



ARIOSO

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Cantata "Ich steh mit einem Fuß im Grabe"

Sinfonia, BWV 156 (1729)

Concerto for harpsichord, strings and continuo No 5 in f minor

Largo, BWV 1056 (1738)

Violin and strings

d minor

Urtext edition by Erlend Vestby, 2020

PREFACE

The title *Arioso* was not given by Bach himself, but was used early to describe the character and style of the piece. Perhaps a title like this was necessary because the *Arioso* appears in two of J.S. Bach's compositions, both included in this edition. The first is the *Sinfonia* from Cantata BWV 156, and the other version is the much more ornamented 2nd movement, *Largo*, of the harpsichord concerto BWV 1056. The title *Arioso* is only used when this movement (usually BWV 156) is played by its own, and not in connection with the rest of the work. This might be another reason for using a unique title for such occasions. The inspiration to the composition came probably from the *Andante* in Telemann's Flute Concerto in G major, TWV51:G2. The first two bars here are identical to Bach's *Arioso*.

Arioso is Italian and means "airy". The term first appeared in the 16th century to describe an aria of a melodious and songlike character as opposed to a declamatory character. D. Scarlatti, a composer and performer contemporary with Bach, used the term to describe music "in a flowing melodic style."

The most common edition of the *Arioso* for violin or cello and piano or organ was made by Sam Franco in 1915. This version is more richly harmonised than the original version, and includes editorial slurs, dynamics, articulations, bowings, and fingerings. I decided to create a historically informed edition to stay closer to Bach's language and composition, and to give performers more freedom in their interpretative choices.

Instrumentation and keys

BWV 156 in d minor: Solo oboe. 2 violins, viola and basso continuo. (Strings arco)
BWV 1056 in f minor: Solo harpsichord. 2 violins, viola and basso continuo. (Strings pizz.)

This new edition is written in various keys and instrumentations:

- Violin, viola or cello and piano
- Violin, viola or cello and organ
- Violin, viola or cello and strings

They are written in d minor, g minor, f minor and e minor.

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

This edition of the *Sinfonia* BWV 156 is made after the surviving anonymous copies of the instrumental parts (A) created between 1750 and 1761, just after Bach's death. Bach's own manuscript and the original parts were lost to history early on. I have compared these copies with the first printed edition (E1) of the Cantata, made in 1886 by Ernst Naumann for Breitkopf und Härtel Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe.

The edition of the *Concerto* BWV 1056 however is made primarily after J.S. Bach's own autograph manuscript (MS). I have also used the first printed edition (E2) of this work made in 1869 by Wilhelm Rust for Breitkopf und Härtel Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe. Johann Nikolaus Forkel (1749-1818), musicologist, organist and the first biographer of J.S. Bach, made a copy of the MS which I have also consulted (F).

The MS has been the primary source and has also been used to compare A and E1 when making the *Sinfonia* due to the lack of survived autograph manuscripts of the Cantata. The E2 has been used to better understand the writings of MS and as a quality control. F is the source that has the largest discrepancies to all the other sources. Some changes have been necessary in order to make the transposition (g minor), but the copy also includes more embellishments than in the other sources (marked in blue in the score). F has its own chapter below where the major differences are shown.

Abbreviations:

S: = solo part

1: = 1st voice (1vln)

2: = 2nd voice (2vln)

3: = 3rd voice (vln)

C: = continuo (bass)

b = bar number

n = note in the bar. Slurs, ties, grace notes and rests are not included when counting.

MS = manuscript (1738) (J.S. Bach of BWV 1056)

A = Autograph (1750-1761) (anonymous copy of BWV 156 parts)

F = Copy of BWV 1056 by J. N. Forkel (1760-1789) (transposed to g minor)

E1 = first edition BWV 156 (1886) (Ed. Ernst Naumann)

E2 = first edition BWV 1056 (1869) (Ed. Wilhelm Rust)

SINFONIA, BWV 156

C: b4, n4 – C in *A*, *E1* and *F*. Double stop C/B in *MS*. B in *E2*.

S: b4, n10 – F in *A*. G in *MS*, *E1*, *E2* and *F*.

1: b14, n3 – C in *A*, *MS*, *E2* and *F*. A in *E1*.

S: b14, n12-19 – Slurs 3+1 x2 in *MS*. Slurs 4+4 in *E2*. Slurs 2+2 x2 in *A*. Slurs 2x3 +1+1 in *E1*. No slurs in *F*.

S: b14, n16 – G in *A* and *E1*. F in *MS*, *E2* and *F*.

1, 2, 3: b17, n1 – Bb, G and G in *A* and *E1*. Bb, G and C in *MS*, *E2* and *F*.

3: b18, n1 – D in *E1*. C in *A*, *MS*, *E2* and *F*.

S: b18, n11 – Tie in *A* and *E1*. No tie in *MS*, *E2* and *F*.

LARGO, BWV 1056

S: b2, n4-8: No tie or slur in *F*. The tie appears in *E2*, the slur in *MS*. The embellishment is only written in *MS*.

3: b2, n4: C in *F*. Bb in all other sources.

S: b2, n13-15: Slur in *F*. No slur in *MS*, *E2*, *A* or *E1*.

C: b4, n4 – Double stop C/B in *MS*. B in *E2*. C in *A*, *E1* and *F*.

S: b5, n1-5: No slur in *E2* or *F*. The slur is written in *MS*. The tie appears in all sources.

S: b10, n12, 14: No flat in *F*.

S: b11, n7-8 – Double stop G/Bb and Bb/G in *MS*. It is difficult to tell which of the notes were intended. Bb, G in *E2* and *F*. G, Bb in *E1* and *A*.

S: b12, beat 3: No slur in *F*. Slur in *MS* and *E2*.

S: b13, n13,15 – *MS* shows double stop A/F on both notes. It is difficult to tell which of the notes were intended. *E2* indicates A, F. *A*, *E1* and *F* show F, A.

2: b14, n4 – F in *F*. A in all other sources.

S: b14, n12-19 – Slurs 3+1 x2 in *MS*. Slurs 4+4 in *E2*. Slurs 2+2 x2 in *A*. Slurs 2x3 +1+1 in *E1*. No slurs in *F*.

2 and 3: b15, n2 – the two voices swap notes in *F*. (C one octave down.) Notated here as printed in *MS*, *E2*, *E1* and *A*.

S: b17 and 18, last beats – no embellishment sign in *F*. Notated in *MS* and *E2*. The exact position in *MS* is unclear and is here placed as found in *E2*. B17: Slur in *F* covers 4 notes, *MS* appears to cover 3 notes, the slur in *E2* covers 2 notes. B18: Slur in *F* only.

2 and 3: b18, n3: Notes swap in *F*. (C one octave down.) Notated here as printed in *MS*, *E2*, *E1* and *A*.

C: b19, n2 – Flat in *MS*. No accidentals in *E2* or *F*.

S: b19, n5-6 – Tie in *MS*, no tie in *E2* and *F*.

S: b20, last beat – Slur over 2 last notes in *MS*. Slur over 2 first notes in *E2*. No slur in *F*.

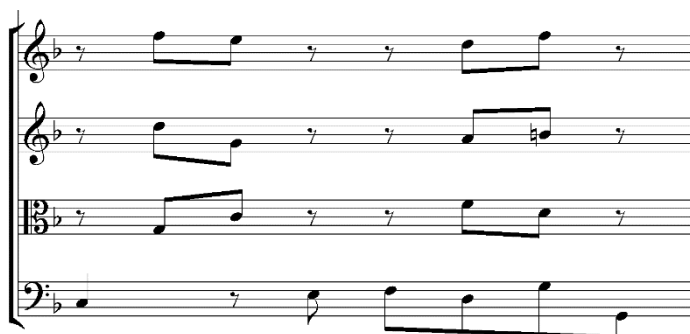
Special differences between *F* and the other sources:

There are specific grace notes and embellishments added in the copy by Forkel that are not written in the other sources. These are embellishments that might have been added by contemporary performers. I have therefore kept them in the score marked in blue.

Slurs and other minor differences in *F* are marked in the commentary above in the same way as the other sources are discussed.

Larger differences are described below:

- Strings, b6:



The image shows a musical score for strings, measure b6. It consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs. Some notes are marked with a blue '7' above them, indicating grace notes. The score is presented as a single system.

- S: b8-9 – The ossia staff shows a different embellished line found in *F* only.
- Strings, b8:

- Strings, b10-11 (octave differences):

- S: b15:

F:

Other sources:

S: b16, last beat:

- Two last bars in *F*. The printed version is as found in *MS* and *E2*:

ADAGIO AND LARGO

There are some uncertainties with the tempo relationship between *adagio* and *largo* in the Baroque era. They were both used to describe a slow movement, but which of them were the slowest depended on who you asked. The Italian writers and composers mostly saw *adagio* as slow and *largo* as very slow. Most French musicians placed them the other way around. It is uncertain what Bach himself thought, but it is a possibility that he didn't make a distinction between them at all; they just meant "slow". I will shortly explain some of the various other meanings *adagio* and *largo* could have that may explain why BWV 156 and BWV 1056 are marked differently:

According to musicologist David Fallows, *adagio* in the Baroque era up until the Classical period, meant a slow movement that asked for extra embellishments from the performer. The *Sinfonia* marked *adagio* is sparingly embellished, whilst the harpsichord concerto marked *largo* is much more elaborated. This might be the very reason that they are marked differently. Both the *adagio* and the *largo* should be played equally slow, but the *adagio* also needs to be embellished.

Bach expert and performer, Anthony Newman, argues that *adagio* has a slow tempo with emphasis on the strong beats. *Largo* is also slow, but with emphasis on strong as well as weak beats, increasing the number of accents in the bar. With the long and many embellishments written out in the *largo*, extra accents and heavy beats might come naturally as a result of these.

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Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz. "D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 239, Faszikel 1, BWV 1056" *Bach Digital*. Accessed April 15, 2020. https://www.bach-digital.de/receive/BachDigitalSource_source_00001163

Sinfonia

Ich steh mit einem Fuß im Grabe

J.S. Bach, BWV 156

Adagio



Violin

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Basso Continuo

4

9

tr

3 3 3 3

14

Musical score for measures 14-17. The score is written for five staves: Treble Clef 1, Treble Clef 2, Treble Clef 3, Bass Clef 1, and Bass Clef 2. Measure 14 features a triplet of eighth notes in the first staff. The music continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests across the five staves.

18

Musical score for measures 18-20. The score is written for five staves: Treble Clef 1, Treble Clef 2, Treble Clef 3, Bass Clef 1, and Bass Clef 2. Measure 18 shows a melodic line in the first staff. Measure 19 features a long note in the first staff. Measure 20 concludes with a final note in the first staff. The other staves provide accompaniment throughout.

Concerto No 5

for harpsichord, strings and continuo

J.S. Bach, BWV 1056

Largo

Violin

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Basso Continuo

Detailed description: This block contains the first three measures of the concerto. The Violin part features a melodic line with a trill (tr) and an accent (+). The strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola) play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Basso Continuo provides a bass line with occasional rests.

Detailed description: This block contains measures 4 through 7. The Violin part continues with a melodic line, including a trill (tr) and an accent (+). The string parts maintain their rhythmic accompaniment. The Basso Continuo part continues with a steady bass line.

8

Detailed description: This block contains measures 8 through 11. The Violin part features a complex melodic line with a trill (tr) and an accent (+). The string parts continue with their rhythmic accompaniment. The Basso Continuo part continues with a steady bass line.

12

System 12-15: This system contains measures 12 through 15. The top staff features a complex melodic line with sixteenth-note runs and triplets. The lower staves provide harmonic support with eighth-note patterns. Measure 12 includes a double-sharp (**) above the first note. Measures 13, 14, and 15 each contain a triplet of eighth notes.

16

System 16-18: This system contains measures 16 through 18. The top staff continues the melodic development with trills (tr) and double-sharps (**). The lower staves maintain a consistent eighth-note accompaniment. Measure 16 has a double-sharp (**) above the first note. Measures 17 and 18 feature trills (tr) above the final notes.

19

System 19-21: This system contains measures 19 through 21. The top staff shows a continuation of the melodic line with a double-sharp (**) and a plus sign (+) above notes. The lower staves provide harmonic support. Measure 19 has a double-sharp (**) above the first note. Measure 20 has a double-sharp (**) above the first note. Measure 21 has a plus sign (+) above the first note.

Sinfonia

Ich steh mit einem Fuß im Grabe



J.S. Bach, BWV 156

Adagio



Concerto No 5

for harpsichord, strings and continuo



J.S. Bach, BWV 1056

Largo

Musical notation for measures 1-3. Measure 1 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 2 has a blue 'w' above the first note. Measure 3 has a blue 'tr' above the first note and a blue '+' above the second note.

Musical notation for measures 4-5. Measure 4 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 5 has a blue '+' above the first note.

Musical notation for measures 6-7. Measure 6 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 7 has a blue '+' above the first note.

Musical notation for measures 8-9, labeled 'F:'. Measure 8 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 9 has a blue '+' above the first note.

Musical notation for measures 10-11. Measure 10 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 11 has a blue '+' above the first note.

Musical notation for measures 12-14. Measure 12 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measures 13-14 have blue '3' above the first notes of each measure. Measure 14 has a blue '+' above the first note.

Musical notation for measures 15-17. Measure 15 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 16 has a blue 'tr' above the first note. Measure 17 has a blue '+' above the first note.

Musical notation for measures 18-19. Measure 18 has a blue '+' above the first note. Measure 19 has a blue '+' above the first note.