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THE EIGHT PRELUDES FOR PIANO OF FRANK MARTIN, A LECTURE RECITAL,
TOGETHER WITH THREE RECITALS OF SELECTED WORKS OF J. S. BACH,
L. V. BEETHOVEN, J. BRAHMS, F. CHOPIN, I. ALBENIZ,
R. SCHUMANN, A. SCRIBIN, F. LISZT, AND
K. SZYMANOWSKI

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

By

Geraldine T. Collins, M.M.

Denton, Texas

May, 1980

Collins, Geraldine T., The Eight Preludes for Piano of Frank Martin, A Lecture Recital, together with three recitals of selected works of J. S. Bach, L. V. Beethoven, J. Brahms, F. Chopin, I. Albeniz, R. Schumann, A. Scriabin, F. Liszt, and K. Szymanowski. Doctor of Musical Arts (Piano Performance), May, 1980, 41 pp., 22 examples, bibliography, 18 titles.

Frank Martin, while assimilating many of the features of serial technique, found other of its features incompatible to his temperament. The Eight Preludes for Piano mark a point of decision regarding these features. While rejecting the twelve-tone row, he extracted prime cells from the octatonic scale and subjected them to the serial approach. One of these cells, G-flat - F - A - A-flat, evokes the B-A-C-H motive. In view of Martin's admiration for Bach, this similarity is probably not accidental. In any event, this four-note motive permeates the preludes and binds them into a coherent and unified set.

Along with some evidence of partita form in the preludes, the concept of continuous variation is the compelling force molding the overall form. Martin disdained atonality on personal and artistic premises. Despite their contemporary textural qualities, the listener perceives c-sharp as a tonal center for the set. Tempo, rhythm, and texture contrasts and complementation between the preludes reveal an obviously pre-planned format for the fulfillment of set unity. The consummate knowledge of pianism demonstrated in the preludes places them as a major contribution to twentieth-century piano literature.

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1979

Tape recordings of all performances submitted as dissertation requirements are on deposit in the North Texas State University Library.

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NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

GERALDINE COLLINS

in a

GRADUATE PIANO RECITAL

June 27, 1976

3:00 p.m.

Recital Hall

PROGRAM

Ich ruf' zu Dir, Herr Bach-Busoni

Sonata in E Major, Op. 109 Beethoven
Vivace ma non troppo
Prestissimo
Andante molto cantabile

Sonata No. 5, Op. 53 Scriabin

INTERMISSION

Nocturne, Op. 15, No. 2 Chopin

Nocturne, Op. 27, No. 2 Chopin

Vallée d'Obermann Liszt

*Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts*

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

GERRY COLLINS

Pianist

in a

GRADUATE RECITAL

October 3, 1977

5:00 p.m.

Recital Hall

PROGRAM

Chromatic Fantasy & Fugue J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Two Etudes, Opus 4 K. Szymanowski
(1882-1937)

No. 3 — B-Flat Minor

No. 1 — E-Flat Minor

INTERMISSION

Sonata in F Minor, Opus 5 J. Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro maestoso

Andante espressivo

Scherzo: *Allegro energico*

Intermezzo: *Andante molto*

Finale: *Allegro moderato ma rubato*

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North Texas State University
School of Music

presents

GERRY COLLINS

in a

GRADUATE PIANO RECITAL

Monday, July 2, 1979 5:00 P.M. Concert Hall

PROGRAM

- Nachtstücke in F Major, Op. 23, No. 4 Schumann
- Sonata in F minor, Op. 14 Schumann
Allegro
Scherzo: Molto commodo
Andantino: Quasi variazione
Prestissimo possibile

INTERMISSION

- Suite Española, Op. 47 Albeniz
Granada
Cataluña
Sevilla
Cádiz
Asturias
Aragón
Cuba
Castilla

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North Texas State University
School of Music
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GERRY COLLINS
in a
LECTURE RECITAL

Thursday, December 6, 1979 6:30 p.m. Concert Hall

*The Eight Preludes for Piano of Frank Martin:
An Analysis and Performance*

Eight Preludes pour le piano Frank Martin

- I Grave
- II. Allegretto tranquillo
- III. Tranquillo ma con moto
- IV. Allegro
- V. Vivace
- VI. Andantino grzaioso
- VII. Lento
- VIII. Vivace

*Presented in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts*

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THE EIGHT PRELUDES FOR PIANO OF FRANK MARTIN,
A LECTURE RECITAL

Introduction

The works of the late Swiss composer Frank Martin span a variety of forms and media, among them opera, oratorio, ballet, symphony, chamber music and works for solo instruments with orchestra. Since he was a pianist, it is no surprise to find that Martin wrote for the piano as a solo instrument and as a prominent member of various instrumental combinations in other compositions. In addition to two piano concertos, he has written a piano quintet, a Ballade for piano and orchestra, the Petite Symphonie concertante for harp, harsichord, piano and double string orchestra, the Foxtrot for two pianos, and the Danse de la Peur for two pianos and small orchestra. Comprising the works for piano solo are the Eight Preludes of 1948, the Clair de lune of 1953, the Etude rythmique and Etude de déchiffrage both of 1965, and the Fantasie sur des rythmes flamenco of 1973.¹ Of the solo piano works, the eight preludes have enjoyed a degree of recognition above that of others in this category.

This paper will show through analysis the compositional process

1. Nicholas Slonimsky, ed., "Frank Martin," Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, 6th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1978), 1099.

that Martin employs in his eight preludes and will identify their stylistic features as a unique expression of twentieth-century keyboard idioms. The analysis reveals among other pertinent features, the presence of a motive that bears a close resemblance to the well-known B-A-C-H and traces its cryptic occurrences throughout the set. Further analysis will show that this motive derives from the octatonic scale. In view of Martin's admiration of Bach, and certainly he knew this motive, the affinities present are perhaps not accidental. In any event, the motive functions as a unifying device and provides an essential thread of continuity in these eight highly individual pieces.

Other thematic sources and rhythmic structures emerge as controlling factors in the overall design of the preludes. Martin's loose adaptation of Schoenberg's twelve-tone method is seen as a procedural by-product within the context of certain preludes. The use of traditional formal structures and techniques in the containment and development of his ideas reflects Martin's allegiance to the past. Blended with this heritage are selected contemporary concepts and techniques that freely intermix with his own personal stylistic idiom. Of equal or even more importance, the abundance of pianistic writing to be found in the preludes should be gratifying to pianists of all musical persuasions.

Biographical Data

Early in his career, Martin was one of the more fortunate breed of composers that enjoy immense popularity and esteem in their native

countries. Born in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1890, his inspiration to be a composer came at the age of twelve when he heard Bach's St. Matthew Passion.² A record of successful performances in Europe dating from 1918 increased his recognition there, but it was not until 1939 that any major work of his received performance in the United States.³ Though largely self-taught, his only formal study in composition was with Joseph Lauber in Geneva. His early writing leaned heavily toward the traditional with acknowledged influences from Franck, Wagner, and Strauss, eventually progressing into the harmonic language of Debussy and Ravel. Partly due to his dissatisfaction with the content and shape of his musical ideas at this time and partly due to the efforts of his countryman, the noted conductor Ernest Ansermet, at championing new music, Martin in 1932 began writing in a contemporary style for the first time.⁴

The limitless possibilities and intellectual challenge of twelve-tone composition have lured countless composers to this method of expression and Martin proved to be no exception. Embarking on an intense study and assimilation of Schoenberg's techniques and theories,

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2. William W. Austin, "Frank Martin," Dictionary of Contemporary Music, ed. John Vinton (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1974), 453.
 3. David Ewen, "Frank Martin," The Complete Book of Twentieth Century Music (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959), 228.
The work performed was the Ballade for saxophone, piano, percussion, and strings.
 4. Janet E. Tupper, "Stylistic Analysis of Selected Works by Frank Martin" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1964), 248-49.

he found much to his liking in the method but also tenets which he rejected, one of the strongest being its (the method's) denial of a tonal center. In an excerpt from one of his numerous writings on this subject, Martin gives a compelling defense of his rejection:

Partial use of the 12-tone technique has helped me free myself from acquired customs and ready-made formulas. Where I never could follow Schoenberg was in the area of atonality, against which I place my entire musical feeling. Considering atonality, I have the same feeling as before an architectural work in which the calculation of the gravitational support is not carefully done; as before a world in which there is no vertical, no horizontal, in which even the right angle is unknown.⁵

Throughout most of his life, a large share of Martin's creative energies were expended in scholastic service. After early independent study in Paris and Rome, he returned to Geneva in 1925 where he was first a student and then a teacher at the Jacques-Dalcroze Institute of Eurhythmics, continuing in the latter position until 1938. During this same period, he taught at the Geneva Conservatory and from 1933 to 1939, was director of Switzerland's Technicum Moderne de Musique. From 1950 to 1957, he taught composition at the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne. In addition to this active career as a composer, teacher, and administrator, Martin wrote and published many essays dealing with philosophical and technical problems affecting composers in general as well as his own work. In one of these, entitled "Schoenberg and Ourselves,"⁶

5. Rudolph Klein, Frank Martin: Sein Leben und Werk, trans. Janet Tupper (Vienna: Osterreichische Musikzeitschrift, 1960), 15.

6. Frank Martin, "Schoenberg and Ourselves," Score (London: May 1952), 15-17.

Martin defines so eloquently and lucidly the pros and cons of Schoenberg's system that few could deny it to be one of the clearest, most objective views of the total twelve-tone rationale. Martin moved his residence to Amsterdam in 1946. It was in the Netherlands he wrote the Eight Preludes for Piano, and died on November 21, 1974.

Form in the Eight Preludes

The first impressions conveyed by a keyboard study of the Martin preludes are their effectiveness and homogeneity as a set. Without forsaking the individuality and self-containment of each prelude, Martin achieves group symmetry through an obviously pre-planned format. Two overt factors seen as contributors to this set unity are the contrasts and complementation effected by tempo, rhythm, and texture between the preludes. The chief compelling feature of unity, the B-A-C-H motif or the four-note figure as herein designated, is less obvious and will be discussed later under Melodic Process.

Homogeneity of the Preludes as a Set

The tempo indications of the preludes are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| I. Grave | V. Vivace |
| II. Allegretto tranquillo | VI. Andantino grazioso |
| III. Tranquillo ma con moto | VII. Lento |
| IV. Allegro | VIII. Vivace |

If reduced to their closest tempo cognates, the given indications would group the preludes in a four-plus-four plan of slow-fast-slow-fast (1,

2, 3, 4); fast-moderately fast-slow-fast (5, 6, 7, 8). This divisional tempo scheme supports the contention that the metrical-rhythmical make-up of each prelude was controlled by and within a larger plan. In comparing the first two preludes, the slow-fast tempo contrast between each establishes this first order of relationship while supporting their textural contrast. The Grave mood and character of number one, with its sustained, unhurried bass movement, is contrasted in number two by a rapid sixteenth-note figuration for the right hand that impatiently weaves and doubles itself in a sequential ascent (Examples 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b).

Ex. 1a. Martin, Prelude I, mm. 1-2

The musical notation for Example 1a shows the first two measures of Martin's Prelude I. The tempo is marked 'Grave' and the dynamics are 'f'. The piece is in 4/4 time. The bass line is slow and sustained, while the right hand features a sequential ascent of sixteenth notes.

Ex. 1b. Martin, Prelude I, mm. 18-19

The musical notation for Example 1b shows the final two measures of Martin's Prelude I. The right hand features a rapid sixteenth-note figuration, while the bass line remains sustained.

Ex. 2a. Martin, Prelude II, mm. 1-4.

Allegretto tranquillo

The musical score for Ex. 2a is in 2/4 time and G major. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5. The left hand plays a steady accompaniment of eighth notes, starting on G3 and moving up stepwise to D4. The piece is marked *Allegretto tranquillo*.

Ex. 2b. Martin, Prelude II, mm. 21-22.

The musical score for Ex. 2b is in 2/4 time and G major. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5. The left hand plays a steady accompaniment of eighth notes, starting on G3 and moving up stepwise to D4. The piece is marked *Allegretto tranquillo*.

In the third prelude, a left-hand ostinato in an undeviating eighth-note pattern provides a sense of stability and equilibrium after the restless syncopations of number two (Example 3).

Ex. 3. Martin, Prelude III, mm. 1-3.

Allegretto ma con moto

The musical score for Ex. 3 is in 2/4 time and G major. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5. The left hand plays a steady accompaniment of eighth notes, starting on G3 and moving up stepwise to D4. The piece is marked *Allegretto ma con moto* and *pp legato*.

This prelude, which bears a close figural relationship to the Chopin Prelude in a minor, Opus 28, number two, functions effectively in its placement and compositional design as the "slow movement" of the first

half of the four-plus-four grouping mentioned earlier.

The fourth prelude projects the most decisive contrast yet with its preponderantly triadic orientation and its un-metered and irregular groupings and accents. This is the shortest of the eight preludes at thirty-six measures, and its whimsical, scherzo-like character lends support to number four's role as the closing member of the first group (Example 4).

Ex. 4. Martin, Prelude IV, mm. 1-2.



The first three preludes have simple time signatures; 4/4 for number one, 2/4 for number two, and ζ for number three. No time signature is given for number four. In the second group of four preludes, compound signatures control the metrical scene. With the exception of number seven which is in 3/4, the signatures are: number five, 12/16; number six, 12/8, number eight, 18/16. The fifth prelude is built entirely on a triplet foundation. Except for its incidence in the irregular groupings of number four, this is the first time the division of the basic pulsation unit into three occurs in the preludes. The sixth and eighth preludes are also constructed primarily on the triple division of the beat.

In number five, the triplet configurations in sixteenth notes affect a perpetuum mobile, as they consistently occur on nearly every beat throughout the piece until four bars from the end where Martin inserts a dotted-quarter tied to a dotted-eighth (measures 75-76), the first and only respite since it began (Examples 5a, 5b).

Ex. 5a. Martin, Prelude V, mm. 1-2.



Ex. 5b. Martin, Prelude V, mm. 75-76.



Contained entirely within the boundaries of a strict two-part canon at the fifth, the sixth prelude differs from the previous five in its visual as well as aural impression. With its wide melodic leaps that encompass as much as a minor thirteenth, and its suggestion of tone-row organization,⁷ this prelude presents the sternest test of

7. Further commentary on aspects of twelve-tone technique in this prelude is delayed for inclusion under Melodic Process.

group continuity and relationship in the set (Example 6).

Ex. 6. Martin, Prelude VI, mm. 1-2.

Andantino Grazioso

In subjecting the jagged contours of this work to the laws of a strict contrapuntal procedure, it appears that Martin sought to create a quasi-tonal atmosphere that he could direct to his own expressive needs.

Whereas the flavour of number six is decidedly expressionistic, that of prelude number seven is unmistakably impressionistic. The parallelisms, blurred outlines and pedal effects closely resemble the pianistic idiom of Debussy, whose style Martin admired and emulated⁸ (Example 7a).

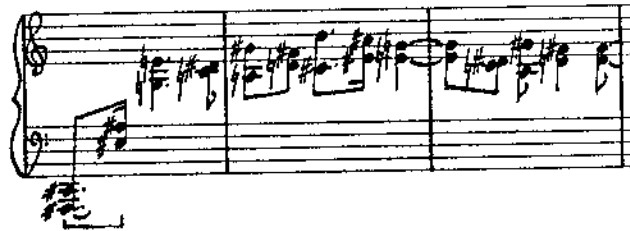
Ex. 7a. Martin, Prelude VII, mm. 1-7.

Lento

8. Abraham Skulsky, "Frank Martin, A Clear Understanding of his Ideals of Expression," Musical America (August 1949), 8.

In the lengthy main section of this prelude, the principal thematic idea is introduced in a semi-declamatory manner which seems to foster a plaintive quality. The melancholy mood of this theme is given further significance by Martin's assigning it, for twenty-four measures, to be played by the left hand alone (Examples 7b, 7c).

Ex. 7b. Martin, Prelude VII, mm. 17-19, Section A, Theme.



Ex. 7c. Martin, Prelude VII, mm. 24-26, Section A, theme transposed.



In the final prelude, Martin unleashes the full force of his creative and pianistic energies in a design that inherits much of the material previously heard but refashions it into a tour de force of intense vitality. He chooses rondo form for number eight and the first half of the A theme-group, with its triadic juxtapositions, recalls the triad-based number four (Example 8a).

Ex. 8a. Martin, Prelude VIII, mm. 1-2.



For the B theme-group beginning in measure ten, Martin employs as a left-hand ostinato figure the first six notes of the canon melody of prelude six (Example 8b). The initial appearance here is on F-sharp (see example six, page ten, the first canonic imitation) and is followed by three successive transpositions to C-sharp, G-sharp, and D-sharp.

Ex. 8b. Martin, Prelude VIII, m. 10.



The transitional material beginning in measure twenty-five echoes, in its rhythmic and chromatic outline and emphasis on the interval of a third, a parallel passage in number five, beginning at measure thirty-eight (Examples 8c, 8d).

Ex. 8c. Martin, Prelude VIII, m. 25.



Ex. 8d. Martin, Prelude V, mm. 38-39.



This re-casting or transformation of previous material combines with new ideas in a brilliant pianistic style, making prelude eight an authoritative and effective finale.

Individual Form in the Preludes

In her 1964 unpublished dissertation on selected works by Frank Martin, Janet Tupper states:

In short pieces or movements from larger works, Martin usually adopts some type of part form which is concise and allows some contrast along with an emphasis of unifying techniques. The piano preludes . . . are examples of this formal type.⁹

9. Tupper, op. cit., 206.

Tupper assigns preludes IV, V, VI, and VIII to traditional part form structures and outlines them as follows (Examples 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d):¹⁰

Example 9a. Martin, Prelude IV, formal outline.

A	A'	B	A''
1	10	21	26
C#	F#	B	C#

Example 9b. Martin, Prelude V, formal outline.

Intro.	A	B	tr	A'	Coda
1	14	25	31	41	61
B	F#	b	F-D-	Eb	B-G#

Example 9c. Martin, Prelude VI, formal outline. (Canon)

PART I	PART II	PART III
A1 2 tr A'1 tr	A1 A1''	Coda (A1 + C# pedal)
C# B	A- F#- A	A-C#
m 1, 5 m7	M12 shortened, intensified m 16	m 17

Example 9d. Martin, Prelude VIII, formal outline. (Rondo theme = A)

A	B	tr	A	C1	2	3	tr	A	D1	2	tr	A	Coda (A)
D#	F#	26	D#	G	F#	B	B	D#	G	G#	80	F	D#-E-C#
m1	11		29	33	37	40	48	54	58	70	80	90	97

Going beyond Tupper's analysis, the other four preludes are best described as unique forms in that they each exhibit structural plans

10. *Ibid.* 200, 206, 207.

that conform to no standardized genera. The basis for their analysis and outlines was derived chiefly from Douglas M. Green's book, Form in Tonal Music, especially chapter 15, entitled "Unique Forms."¹¹ Prelude I is an A-B-A'-A (Example 10a):

Example 10a. Martin, Prelude I, formal outline.

A	B	A'	A (codetta)
1-17	18-26	27-39	40-43
c#	e	D#	c#

Prelude II is a monothematic structure that grows from a continuous eight-bar melody expressed in the first eight measures. The organization of the melodic sequences and their key levels outlines as follows (Example 10b):

Example 10b. Martin, Prelude II, outline.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Measures</u>	<u>Tonal Level</u>
Original	1 - 8	b
Sequence 1	9 - 16	e
Sequence 2	17 - 18	b
Sequence 3	19 - 20	g#
Sequence 4	21 - 28	c#
Sequence 5	29 - 37	d
Sequence 6	38 - 48	b
Codetta	51 - 53	b

Prelude III is a variant form of the Passacaglia-Chaconne, this relationship stemming primarily from the quasi-ostinato of the left hand. The clearest formal outline is suggested by the harmonic shifts of the ostinato (Example 10c).

11. Douglas M. Green, Form in Tonal Music (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), 282-299.

Example 10c. Martin, Prelude III, outline.

<u>Ostinato Changes</u>	<u>Measures</u>	<u>Harmonic Color</u>
1	1 - 21	g#
2	22 - 23	b# dim.7
3	24	B-aug.7
4	25 - 28	e
5	29 - 31	Bb
6	32 - 36	f#
7	37 - 40	Ab-aug.
Coda	41 - 45	g#

In prelude seven, Martin again borrows aspects of continuous variation by the consistent use of a single bass or left-hand theme (see Examples 7b and 7c, page eleven). In this piece, which opens and closes with a short prologue and epilogue of identical material, Martin's complex yet lucid technical procedures reveal his mastery of compositional design more than do the other preludes (Example 10d).

Example 10d. Martin, Prelude VII, outline

<u>Theme-Group</u>	<u>Measures</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>
PROLOGUE	1 - 16	Impressionistic, blurred pedal
A	17 - 33	Declamatory, left hand alone
Transition a	34 - 40	L.H. alone, wide sonorities
Transition b	41 - 53	Two hands, increased motion
A'	54 - 75	L.H. has original A, R.H. obbligato
Transition a'	76 - 82	R.H. obbligato doubled to octaves
Transition b'	83 - 88	Canonic imitation, one beat removed
Codetta	89 - 95	A in semi-diminution in L.H.
EPILOGUE	96 - 114	Impressionistic, blurred pedal

Melodic Process in the Preludes

Chromatic Elements and Schoenberg

Martin's use of chromatic melodies within an essentially diatonic but fluctuating tonal framework heightens the preludes' contemporary style. In this work, his personal interpretation of the chromatic inferences of Schoenberg's twelve-tone method is seen in the rejection of austere row organization in favor of a freer adaptation of twelve-tone techniques based on a symmetrical scale of alternating whole and half steps. This adaptation was the result of a selective process governed by Martin's scrupulous approach to composition and his unswerving musical esthetic. A partial understanding of this esthetic and its control over Martin's attitude toward the twelve-tone method comes from his own words:

Above all we must never set aside our own musical sensibility and look to this new technique (twelve-tonalism) to find an easy way out of difficulties. . . . Everyone will shape it according to his own temperament. . . . We can enjoy being freed from. . . classical tonality, but we need not necessarily give up our feeling for tonal functions, for the functional bass. . . .¹²

In the preludes, there are no evident twelve-tone rows. The closest resemblance to a row derivation is seen in the theme of Prelude VII, which uses ten chromatic tones initially but follows no established

12. Martin, op. cit., 16-17.

order in their recurrence (see Example 6, page 10). What is the basis then of Martin's pitch organization in this work? Careful scrutiny of the chromatic process as it appears in each prelude reveals the most defensible answer to be the octatonic scale.

The Generative Role of the Octatonic Scale: The B-A-C-H-related Motive

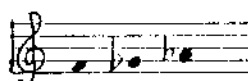
The octatonic or eight-tone scale is comprised of the following whole and half step arrangement (Example 11a):

Example 11a. Octatonic Scale Formation

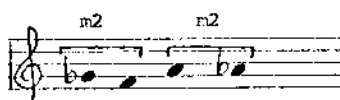


The minor second, by its placement and disposition within this scale becomes its characteristic interval. Various cell groups may be drawn from this scale and Martin apparently derived one such cell for use as the principal unifying element in the preludes. This particular cell (Example 11b), when joined to an adjacent tone and rearranged (Example 11c) forms the nucleus from which each prelude draws its thematic material. With the negligible difference of a major versus a minor 3rd, this nucleus gains in significance when compared to the B-A-C-H-related motive (Example 11d).

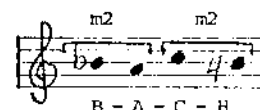
Example 11b.



Example 11c.



Example 11d.



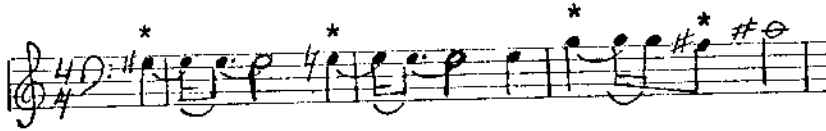
The weight of the minor seconds and their descending order in both motives corroborates the hypothesis that the B-A-C-H variant emerged as a result of Martin's manipulation of the octatonic scale and that he accepted this result as a distinctive way through which to organize his preludes and coincidentally to pay homage to his life-long favorite composer.¹³ Additionally, this motive, though chromatic in essence, provides enough flexibility through the presence of the third for Martin to avoid the common pitfall of an aimless chromaticism.

The B-A-C-H-related Motive as it Appears in the Preludes

The more or less overt occurrences of the B-A-C-H-related motive are seen throughout Preludes I, II, IV, and VII. The following examples show one appearance in each of these preludes (the examples, for reasons of expediency and space, use only the voice, or one of the voices, that carries the motive, the motive itself being designated by an asterisk):

13. "Frank Martin," Boston Symphony Concert Bulletin, n.a. (Dec. 28, 1951), 464. Most articles on Martin's life and work refer to his reverence for Bach. In this one (derived largely from an unsigned article in Polyphonie magazine, the issue on Rhythm 1948), the statement is made that Martin admits to having been so impressed at age eight or nine by the St. Matthew Passion that Bach was from then on his favored master.

Example 12. Martin, Prelude I, mm. 1 - 3.



Example 13. Martin, Prelude II, mm. 1 - 2.



Example 14.
Martin, Prelude IV, m. 1.

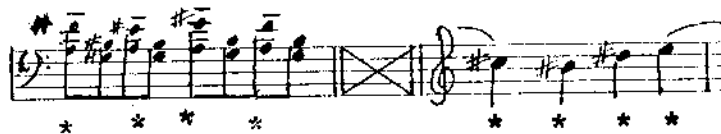


Example 15.
Martin, Prelude VII, mm. 24-25.



In prelude III the motive is less obvious, occurring sporadically in the top voice of the ostinato and later as a rearranged melodic fragment in the right hand (Example 16).

Example 16. Martin, Prelude III, l.h. ostinato, m.9; r.h. melody, m.33.



Two octatonic cell units combine to fashion the melodic material of preludes V and VI (Examples 17, 18a, 18b):

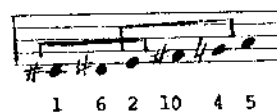
Example 17. Martin, Prelude V, Octatonic cell combinations, m.1.



Example 18a.
Martin, Prelude VI, m.1.



Example 18b.
Martin, Prelude VI, cell.



In the last prelude, the motive's occurrences are the most cryptic, appearing in the middle voices, partially inverted and retrograded (Examples 19a, 19b, 19c):

Example 19a. Martin, Prelude VIII, m. 33.



Example 19b. Martin, Prelude VIII, m. 37.



Example 19c. Martin, Prelude VIII, m. 58.



As these examples show, Martin's debt to Schoenberg lies principally in his serial approach to composition that selects only those elements of serialism that are compatible with his style and musical philosophy.

Harmony—Tonality in the Preludes

Knowing Martin's attitude and convictions regarding atonality (see quotation page four), it is no surprise to find that the preludes, despite their chromatic orientation, maintain a sense of tonality if not consistent tonal centers. Immediately in the first prelude, with a strong c-sharp minor chord on the down-beat of the first measure (see Example 1a, page six), Martin in effect announces that traditional harmonic and tonal elements will not be alien to this work. Further, after a searching analysis of several works by Martin, including the preludes, Janet Tupper has stated that "no matter how complex the individual chords become, or with what rhythm the music moves, it still adheres to a 'key centered' tonality."¹⁴

14. Tupper, op. cit., 62.

The prevailing color of the preludes is the minor mode with the strongest hint of major occurring in the "prologue" and "epilogue" of number seven. Occasionally, after a freely fluctuating harmonic sequence, Martin will suddenly cadence on a major chord which in most cases is neither predictable nor apparently logical in its particular choice (prelude I, mm. 25-26; prelude V, mm. 60-61).

Martin's fondness for triads is evidenced in the three-note up-beat figure occurring throughout prelude II, the ubiquitous root triads of IV, the clever triad juxtapositions of V, and the triad-based A theme of prelude VIII.

The following example gives the basic tonal centers for each prelude:

Example 20. Martin, Preludes, Tonal Centers

<u>Prelude No. - Tonal Center(s)</u>	<u>Prelude No. - Tonal Center(s)</u>
I c# - e	V c#
II b	VI c#
III g#	VII C - f# - C
IV c# - f# - e-flat	VIII d# - G - (f - g) C#

Pianistic Idiom in the Preludes

Although William Austin states that Martin was a mediocre pianist at age sixteen,¹⁵ we cannot assume that this estimation of his pianistic ability remained throughout his life. While he did not perform as a solo recitalist, he did enjoy an active career for ten years as pianist and harpsichordist for the Chamber Music Society of Geneva. The pianistic style in the preludes in many ways reflects this chamber music background. With the exception of prelude VIII and the last page of prelude V, these works are devoid of superfluous display or ostentation. And even in preludes V and VIII, the bravura passages are never superficial but are outgrowths of the musical thought and remain subservient to it.

The predominantly contrapuntal idiom of the preludes and Martin's frequent stratification of his ideas emerge as strong determinants of his keyboard style. The combination of both these elements is seen in the following passage from the first prelude (Example 21):

Example 21. Martin, Prelude I, mm. 27-28

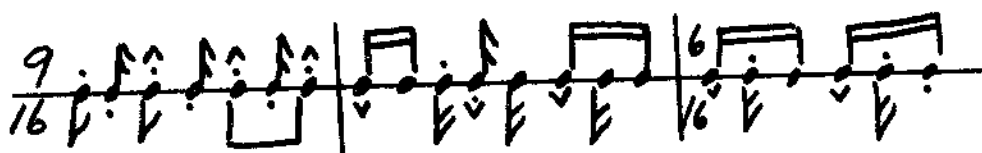
15. William W. Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century (N.Y.: W. W. Norton, 1966), 497.

Other examples of this type appear in preludes III (mm. 29-40), V (mm. 14-16 and 41-45), and VII (mm. 59-82).

Rhythmic Designs

A colorful palette of rhythms and rhythmic textures helps to mold and define Martin's pianistic style and contributes to the variety between preludes. Many reveal in their rhythmic make-up the exploitation or dominance of only one figure or pattern, such as the triplets of number five or the syncopated sixteenths of number two, but in prelude VIII, the rhythmic complexities and oppositions evoke Stravinsky. This influence or kinship is particularly noted in the D theme-group of number eight, which the following rhythmic excerpt shows (Example 22):

Example 22. Martin, Prelude VIII, rhythmic patterns, mm. 70-72 (r.h., stems up, l.h., stems down).



Another example of Martin's rhythmic vitality can be seen in this same prelude in the passage beginning at measure ten where the agogic syncopations of the right hand against the triplet ostinato in the bass produce an effect akin to jazz, or even boogie-woogie (see Example 8b, page 12).

Idiomatic Techniques

Some characteristic keyboard techniques such as arpeggios and scalar lines are minimally used in the preludes. The tremolando is completely absent and the trill is used in only three preludes, with only one occurrence in each. There are two glissandi in the final prelude, one of which is a sweep from top to bottom of the keyboard, and both function endemically as linking mechanisms rather than as extraneous bravura. Martin gives precise performance directions for most of the preludes, these directions occurring at specific passages but usually in a more detailed explanation at the end of each prelude.

Summary

This paper has shown that the Martin Preludes are the product of a careful and precise creative process and that their coherence as a set results from a conscious design. The octatonic scale with its chromatic implications emerged as the most compelling source of all thematic material, including its coincidence in the derivation of a B-A-C-H-related motive. This motive, in its various roles as an organizing and molding force, is the principal element that lends coherence to the preludes. Whereas Martin, an intellectual and sensitive composer, studied and absorbed the major compositional technique and influence of his time, the twelve-tone method of Schoenberg, he used from it only

what was compatible and enhancing to his personal esthetic of balance, order, and expressiveness. His use of traditional formal schemes and techniques such as the rondo, canon, and part forms in the preludes reflects this esthetic as does his preference for tonal centers. Harmony and tonality in the preludes stray little from practices in tonally based music and draw heavy support from the triad. Earlier influences on Martin's style were noted in some preludes, such as the Chopinesque number three, the impressionistic number seven, and the austere expressionism of number six. The last prelude combines previous thematic and rhythmic elements with dynamic new material to shape a brilliant and dramatic finale. Finally, Martin reveals in the preludes an adroit pianism which he effectively subjugates to the prime cause of the musical idea without sacrifice of idiomatic flair.

Conclusion

Although Frank Martin's works are still undergoing the test of time, the Piano Preludes' increasing status in the contemporary musical scene is bolstered by a host of other compositions by this composer of equal or higher standing. Such works as the Petite Symphonie Concertante, the oratorios Le vin herbè and Golgotha, and the Ballades for various chamber ensembles, have garnered many accolades for Martin.

The Preludes, which were dedicated to the late Rumanian pianist, Dinu Lipatti, have been with us for nearly thirty-two years. The work

that their composer so reverently worshipped in his youth, the towering St. Matthew Passion of J. S. Bach, lay one hundred years in oblivion before gaining the recognition and appreciation it so rightly deserved. While it is readily admitted that the Preludes can make no claim to distinction on a par with the Matthew Passion, it is hoped that, with the technological ease and variety of means by which music is disseminated today, Martin will not have to await a latter-day Mendelssohn to bring this work and his name to the forefront of musical consciousness.

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