated 1720, which was during his time as Capellmeister in Cöthen.<sup>3</sup> In the following years he also produced fair copies of the Brandenburg Concertos (1721), the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (1722) and the *Inventions and Sinfonias* (1723); these manuscripts are sometimes referred to as the Cöthen Demonstration Cycles, and appear to represent a summary of Bach's most significant achievements as a composer and performer up to that time (Geck 525; Ledbetter 16). Whilst there is notational evidence that supports the theory that at least some parts of the Six Solos date back to Bach's time as concertmaster in Weimar, much of the violin writing is of a maturity more comparable to that of the violin parts of the Brandenburg Concertos than a similar work known to be from his Weimar period, the G minor Fuga for violin and continuo, BWV 1026 (Ledbetter 5, 14; Wolff 133; Wollny IX). The facsimile of Bach's autograph manuscript is readily available in a number of editions; this study refers to the one published by Bärenreiter in 1977 (Bach, *Sei Solo*). The facsimile score is supplemented by the Bärenreiter edition prepared by Günter Haußwald and revised by Peter Wollny, whose comprehensive preface discusses the place of the works in music history, the possible circumstances of their composition and the sources used in preparing the modern scholarly edition.

The title page of the manuscript reads: *Sei Solo. | â | Violino | senza | Basso | accompagnato. | Libro Primo. | da | Joh: Seb: Bach. | a[nn]o. 1720*. One might argue that their common name today, the Sonatas and Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin, is not only unwieldy but also misleading: the violin is not so much “missing” an accompaniment as it is providing its own (Ledbetter 2; Williams 140). Although BWV 1002, 1004 and 1006 are widely known today as “Partitas,” Bach uses the term *Partia*, which was a standard term in central Germany for suite-type works and in south Germany and Austria for violin virtuoso works at the time (Ledbetter 3). This study will adhere to Bach's terminology. The designation *Libro Primo* is commonly taken to indicate that Bach intended to compose a series of solo instrumental cycles, with the Six Suites for Solo Violoncello, BWV 1007–1012 assumed to be *Libro Secondo*, and a solitary Solo for Transverse Flute, BWV 1013 possibly a fragment from an unfinished *Libro Terzo* (Wollny viii–ix). It is also possible that the solo violin and cello works were intended as a set of twelve works, a compositional format largely established by the commercial success of Corelli's sonata collections (Schmidt-Beste 35).

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<sup>3</sup> Berlin Staatsbibliothek, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, *Mus. ms. Bach P967*.

Although Bach was primarily known during his lifetime as a keyboard virtuoso, and to us today as a composer, his solo violin works leave us in no doubt that his command and knowledge of the instrument were both profound. The “life and works” volumes on Bach by Christoph Wolff, Martin Geck (translated by John Hargraves), and Peter Williams provide a comprehensive background to the Six Solos in their chapters on his time at Weimar and Cöthen and his cycles of instrumental music. The authors explore possible influences, compositional purpose and the technical and formal features of the works. It may be assumed that Bach would have received his earliest music training from his father, and the violin was integral to the professions of both his father and grandfather as court and town musicians (Ledbetter 13). Bach’s first employment was as a rank-and-file violinist at Weimar, at which court the prominent violinist-composer Johann Paul von Westhoff was also employed at the time. Upon returning to Weimar several years later Bach held there the positions of organist and court musician, which included teaching violin to his pupils, and eventually concertmaster (Ledbetter 13). Bach’s second son, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, gives the following description of Bach as a violinist in a letter to Johann Nikolaus Forkel, Bach’s first biographer:

In his youth, and until the approach of old age, he played the violin cleanly and penetratingly, and thus kept the orchestra in better order than he could have done with the harpsichord. He understood to perfection the possibilities of all stringed instruments. This is evidenced by his Solos for the violin and for the violoncello *senza basso*. One of the greatest violinists told me once that he had seen nothing more perfect for learning to be a good violinist, and could suggest nothing better to anyone eager to learn, than the said violin Solos without bass. (qtd. in Ledbetter 14)

The solo violin works reveal not only Bach’s command of the instrument’s performing techniques to a high level of virtuosity, but also his innovative compositional abilities with regard to writing intricate counterpoint and refined harmony even without an accompanying bass part (Wolff 232). Williams takes particular note of the fact that although multiple-stopped chords are naturally quite prominent in these works, Bach often uses thinner textures without compromising the richness of the harmonic palette (142). The Six Solos also encompass a range of formal structures, exhibiting the instrument’s versatility. The Sonatas consist of a slow movement, a fugue, another slow movement, and a fast movement, while the Partias contain a series of dance movements (Geck 547). However, within this formal unity, each of the Sonatas and Partias displays distinct formal and

stylistic differences, and the varied technical and expressive challenges that these works present to violinists have made them central to the pedagogic repertoire for over two centuries (Lester v). Both Geck and Williams discuss Bach's didactic intentions and the works' formal and stylistic features. Geck does so in a chapter on the "Cöthen Demonstration Cycles", in which he highlights the didactic and formal coherence of the *Inventions and Sinfonias*, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and the Six Solos, and Williams in his chapter on Bach's time in Cöthen. By contrast, Ledbetter emphasises that viewing Bach's solo instrumental works as a whole enhances one's understanding of them, and he examines the solo works for violin, cello, lute and flute as a cohesive group rather than considering the Six Solos with the other instrumental cycles of Bach's Cöthen period (vii). Individual movements are analysed in varying degrees of detail depending on their complexity; points of discussion include but are not limited to the movement's formal, stylistic, harmonic and textural features, possible antecedents and technical and interpretive challenges.

The prominence of the Six Solos in the violinist's repertoire is such that performers and researchers have written extensively on the topic; two particularly important contributions are Joel Lester's detailed and perceptive volume which examines in depth the structural and stylistic features of the works, and Dutch baroque violinist and pedagogue Jaap Schröder's performer's guide to the works. Schröder not only provides performance advice for the baroque violinist, but also aims to illustrate ways in which the player of a modern instrument can adapt his or her technique to meet the stylistic challenges presented by Bach's music.<sup>4</sup> The scope of Lester's book is wider than that of a performing guide in that he sees a creative unity in Bach's works that transcends their genres, and he attempts to lay out some of the features of Bach's stylistic approach and their implications for the performer. Robin Stowell also selects Bach's Partia No. 3 in E major for violin solo, BWV 1006 for a case study, and discusses its provenance, dissemination and stylistic and formal features before providing practical performance suggestions for each individual movement and for overall stylistic approach.

Georg Philipp Telemann's Twelve Fantasias for solo violin, on the other hand, are not as widely known or recognised as an essential part of a violinist's repertoire as Bach's works are, despite featuring some of the most original writing for solo violin from the eighteenth century. This is reflected in the relative scarcity of English-language sources on Telemann's life and works. The most prominent English-language work on Telemann and his music is Steven Zohn's *Music for a*

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<sup>4</sup> The author of this critical commentary has had some involvement with historical performance practice and period violins, but this study is written from the perspective of a violinist performing the works on a modern instrument.

*Mixed Taste: Style, Genre, and Meaning in Telemann's Instrumental Works*, published in 2008; as indicated in the preface, it was the first book-length study on Telemann to have been published in English since Richard Petzoldt's biographical volume was translated in 1974 (Zohn viii). Petzoldt's volume is written in a semi-popular manner, and at the time of the translation's publication, reviews in *The Musical Quarterly* and *The Musical Times* highlighted the limitations of the popular format of the book, citing lack of depth in the discussions of Telemann's works and a number of errors in translation (Bowman 341–42; Peckham Day 665–68).

Steven Zohn's article in *Grove Music Online* is the biographical source that represents the current state of research on the composer in English. *Music for a Mixed Taste* aims to demonstrate through the study of Telemann's instrumental music that he was not only a highly prolific contemporary of Bach, but an innovative and "at times even revolutionary" composer who applied his skill across many genres and styles (*A Mixed Taste* xi). While this text is chiefly concerned with surveying the repertory and examining selected works in greater depth, it also incorporates discussion of Telemann and his works in the context of his professional and social environment. Passages of particular interest to this critical commentary include those concerning his training and the music and musicians which may have influenced him, both as a composer and a violinist, and the section of the chapter "The Hamburg Publications" concerning the Twelve Fantasias, which mainly deals with the forms contained therein but also touches upon Telemann's use of contrapuntal textures and varying styles. Zohn's 1996 review of a newly-published edition of the Twelve Fantasias edited by Yvonne Morgan is in fact for the most part a brief historical, musical and source analysis of the works, and provides some details not included in his book (Rev. of *Zwölf Fantasien*, 1022–23).

Telemann published collections of fantasias for flute, keyboard, violin and viola da gamba respectively between 1732 and 1736, a particularly productive phase of his career in Hamburg (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 426). Telemann's self-publishing business was arguably the most active music-publishing business in Germany during the late 1720s and 1730s (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 338), and the composer regularly made announcements in various newspapers whenever musical editions were completed (Reipsch). It is likely that the violin Fantasias were composed around 1733 (thirteen years later than the date on Bach's manuscript of the Six Solos), as in that year Telemann issued an announcement that listed them as "works that can be published by and by," and in a 1735 printed catalogue they are listed as "12 fantasias for the violin without bass, of which 6 include fugues and 6 are *Galanterien*" (Reipsch; Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 430).

While no autograph or original print copy of the Fantasias is extant, a title page from the

print edition has survived, mistakenly attached to a print copy of the Twelve Fantasias for Transverse Flute, TWV 40:2–13, and reads: *Fantasia | per il | VIOLINO | senzo Basso* (Reipsch). The score itself survives in a copy in an unknown hand that appears to have been copied from the print edition (Reipsch). Consequently, the main source used for this study is the Bärenreiter edition, also edited by Günter Haußwald, with a much briefer preface than Wollny provided for the Six Solos. Haußwald describes the Fantasias as “intended for the amateur or the instrumental student” but also acknowledges Telemann’s varied approach to formal construction, “keen sense of polyphonic thought” and knowledge of the “playing potentialities” of the instrument. The facsimile of the aforementioned manuscript, purportedly copied from the print edition of Telemann’s own publishing house, is available as a publication from Edition Walhall. The preface by Brit Reipsch, like Wollny’s preface to the Bach works, examines the circumstances of the work’s composition and the origins of the source manuscript, and also discusses some of the compositional features of the works in greater detail. Like Bach, Telemann seemed to have intended the violin Fantasias as part of a series of solo instrumental cycles, along with the collections of fantasias for flute, keyboard and viola da gamba (the last unfortunately lost), all published between 1732 and 1736 (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 426).

We know from Telemann’s autobiographies and letters that he regarded the violin as his primary instrument (Reipsch; Zohn *A Mixed Taste* 123); it was one of the first instruments he taught himself to play at the age of ten (Zohn, “Telemann, Georg Philipp” n. pag.). His working partnership at Eisenach with violinist and dancing master Pantaleon Hebenstreit must have been a stimulating collaboration, as some of Telemann’s earliest concertos were works for one or two violins and strings (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 123). Telemann recounted Hebenstreit’s skill and how their performances of concertos together galvanised him to hone his own technique in the following anecdote:

In this connection, I recall the aforementioned Herr Hebenstreit’s strength on the violin, which certainly placed him in the first rank among all other masters. So when we had to play a concerto together, I locked myself up for several days before, violin in hand, shirtsleeve rolled up on the left arm, and with strong ointments for my nerves, and gave myself lessons so that I would be somewhat able to rise up against his power. And behold! It assisted my noticeable improvement. (qtd. in Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 123)

Telemann’s proficiency in violin technique is reflected in the idiomatic writing for the

instrument in the Fantasias that allows for remarkable ease of interpretation with regard to fingering (Reipsch). The Fantasias also highlight his skill in the application of techniques that imply polyphony on the solo violin. “Telemann’s use here of compound lines to simulate additional voices... is nearly unparalleled in its ingenuity,” writes Zohn (Rev. of *Zwölf Fantasien*, 1022).

Although Telemann’s violin Fantasias could have been inspired by a handful of earlier solo violin works of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, including those of Bach, he may also have been drawing upon the tradition among violinists and viola da gambists through the seventeenth century of improvising solo instrumental fantasias (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 427). The structures employed by Telemann within his Fantasias vary greatly: some begin with a slow movement or prelude followed by a fugal movement, while others make use of concerto-like construction, binary allegro forms or reprised fast movements, and a wide variety of different lively dance movements are employed as the final movements of the Fantasias. The formal variety found in these works typifies Telemann’s skill in moving fluently between older styles from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the new *galant* style (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 431).

As mentioned above, there was already an established tradition of Austro-German violinist-composers when Bach and Telemann wrote their works for solo violin. The existing literature explores to varying degrees works that might be considered predecessors to the solo violin works of Bach and Telemann; although it is impossible to know the degree to which Bach and Telemann were familiar with the solo violin works of contemporaries such as Schmelzer, Walther, Westhoff and Biber, they are certainly acknowledged as possible influences (Ledbetter 18-35; Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 427). Ledbetter’s volume in particular begins with detailed chapters on German traditions of solo instrumental music up to Bach’s time and concepts of style and structure in relation to the works, while Stowell provides a comprehensive chapter on the repertory and principal sources relating to violin-playing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which includes a survey of composers and works that could have influenced Bach and Telemann. Jerrie Cadek Lucktenberg’s 1983 dissertation also provides a more in-depth examination of the solo violin repertory up to Bach’s time. It covers precedents for the genre from the lute and viola da gamba literature and prevalent instrumental music forms before examining the relevant output of violinist-composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with musical examples aiding the comparison of the compositional and technical devices used in their works. Corelli’s influence on contrapuntal violin writing and the propagation of *sonata da chiesa* and *sonata da camera* form in instrumental chamber music is examined in detail by Allsop; Schmidt-Beste also dedicates a chapter of his volume on the sonata to Corelli’s influence on sonata composition.



## Chapter 2: Form and Style in Bach's Six Solos and Telemann's Twelve Fantasias

One of the ways in which Bach's and Telemann's works for solo violin differ the most is in form. While one of the major differences between Bach's Solos and Telemann's Fantasias is in phrase length – Bach explores particularly long harmonic sentences in his collection while Telemann's are typically quite short – there are parallels to be found in the larger structural processes used by each composer (Ledbetter 115). For example, there is a clear correspondence to be found between the set of twelve works for a solo string instrument comprising Bach's six violin Solos and six cello Suites, and Telemann's division of his twelve Fantasias into two stylistically contrasting sets of six works (Zohn 427). Both works make reference to the compositional format of a twelve-work set propagated by the commercial success of Corelli's collections of sonatas (Schmidt-Beste 35).

As noted in Chapter 1, Bach's Sonatas each comprise a slow opening movement, a fugue, another slow movement and a fast movement, conforming closely to the *sonata da chiesa* form, while his Partias comprise a series of dance movements, loosely following the *sonata da camera* or dance-suite tradition, both established by Corelli as widespread norms of the genre through the "unprecedented international success" of his works (Schmidt-Beste 34). Their movement structure is shown below (see Tables 1 to 3). Telemann uses a wider range of formal structures in his solo violin works, perhaps unsurprisingly as the "fantasia" by definition is a genre that allows the composer much more freedom in structure than the sonata or partia. The Fantasias are three- or four-movement works, but the only perceivable planned consistency to their structure is Telemann's aforementioned assertion in his catalogue that "6 include fugues and 6 are *Galanterien*" – although even this refers more to stylistic approach than formal structure (Reipsch).

**Table 1 Movement types in Telemann's Fantasias for solo violin**

Fantasia	Tonality	Movements
1	B-flat major	Largo – Allegro (fugue) – Grave – Allegro (repeated)
2	G major	Largo – Allegro (fugue) – Allegro (gigue)
3	F minor	Adagio – Presto (fugue) – Grave (modulatory) – Vivace (menuet)
4	D major	Vivace (fugue) – Grave (modulatory) – Allegro (gigue)
5	A major	Allegro – Presto (fugue) – Allegro – Presto (fugue) – Andante (modulatory) – Allegro (binary)
6	E minor	Grave (sarabande) – Presto (fugue) – Siciliana – Allegro (bourée/rigaudon)
7	E-flat major	Dolce – Allegro (binary allegro) – Largo – Presto (gavotte)
8	E major	Piacevolmente – Spirituoso (binary allegro) – Allegro (passepied)
9	B minor	Siciliana – Vivace (binary allegro) – Allegro (gigue)
10	D major	Presto (fugue) – Largo – Allegro (gigue)
11	F major	Un poco vivace (binary allegro) – Soave – Un poco vivace (repeated) – Allegro (rustic dance)
12	A minor	Moderato – Vivace – Presto (rustic dance)

Table 1 above, modelled on one used by Zohn, sets out the movement structure of each of the Fantasias; it is clear that their format is not as systematic as that of Bach's Six Solos (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 430). Telemann combines common models such as prelude-and-fugue and concerto or ritornello constructions with binary dances and slow movements that range from siciliana-type movements to brief, modulatory passages towards the following movement. Only two out of the twelve fantasias lend themselves towards a sonata-like reading: the sixth, which consists of a *grave*, a fugue, a siciliana and a bourée/rigaudon pair, and the seventh, which consists of a slow opening *dolce* movement, a binary allegro, a largo and a gavotte-like dance. They follow roughly the same model used by Bach in his Sonatas, albeit on a much smaller scale. One feature that spans both the fugal and *Galanterien* Fantasias is the use of lively dance movements: all but the first and fifth Fantasias conclude with one. However, the placement of these dance movements within the Fantasias suggests the aim of contrasting movements rather than a reference to the dance suite tradition, as no more than two dance movements are to be found in each Fantasia.

In the introduction to *Unaccompanied Bach*, Ledbetter writes:

Part of the fascination of this music is that it comes after a century of stylistic development. The art of the suite and the sonata was to play on set forms in novel and inventive ways. The interesting thing is not how a particular piece confirms to a prototype, but the originality with which it uses the prototype... (1–2)

Although at first glance it may appear that Bach chose to adhere to existing structural models whilst Telemann chose to employ a wider variety of movement forms, closer inspection of each composer's works for solo violin reveals that Bach's formal innovations occur within the larger cohesive structural framework, and that Telemann's works still make reference to the same models, such as the *sonata da chiesa*, prelude-and-fugue and concerto forms, despite appearing to make more departures from established conventions. Bach draws on the well-established *sonata da chiesa* form in his Sonatas, but not one of them is identical in structure to its neighbours. At first glance, the Sonatas appear fairly uniform: each consists of a slow introductory movement that forms a prelude-and-fugue pair with the second movement, another slow movement and a final fast movement (see Table 2). However, closer examination reveals variations upon the model.

**Table 2 Movement types in Bach's Sonatas for solo violin**

Sonata	Tonality	i	ii	iii	iv
1	G minor	Adagio G minor Prelude – Improv.	Fuga G minor Canzona-style	Siciliana B flat major Trio sonata	Presto G minor 3/8
2	A minor	Grave A minor (ends on V) Prelude – Improv.	Fuga A minor Dance-style	Andante C major Venetian concerto	Allegro A minor Alla breve
3	C major	Adagio C major (ends on V) Pattern-prelude	Fuga C major <i>Stile antico</i>	Largo F major Solo sonata	Allegro assai C major 3/4

The opening movements of the first and second Sonatas are quasi-improvisatory preludes featuring melismatic melodies within a chordal harmonic framework, while the Adagio of the third Sonata features a repetitive dotted rhythm that moves through harmonies in the manner of Bach's "pattern-preludes," the most well-known examples of which are the Prelude in C Major from the *Well-Tempered Clavier* and the Prelude from the first suite for solo cello (Lester 26). The G minor Sonata's Adagio begins and ends in the tonic key, but the preludes of the second and third Sonatas end with a Phrygian cadence leading into the ensuing fugue.

Although all three fugues feature elements of the Italian solo concerto genre, in particular, structures involving tutti-like expositions and contrasting "solo" episodes, each represents a different type of fugue: the G minor Fuga has a canzona-style subject, the A minor Fuga is in a lighter dance meter, and the C major Fuga has a chorale-like subject that makes reference to the *stile antico* (Ledbetter 122, 154). Bach's contrapuntal processes and formal organisation of the opening sections and the ensuing episodes become increasingly complex with each fugue, which is reflected in their respective lengths. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter on the use of fugue in the two sets of solo violin works.

Telemann also makes use of the prelude-and-fugue pairing in his fugal Fantasias. Telemann's fugues are not as extended as Bach's, nor do they follow a strict contrapuntal structure; rather, they feature short, recurring contrapuntal passages which alternate with episodes of thematic or free material (Reipsch). They represent the most substantial and often the central movement of each of the first six fugal Fantasias. In the second and third Fantasias, they form a prelude-and-fugue pair with the opening slow movement; the sixth Fantasia also contains such a pairing, although the opening Grave movement itself also has a contrapuntal structure. The first Fantasia's fugal movement is also preceded by a prelude-like slow movement, but unusually the fugal movement is also repeated after the third movement, a Grave. These prelude-like opening movements vary in structure; the first Sonata's Largo is through-composed after the repeated opening phrase, while the preludes of the second, third and sixth Sonatas feature parallel sections in

which the opening material is repeated in transposition. The fourth Fantasia is alone in opening with its fugal movement. The fifth Fantasia is of particular interest in that its first movement (described by Zohn as a capriccio) consists of alternating harmonically-transposed Allegro and Presto passages; the Allegro sections feature virtuosic *style brisé* material, while the Presto sections are contrapuntal (431). The tenth Fantasia also features a first movement with fugal elements, despite falling within the *Galanterien* set. It is clear that Telemann is more liberal with his use of the label “fugue,” using the term in stylistic contrast with *Galanterien*, rather than in the strict formal sense. These fugal movements will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

The third movements of Bach’s Sonatas vary the most; using different meters and multiple-stopping techniques, Bach makes reference to three distinct types of ensemble scoring in these slow movements for solo violin. The first Sonata’s *Siciliana* refers to the slow movement of a trio sonata, the second Sonata’s *Andante* to the slow movement of a Venetian concerto, and the third Sonata’s *Largo* to the slow movement of a solo sonata (ie. violin and continuo) (Ledbetter 104, 160).

**Ex. 1 Bach: Siciliana of Sonata I, bars 1–2**



**Ex. 2 Telemann: Siciliana of Fantasia VI, bars 1–4**



The G minor Sonata’s *Siciliana* trio texture is created through a lilting figure that mostly occurs in the lowest “voice,” with double-stopped motion in thirds and sixths creating the illusion of the two upper voices (Ex. 1). In the relative key of B-flat major, visited only briefly in the preceding fugue, and based on a light dance style, the movement provides contrast to the seriousness of the Sonata’s other movements (Lester 88). A light, lifted bow stroke, and refraining from sustaining notes with constant bow pressure for their full length, especially when arpeggiating multiple stops, helps to highlight the melody in this movement. Interestingly, a *Siciliana* in the relative major provides a similar sense of respite in Telemann’s sixth Fantasia, mentioned above as the Fantasia with the most parallels to sonata form and with the strictest fugue in Telemann’s set of solo violin works. The key relationships in the sixth Fantasia are the same as those in Bach’s minor-key Sonatas; the slow third movement in the relative major provides the only respite from the E

minor of the other movements, although Telemann also makes use of the second of the paired dances to explore the tonic major before the *Minore da capo*. The texture of Telemann's Siciliana here is much simpler: it consists of chords in mostly three voices, with a lilting melody of more limited range than that of Bach's, and the voices largely move homophonically in parallel motion (Ex. 2). The chords are voiced in a way that suggests a bass with two upper lines in thirds or sixths; playing the multiple stops with a bow stroke that leaves the lowest string ringing while lingering with a slightly longer stroke on the upper two notes brings out this texture. Suppleness in the bow arm's wrist aids the string crossings required throughout to execute these constant multiple stops.

The structure of the sixth Fantasia's Siciliana is also very simple, consisting merely of two repeated six-bar sections. The form of Bach's Siciliana, on the other hand, is as not easily perceived in clearly recognisable sections as most of the other non-fugal movements of Bach's Six Solos, but Lester suggests that it falls into the category of Bach's "parallel-section movements," in which thematic materials are reworked in each section with a successively heightened level of development (88).<sup>5</sup> The other Siciliana contained in Telemann's Fantasias is the opening movement of the ninth Fantasia; as part of the *Galanterien* set, it features minimal multiple-stopping and is as a result far sparser in texture, suggesting two voices mostly through figures played in different tessitura (Ex. 3). It is more substantial in length and amount of contrasting material than the Siciliana of the sixth Fantasia, with a ternary form that sees the return of the opening material with a pause near the end possibly allowing for an improvisatory moment before the closing phrase.

**Ex. 3 Telemann: Siciliana of Fantasia IX, bars 1–2**



The binary-form Andante of Bach's A minor Sonata is also in the relative major, but in contrast to the Siciliana of the G minor Sonata it makes use of a four-bar phrase pattern which lends it a structural simplicity that Ledbetter describes as "Lied-like" (127). There is a clear stylistic resemblance to a type of Venetian concerto slow movement in which the melody, played by the soloist, is accompanied throughout by repeated chords in the upper strings; in this case the violinist accompanies the song-like melody with repeated quavers on a lower string (Ledbetter 127). The

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<sup>5</sup> Lester believes that heightening levels of activity upon recurrences of material and the organisation of movements into roughly parallel sections are common structural principles that underlie Bach's music; for a deeper discussion refer to Lester, Joel. "Heightening Levels of Activity and J. S. Bach's Parallel-Section Constructions." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54 (2001): 49-96.

challenge of maintaining a smooth, cantabile stroke in the bow for the melody line whilst executing the detached accompanying quaver may be met with a bow arm level that favours the upper string, allowing the execution of the double stops with a string-crossing motion with the wrist, and minimal upper-arm movement. The C major Sonata's Largo is also in a straightforward binary form, and makes use a descending ciaccona-bass (one of the most widely used Baroque progressions) in the subdominant key (Ledbetter 88, 160). Telemann instead favours slow modulatory passages between the fugue and the concluding fast movement in his fugal Fantasias; these occur in the third, fourth and fifth Fantasias and range from the five barely-ornamented chords that precede the third Fantasia's concluding Menuet to the fourth Fantasia's six-bar Grave, richly decorated with dotted rhythms, trills and chromatic demisemiquaver runs. Other types of contrasting slow movements used by Telemann in the fugal Fantasias include the first Fantasia's sarabande-like Grave, which features "sighing" slurred pairs of notes in thirds and sixths, and the aforementioned Siciliana in the sixth Fantasia. Only the second Fantasia lacks an intervening slow movement between its fugue and finale.

The concluding fast movements of Telemann's first six Fantasias mostly adhere to a repeated binary form, with the exception of the first Fantasia, in which the fugal Allegro second movement is repeated as the closing movement, and the sixth Fantasia, which ends with a bourée and rigaudon pair in a minor/tonic major/minor da capo arrangement. In Bach's Sonatas, all three of the final movements are composed in the same repeated binary form, but on a larger scale. Lester describes the form as one in which the second section parallels the first but is intensified through the expansion of previous musical material and the introduction of new material (137). The differences lie in their meter and rhythmic features. The G minor Sonata's Presto is in 3/8, a meter Bach also used in the Giges of the second and fourth cello Suites, with half bar-lines every second bar marking weaker downbeats. Although this movement consists entirely of semiquavers except for at each section's cadence, the figurations allow for great variety in rhythmic counterpoint. Telemann also concludes four of his Fantasias with gigue-like movements: of the fugal Fantasias, the second and fourth, and of the *Galanterien*, the ninth and tenth. Intriguingly, the second Fantasia's Allegro gigue is written in 2/4 meter marked with triplets, despite the lack of duplet rhythms throughout, while the other giges are written in 12/8 and 9/8.

Bach's A minor Sonata's *alla breve* Allegro features lively semiquaver (with some demisemiquaver) figurations over a slow and at times static harmonic rhythm, and repeated half-bars or bars played with an echo effect. Patterns in the first reprise return in an intensified manner in the second reprise through increased rhythmic or harmonic complexity (Lester 137). The example

below shows the first four bars of the first and second reprises of the Allegro; the first bar has been intensified harmonically by the use of the D-sharp, the leading note in the dominant key, and the third and fourth bars have been rhythmically intensified by the extension of the demisemiquaver pattern into the third beat of each bar (see Ex. 4a–b). This intensification of material in the second reprise is seen to some degree in Telemann’s concluding movements, even though most instances contrast is achieved through stating the opening material in straight transposition, or by introducing new material. The concluding Allegro of the fifth Fantasia, in the style of a rustic dance, is one such example: the opening figure is transformed in the second reprise with rhythmic intensification and inversion (see Ex. 5a–b).

**Ex. 4a Bach: Allegro of Sonata II, bars 1–4**

Musical notation for Ex. 4a: Bach's Allegro of Sonata II, bars 1–4. The first staff shows bars 1–4 with dynamics *p*, *f*, *p*. The second staff shows bars 5–8 with dynamics *f*, *p*.

**Ex. 4b Bach: Allegro of Sonata II, bars 25–28**

Musical notation for Ex. 4b: Bach's Allegro of Sonata II, bars 25–28. The first staff shows bars 25–28 with dynamics *p*, *f*, *p*. The second staff shows bars 29–32 with dynamics *f*, *p*.

**Ex. 5a Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia V, bars 1–4**

Musical notation for Ex. 5a: Telemann's Allegro of Fantasia V, bars 1–4. The first staff shows bars 1–4 with a trill (*tr*) in bar 4.

**Ex. 5b Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia V, bars 21–24**

Musical notation for Ex. 5b: Telemann's Allegro of Fantasia V, bars 21–24. The first staff shows bars 21–24.

The Allegro assai of Bach’s C major Sonata in 3/4 opens with a distinctive rhythmic figure (in fact identical to the opening of the concluding Allegro of Telemann’s fifth Fantasia, shown in Ex 5b) before settling into a *moto perpetuo* for most of the rest of the movement; the second reprise

contains more literal transpositions than those of the other two Sonatas. Whilst the figurations in the first two Sonatas' final movements predominantly involve arpeggiation, the Allegro assai's primary motives are the opening scale figure and the auxiliary figure at the end of bar 4 (shown in Ex. 6) (Ledbetter 163). The slurred turn figure in bars 5 and 7 etc. and the *style brisé* pedal pattern in bars 6 and 8 etc. (which in fact reveals itself to be an augmentation of the previous auxiliary figure, and inversions thereof) both contribute to the sense of polyphony in this movement. These variations within the broader *sonata da chiesa* format illustrate Bach's inventiveness even when composing within an established form or structure.

**Ex. 6 Bach: Allegro assai of Sonata III, bars 1–4**



**Table 3 Movement types in Bach's Partias for solo violin**

Partia	Tonality	Movements
1	B minor	Allemanda – Double – Corrente – Double – Sarabanda – Double – Tempo di Borea – Double
2	D minor	Allemanda – Corrente – Sarabanda – Giga – Ciaccona
3	E major	Preludio – Loure – Gavotte en Rondeau – Menuet I & II – Bourée – Gigue

As with the Sonatas, each of Bach's Partias differs in its use of the suite or *sonata da camera* form. Their movement structures are shown in Table 3. The first two Partias are of the solo instrumental suite type, each containing an allemande, a courante, a sarabande, and a gigue (substituted with a bourée in the first Partia). However, each explores the variation principal in different ways: the B minor Partia contains a variation Double for each movement, while the D minor Partia makes reference to the variation-suite structure with strong elements of variation between each of its movements, and ends with the monumental Ciaccona, itself a variation genre (Ledbetter 109). In addition, even though the first two Partias share the same dance movement types, there are distinct differences between each of the corresponding movements. The B minor Allemanda alludes to the French allemande with its varied irregular rhythms (notably a mix of dotted and triplet figures), balanced phrase structure and use of devices such as *coulé de tierce*, while the D minor Allemanda features much more continuous rhythmic motion and less clear-cut, often sequential phrases in what Ledbetter refers to as the German-Italian style (111, 130). Conversely, the B minor Corrente consists of steady quavers while the D minor Corrente contains a



mix of triplets and dotted rhythms.<sup>6</sup> While the D minor Sarabanda contains rhythmic variety and elaborate decoration, the B minor Sarabande<sup>7</sup> features only two main rhythms: bars containing three crotchets, and bars containing the rhythm dotted crotchet-quaver-crotchet (both with various decorations), which give the movement a steady, processional character (Ledbetter 116). Perhaps due to the presence of the *moto perpetuo*-style Doubles in the B minor Partia, Bach chooses to replace the standard gigue with a *Tempo di Borea*.

Telemann's Fantasias are certainly not suites of dances, but they do feature dance movements in common with those used by Bach in his Partias. The opening Moderato of the twelfth Fantasia features a highly distinctive dotted rhythm, and the introduction of triplet figures later on in the movement suggests a reference to the same German-French *allemande* style of Bach's B minor Partia (Ledbetter 111). The Grave that opens the sixth Fantasia is notable in that it is a sarabande that incorporates contrapuntal writing; its blend of counterpoint and a dance form is another example of Telemann's "mixed" style. Bach mixes a dance with another formal structure in a similar manner in the third Partia: the *Gavotte en Rondeau* is, as its title suggests, in a *rondeau* form with a refrain and four couplets, each of which develops different material from the refrain with increasing complexity (Ledbetter 171–2).

Of all of the dance forms featured in Bach's and Telemann's solo violin works, it is particularly interesting to compare the giges – it is certainly the form which occurs most frequently in both sets of works. Bach concludes both the D minor and E major Partias with a gigue, and the Presto of the first sonata is also a gigue movement, as previously discussed. Telemann closes the second, fourth, ninth and tenth Fantasias with gigue movements. Bach's giges feature arpeggiated and scalic figures, implying multiple voices through changing tessitura, and motives subjected to sequential development are a recurring feature (see Ex. 7). There is in fact no multiple-stopping in the two Partia's giges, and it occurs only at cadences in the G minor Sonata's Presto. While Telemann similarly avoids using multiple-stopping in the Allegro of the ninth Fantasia, his other gigue movements feature multiple-stopping more extensively, particularly the Allegro of the fourth Fantasia, of which only two bars are devoid of double stops (see Ex. 8).

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<sup>6</sup> Some period instrument performers undertake the convention of playing written dotted rhythms as triplets in certain rhythmic contexts, but discussion of this practice is beyond the scope of this study.

<sup>7</sup> Ledbetter believes the Bach's use of the French terminology here to be accidental, due to his otherwise consistent use of Italian terms in the Solos other than in the dance movements of the E major Partia, citing an example of another error in consistency: the D minor Corrente is preceded by the instruction 'Segue la Courante' on the previous page. (3)

**Ex. 7 Bach: Giga of Partia II, bars 10–13**

**Ex. 8 Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia IV, bars 1–6**

Bach's third Partia, in contrast to the first two, is of an ensemble overture-suite type containing notably different dance types (Ledbetter 165). Its movements are arranged in pairs: a Preludio and a slow dance, two moderate-tempo Menuets, and two fast dances. After the opening Preludio, Bach uses French terms for the dances, which sets this Partia apart from not only the other Partias but the Sonatas as well.<sup>8</sup> The Preludio shares many technical features with the two Allegro sections at the beginning of Telemann's fifth Fantasia; they are both in 3/4 meter and written in keys which allow for the use of the violin's upper strings as tonic or dominant pedals in bariolage bowing figurations (see Ex. 9a–b). However, their formal context is very different. Bach's Preludio is the second-longest Partia movement after the variation-form D minor Ciaccona, featuring extended sequential passages; its long-held pedal notes are a reference to the organ, and its structure is comparable to that of the Italian concerto allegro style (Ledbetter 165–6). In contrast, Telemann uses this bariolage figure in a brief eight-bar passage that serves as introductory key-establishing statement for the ensuing contrapuntal Presto sections, first in the tonic and then in the dominant.

**Ex. 9a Bach: Preludio of Partia III, bars 13–16**

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 4 regarding Bach's possibly accidental use of French terminology in the Sonatas

**Ex. 9b Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia V, bars 33–36**

At first glance, aside from the D minor Partia's Ciaccona and the E minor Partita's Preludio and Gavotte en Rondeau, all of Bach's Partia movements are in the same repeated binary form found in the finales of the Sonatas, in which the second section parallels the first with an intensification of rhythmic and/or harmonic activity, sometimes with a coda that restates the opening material. However, a closer examination of some of the movements reveals elements of binary sonata structure and the parallel-section structure discussed in relation to the G minor Sonata's Siciliana, and also present is the aforementioned variation aspect that appears in different guises in each of the Partias (Lester 141). The centrepiece of this variation principle, the D minor Ciaccona, is often noted for its length – with most recorded performances at just under fifteen minutes long, it is almost as long as its preceding D minor movements combined, and while the Goldberg Variations, another of Bach's great variation works, is longer, it is a multi-movement composition rather a single movement within a larger work (Lester 151–2). However, Ledbetter stresses that in spite of its large-scale proportions, the Ciaccona represents a culmination of the variation processes in the preceding movements and should not be separated or singled out from the rest of the Partia as many performers and scholars have done, with Felix Mendelssohn's arrangement of the movement for violin and piano accompaniment being a prime example (138, Lester 151). In performance, violinists can aid the audience's perception of the overarching variation form by carefully considering articulations, tempos and the placement of agogic accents; consistency of articulation within a variation despite slight changes in the texture or tessitura can be particularly effective.

Variation may be the common feature of Bach's Partias, but it is harder to pinpoint the uniting element of Telemann's *Galanterien* Fantasias. If the fugal movement is the hallmark of the first six Fantasias, then a fast movement, often in binary form and featuring an angular theme with a distinctive rhythm, is that of the *Galanterien* set. Syncopated rhythms are particularly prevalent; the main motives of the allegro movements from Fantasias 7, 8, 9 are shown below (Ex. 10–12).

**Ex. 10 Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia XII, bars 1–4**

Ex. 11 Telemann: *Spiritoso* of Fantasia XIII, bars 1–4



Ex. 12 Telemann: *Vivace* of Fantasia IX, bars 1–4



The eighth and ninth Fantasias are the most alike in structure: a slow opening movement precedes a binary allegro, followed by a concluding dance. Telemann also follows this model in the seventh Fantasia, but inserts a slow movement between the Allegro and the gavotte-like Presto; it is the only *Galanterien* Fantasia with four rather than three movements, which gives it a comparable structure to that of the preceding fugal sixth Fantasia. Its opening figure also seems to reference another Fantasia from the fugal set: the contour and descending bass are very similar to the opening of the first Fantasia. This is perhaps another example of Telemann's innovation in “mixing” styles where he felt appropriate, despite the broader scheme of two contrasting sets of Fantasias. The tenth Fantasia certainly combines the two styles: its first movement has a clear contrapuntal element, but instead of writing literal counterpoint through the use of double stops as he does in the first six Fantasias, Telemann implies it using the compound line techniques that dominate the *Galanterien* set (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 431). The eleventh Fantasia also differs from the other *Galanterien* works in that it begins with a fast movement, which unusually repeats its opening material in a rhythmically elaborate manner before reprising it in the relative minor in its original rhythm, after which it does not return in the original key. This fast movement is then repeated after the slow second movement before moving on to the dance; this *da capo* Allegro finds its parallel in the first Fantasia, the repeated Allegro of which was discussed above.

There is no doubt that both Bach and Telemann explore a wide variety of forms in their solo violin works; the key comparison is that of the manner in which each composer has approached this compositional variety. By setting out to compose Sonatas and Partias, Bach works with well-established structural models and extends or modifies them, whilst Telemann chooses the relatively flexible genre of the Fantasia that allows him more freedom of movement structure and instead works within a stylistic framework by labelling them as fugal or *Galanterien*.

### Chapter 3: Bach's and Telemann's Fugal Writing for Solo Violin

While it is impossible to write a consistently contrapuntal work for a single-line instrument such as the violin, the tradition of writing polyphonic music for violin was in existence well before Bach and Telemann composed their solo works for this instrument. As mentioned above, earlier Austro-German violinist-composers such as Schmelzer, Walther, Westhoff, and Biber all wrote works for solo violin with varying approaches to writing polyphonically. Corelli's Op. 5 Sonatas are particularly significant in the history of fugal writing for violin; although they are duo sonatas for violin and continuo, the violin assumes the role of playing both upper parts of a *sonata a 3* texture (Allsop 132). While multiple-stopping was a technique already in use by earlier Italian violinist-composers, Corelli was a pioneer in using the technique to facilitate writing in an imitative style on the violin (Apel 235). However, Bach appears to have been the first to publish fully-fledged fugues for a solo violin, and each one displays distinctly different fugal subjects, types of fugal counterpoint and fugal structure (Schröder 53). Telemann makes it very clear that the first six Fantasias contain fugal writing in the description of his set of solo violin works as "12 fantasias for the violin without bass, of which 6 include fugues and 6 are *Galanterien*" (Zohn, *A Mixed Taste* 430). Unlike Bach's fugues for solo violin, Telemann's fugal movements do not follow a consistently contrapuntal structure; instead, short contrapuntal passages in no more than two voices at a time alternate with episodes of thematic or free material (Reipsch). However, Walker emphasises that early eighteenth-century German fugal theory was by no means unified; the traditional German approach to imitative counterpoint from the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries was still present, but there were pronounced regional differences, as well as the influence and integration of Italian fugal theoretical innovations (221). Consequently, the differences in approach to fugal writing seen in the solo works of Bach and Telemann may be due to varied influences as much as to individual approach.

In order to maintain interest in extended fugues for an instrument of limited range and capacity for true counterpoint, Bach combines fugue structure with concerto-ritornello principles; these are sometimes labeled "concerto fugues" or "tutti fugues" (Schröder 38). "Solo" episodes, generally featuring quicker note values, provide textural contrast to "tutti" subject entries, which make use of multiple stops in either a polyphonic manner to convey multiple voices or in a chordal manner to simulate a concerto tutti sonority (Ledbetter 102). Like Bach, Telemann frequently contrasts contrapuntal passages which make use of multiple-stops to create a tutti-like texture with brilliant "solo" passages. While the fugues of Bach's Sonatas are extensive movements implying three or four voices, each more formally and contrapuntally complex than the previous, the fugal

movements contained in Telemann's Fantasias are fugues in miniature, featuring fewer voices and exploring the combination of contrapuntal passages with other instrumental music forms. However, the works of both composers show that it is possible to convey a variety of fugal subject types and processes on an instrument with restricted capacity for polyphonic writing through the use of multiple stopping and implied counterpoint, while making use of the violin's virtuosic idiom to provide contrast to tutti-like textures.

**Ex. 13 Bach: Fuga of Sonata I, bars 1–2**



**Ex. 14 Telemann: Presto of Fantasia III, bars 1–5**



**Ex. 15 Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia I, bars 1–3**



Bach's G minor Fuga is a four-voice fugue with a short subject (Ex. 13) featuring repeated notes and mostly stepwise motion that spans only a fourth, in the style of a seventeenth-century canzona (Schröder 62). This particular subject demands an answer in the subdominant, and indeed C minor is emphasized throughout the whole Sonata (Ledbetter 100). Canzona-style subjects are common in the tradition of polyphonic music for violin; similar material is found in the fugal movements of Corelli's Op. 5 Sonatas and an unaccompanied violin sonata attributed to Geminiani, and Ledbetter suggests that this is due to the practicality on a bowed stringed instrument of the repeated notes for combination with a countersubject (101). Telemann also makes use of this technique of writing a moving contrapuntal line against repeated notes in the fugal movement of the third Fantasia (see Ex. 114). The opening of the Allegro fugal movement of the first Fantasia also bears a striking resemblance to the subject of Bach's G minor Fuga; in the relative major key of B-flat major, its subject features a motive with not only the same rhythm and contour but exactly the same notes as a portion of Bach's subject (see Ex. 15). However, it uses this motive to create a point of imitation within itself; this again illustrates of the overall characteristic of Telemann's solo violin works to be more concise in form than those of Bach. In performance, consistency of articulation with each iteration of such motives will ensure that the counterpoint is clearly heard.

**Ex. 16 Bach: Fuga of Sonata III, bars 1–4****Ex. 17 Telemann: Presto of Fantasia VI, bars 1–15**
**Ex. 18 Telemann: Presto of Fantasia VI, bars 43–47**
**Ex. 19 Telemann: Presto of Fantasia VI, bars 76–80**

The C major Fuga features a much longer chorale-like subject (Ex. 16), but like the G minor Fuga it references an older style; in this case, *stile antico* (Ledbetter 154). As with the subject of the G minor Sonata's fugue, the subject's range is fairly narrow, allowing for a four-voice fugue despite the limitations of the violin's range and polyphonic possibilities. The design of the subject and countersubject also allows Bach to write a section of the fugue in inversion, marked *al riverso* in the score. The Presto of Telemann's sixth Fantasia is similarly archaic, with a four-note subject in semibreves and a countersubject with the same rhythmic elements as Bach's C major fugue subject (Ex. 17). As bars containing a semibreve in one voice and a quavers and crotchets in the other (Ex. 17, bars 3-4) are impossible to play literally on a violin, the performer must play all four semibreves of the subject with the same articulation: not sustaining the note for the whole value, but with a strong enough attack to emphasise the contour of the line, even when heard against a more rhythmically active voice. Out of Telemann's fugal movements for solo violin, it is the only three-voice fugue – the others feature only two voices in counterpoint. It is a largely contrapuntal movement without the soloistic passages found in the other fugues, and incorporates more fugal processes than the simple recurring contrapuntal statement of a subject found in the preceding Fantasias, making use of quasi-stretto entries in its central episode (Ex. 18) and the subject in diminution and embellished in its closing phrase (Ex. 19).

In contrast, the subject of Bach's A minor Fuga (Ex. 20) is short and rhythmic like that of the G minor Fuga, but much more concise, and the movement's 2/4 time signature puts it in the category of Bach's fugues in a light dance meter (Ledbetter 122). Out of the three Sonata's fugues, this subject has the widest range; the octave leap in the subject is highly idiomatic to an instrument tuned in fifths, but also necessitates a lighter three-voice texture appropriate to a dance-style fugue (Schröder 101). The Allegro of Telemann's second Fantasia also features a leaping subject covering the range of a ninth in a light dance meter, shown in Ex. 21. This style prompts the performer to use shorter and lighter bow strokes, lower in the bow with a supple wrist to facilitate the rapid string crossings required by the large intervals.

**Ex. 20 Bach: Fuga of Sonata II, bars 1–3**



**Ex. 21 Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia II, bars 1–8**



In fact, all of the subjects employed by Telemann in his fugal Fantasias apart from the one used in the sixth Fantasia's Presto (discussed above) illustrate his preference for subjects with a wider range and containing more leaps than steps. This preference is possibly the primary explanation for two-voice rather than three- or four-voice contrapuntal writing in Telemann's fugue movements; a wider range in one voice limits the number of voices that can be played with it by multiple-stopping on the violin. The narrower-ranged subjects with mostly stepwise motion used by Bach in his G minor and C major fugues allow room within the range of the violin for more voices, and also for episodes in different tessitura. The consequent increase in textural variety in turn allows Bach to write more extended fugal movements in comparison to those of Telemann's. However, there are still parallels to be found in the formal structure of the two composers' fugal movements despite the difference in scale.

The structure of most of Telemann's fugal movements for solo violin is a blend of concerto ritornello and binary sonata form that alternates contrapuntal sections with concertante solo passages (Reipsch). In the Allegro of the first Fantasia, the presentation of the subject is followed by a slurred figuration which nonetheless conveys a tutti-like texture due to its implied polyphony and a closing phrase supported by multiple-stopped chords. After the first "solo" passage, the subject appears in the relative minor, and quavers in broken tenths simulate a different kind of pseudo-



polyphony: interplay between lower and upper strings (Ex. 22). The second “solo” passage runs into the final section which is parallel to the opening section. If the solo passages are grouped with their preceding tutti sections, the overall structure of the movement displays a similar scheme of thematic organisation and key relationships to that of the binary sonata form.

**Ex. 22 Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia I, bars 24–29**



The lighter dance-style fugue of the second Fantasia preserves this structural layout; again, the opening contrapuntal bars are followed by a continuation of the tutti texture which includes multiple-stopped chordal support of a melodic line, two-voice dialogue (Ex. 23) and texture-thickening bariolage. The second section begins with the subject in the subdominant and is roughly parallel to the first section in a briefer form, while a third section introduces new material in the relative minor and its dominant. The closing section is a recapitulation of sorts, with some modifications.

**Ex. 23 Telemann: Allegro of Fantasia II, bars 11–18**



The fugal movements of the third and fourth Fantasias contain more iterations of the subject than the first two. The third Fantasia’s Presto follows similar four-part structure to that of the second Fantasia’s Allegro, in that there are four sections of which the first, second and fourth are parallel, and the third is contrasting, much like the development section of a binary sonata form. However, whilst this developmental section of the second Fantasia’s Allegro uses mainly new material, the third Fantasia’s Presto still opens its contrasting third section with the subject. The statement of the subject in the relative minor of the dominant is followed by concertante solo figurations (the only such passage in this Fantasia), and the closing section is pre-empted by a false subject entry.

Both Lester and Ledbetter have written at length about the structure of Bach’s G minor Fuga (Lester 58ff, Ledbetter 100ff). The exposition is neat and compact, with a subject-answer-answer-subject pattern that already introduces a sequential extension of the subject in bar 5 for later development, and consists of the character head, the first “solo” semiquaver passage forming the

sequential tail and a closing motive beginning with the subject again which ends in a clear G minor cadence at bar 14 (Ledbetter 101). The second section (bars 14–24) features sequential treatment of the subject and countersubject beginning in a higher register, while the third and fourth sections (bars 24–55 and bars 55–87 respectively) expand on the format of the opening section, with a “tutti” exposition, a concerto-style “solo” semiquaver episode and an extension of the subject in a closing section that ends with a clear cadence (Ledbetter 103).

In this movement, not only does Bach combine fugal structure with a concerto ritornello plan, like Telemann, he also incorporates elements of the binary sonata plan through his arrangement of the movement’s harmonic structure, particularly the placement of key cadences (Ledbetter 124). The dominant cadence at bar 137 can be seen as the equivalent of the double bar in a binary sonata or dance movement; it occurs just before halfway if we take the tonic cadence at bar 280 as the “end” and the last ten bars of the movement as a coda (Ledbetter 124). A slow harmonic rhythm and echo effects are used to great effect in one of the concerto solo passages to convey a sense of space and textural variety (Ledbetter 125). All of the main motivic materials lend themselves to both contrapuntal and melodic inversion, which Bach exploits in the second half of the movement with frequent references to earlier passages; he then takes this process even further in the C major Fuga (Lester 84).

As well as the previously discussed fugal, concerto-ritornello and binary sonata forms, the third Sonata’s Fuga also incorporates a *da capo* structure (Ledbetter 154). Telemann also incorporates a *da capo* structure into one of his fugal movements: the first Fantasia’s Allegro is repeated as the closing movement after the slow Grave. Bach’s use of the *da capo* principle is far more complex. Like the G minor Fuga, the exposition of the third Sonata’s Fuga has four entries, followed by a sequential tail of contrasting texture like that of both preceding fugues, but unusually Bach introduces a subject entry in the subdominant before the expected final tonic entry (Ledbetter 156). The rest of the movement consists of alternating solo episodes featuring semiquaver figurations and tutti sections in which contrapuntal devices such as stretto and melodic inversion are applied to the subject, before the reprise of the opening section, the beginning of which is filled out in texture to make the *da capo* less abrupt (Ledbetter 154, 158). The binary sonata form is still at play, with the dominant cadence at bar 201 representing the double bar; at this point, Bach writes *al riverso* above the stave and proceeds to invert the subject and countersubject (see Ex. 24) (Ledbetter 154). The increase in complexity of formal design, as well as sheer length, with each successive Fuga suggests that the ordering of the Sonatas in the autograph was also the order of composition (Ledbetter 123). This also is the strictest of Bach’s fugue movements for solo violin, in four voices

with tight motivic working, but although it makes obvious references to *stile antico*, it by no means adheres to the model (Ledbetter 160). Bach meets the challenge of maintaining impetus and interest in such a long piece for an instrument with a limited range and capacity for polyphony through the blending of these structural models to build large sections that have clear objectives and cadential markers (Ledbetter 155).

**Ex. 24 Bach: Fuga of Sonata III, bars 201-205**



The fifth Fantasia shows Telemann taking a very different approach to the structure of a fugal movement. Still seeking to marry fugal counterpoint and virtuosic concerto-style solo passages, the first “movement” of the Fantasia comprises two sets of alternating Allegro and Presto sections. Two Allegro passages feature brilliant *style brisé* figurations in static tonic and dominant harmony respectively, serving as introductions to the two Presto sections which begin with statements of a subject featuring leaps in thirds and fourths and a more rhythmically active tail followed by bariolage and multiple-stopped passages which continue to convey a tutti-like texture. This unusual structure, which Zohn describes as a capriccio, again illustrates Telemann as a master of the “mixed” style, exploring different combinations of existing styles and forms to produce innovative musical material (431). The tenth Fantasia also typifies this approach; although it falls within the *Galanterien* set, its opening Presto also displays fugal elements; like the Vivace of the fourth Fantasia, it features a subject stated without literal multiple-stopped counterpoint (Ex. 25).

**Ex. 25 Telemann: Presto of Fantasia X, bars 1–9**



One particularly interesting compositional technique that Bach uses in his fugues for solo violin is the embedding of subject motives in concertante solo figurations. In the G minor fugue, each bar of the semiquaver passage at bars 42–44 consists of an arpeggiated embellishment of the repeated notes of the subject and the lower auxiliary note figure before the fourth beat (Ex. 26) (Ledbetter 102). The auxiliary note figure of the A minor Fuga’s subject is similarly embedded in one of the episodes featuring solo figurations (Ex. 27) (Ledbetter 126). In the Fuga of the third

Sonata, Bach goes further and uses this technique in such a way that it simulates the effect of ripieno instruments coming in with the subject beneath the soloist's figurations (Ex. 28) (Ledbetter 154). The performer can highlight these appearances of motives by slightly accenting (dynamic or agogic) or using a slightly longer bow stroke on the motivic notes, and using a lighter stroke for the embellishing notes. Bach's use of this type of contrapuntal writing for solo violin allows for a wide range of contrasting contrapuntal textures within his fugues.

**Ex. 26 Bach: Fuga of Sonata I, bars 42–44**



**Ex. 27 Bach: Fuga of Sonata II, bars 112–115**



**Ex. 28 Bach: Fuga of Sonata III, bars 171–175**



It is clear that the larger scale of Bach's fugal movements allow him great scope for exploring idiomatic ways of writing contrapuntally for the violin. They are extensive three- or four-voice fugues, and each is progressively more formally and contrapuntally complex. Telemann's fugal movements for solo violin are much shorter, feature fewer voices and explore more combinations of fugal structure with other instrumental music forms. Despite these very different approaches, both composers show that the violin, even with its limited capacity for polyphonic writing, is a more than adequate vehicle for the fugue by highlighting the interplay of the instrument's virtuosic possibilities with tutti-like contrapuntal textures. Although Bach favours fugue subjects with a narrower range and mostly stepwise motion, whilst the majority of Telemann's subjects cover a wider range and comprise larger leaps, both composers demonstrate a wide variety of fugue styles even within the technically limiting boundaries of writing for a solo string instrument.

## Conclusion

The comparison of these two sets of works for solo violin brings to light similarities and differences in compositional approach; both Bach and Telemann make reference to existing formal and stylistic models, and both are innovative in the techniques employed to achieve variety and musical complexity within these models and in the restricted medium of writing for a solo string instrument. While both composers would have been at least aware if not familiar with the existing tradition of Austro-German violinist-composers who wrote for solo violin, the way in which Bach and Telemann approached the composition of their respective sets of solo violin works differ greatly.

Bach's Six Solos are more consistent in overall structure, with the Sonatas conforming to the *sonata da chiesa* form and the Partias following the dance-suite tradition. While no Sonata or Partia is identical in style and structure to its neighbours, differences and innovations occur within the context of the larger cohesive formal framework. Within the *sonata da chiesa* form, Bach's Sonatas still showcase a variety of stylistic and formal features, and there is an undercurrent of increasing complexity, especially in the fugues, which runs through the three Sonatas. Similarly, the Partias combine the established dance-suite tradition with the idea of variation, each Partia approaching the integration of these processes differently. While Telemann's Fantasias even in name convey more flexible structural processes, the composer still draws on many of the same established formal conventions, such as the prelude-and-fugue pair, dance styles, and sonata and concerto constructions. He gives the cycle structural unity with the division of the twelve Fantasias into two halves, each representing a different stylistic approach: the "fugal", referencing older conventions from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the new *galant* style. An understanding of both the stylistic and formal models and each composer's innovations in this music allows the violinist to deliver a performance that highlights the structure of the works.

A comparison of the fugal writing in these solo violin works also shows similarities and differences in writing polyphonically for a solo string instrument. Both Bach and Telemann make reference to concerto-ritornello structures in their fugal movements; contrapuntal passages are contrasted with sections featuring idiomatic and virtuosic violin writing, creating the illusion of "tutti" and "solo" sections. However, Bach is credited to have been the first to publish fully-fledged fugues for a solo violin, and in the three fugues contained in the Sonatas he explores a range of different fugal subjects, types of fugal counterpoint and fugal structure (Schröder 53). In contrast, Telemann's fugal movements resemble fugues in miniature. They are shorter and less strict in structure; he also draws on a variety of other forms such as the capriccio and the *da capo* principle.

Notworthy is Telemann's preference for fugal subjects that cover a wider range and incorporate more leaps, necessitating a lighter texture through the presence of only two (and occasionally three) voices. The fugue subjects contained in Bach's Sonatas tend to be narrower in range and contain mostly stepwise motion, allowing more room within the violin's range for more voices; this enables Bach to write extensive three- or four- voice fugues for the violin.

One of the major challenges that the solo violin works of Bach and Telemann presents to the modern violinist is the execution of the many multiple-stopped chords through which polyphony is achieved; it takes careful consideration and a high level of bow technique to play the chords in a way that allows the listener to perceive individual voices rather than just consecutive chords. It is particularly crucial whenever the polyphonic texture is thicker, such as in the sections of Bach's fugues with four voices. The contrasting passages of "solo" figurations provide textural contrast, even when fugal subject material is embedded within the virtuosic writing, and can be taken as an opportunity to release the musical and physical tension that builds up in highly contrapuntal passages. The discussion in this critical commentary is relevant not only to performers of this music, but also to those with an interest in the compositional techniques that Bach and Telemann used in their construction of their works for solo violin. Bach's Six Solos and Telemann's Fantasias represent a rich and varied part of the violin repertory, and the discussions and critical comparisons made in this study will provide musicians and audiences with a deeper understanding of the stylistic and formal processes behind these works, enhancing both the performer's interpretive ability to convey the music and the audience's appreciation of it.

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