

<http://www.pekc.org>

## A Day with The Art of the Fugue

### **POSTPONED DUE TO INJURY!!**

I have injured my shoulder and won't be able to conduct the workshop on the scheduled date. (This is largely because I wouldn't be able to do the substantial amount of playing that is an integral part of the presentation.) I am working on rescheduling the event, and it will take place either in June 2023 or sometime in the fall of 2023. Please write me at [gavinblackbaroque@gmail.com](mailto:gavinblackbaroque@gmail.com) for more information or to be added to my mailing list. - Gavin

A  
Princeton Early Keyboard Center  
Workshop

led by

Gavin Black  
Director, PEKC

~~Saturday April 1, 2023~~  
~~10:00 AM - 4:00 PM~~

Seminary Chapel  
Princeton Theological Seminary  
64 Mercer Street  
Princeton, New Jersey 08542

This one-day workshop is, first of all, designed to be flexible enough in structure and content to offer something valuable to anyone who is interested in attending, regardless of prior background or experience. Anyone who is interested or intrigued is very welcome indeed. In particular, while of course keyboard players, Baroque specialists, and other musicians are warmly invited to attend, we expect that the day will be of equal interest to those who are not themselves musicians or performers. All that is necessary is that you be interested enough to want to be there.

We will start by discussing the phenomenon of *counterpoint* – in music, of course (since *The Art of the Fugue* is a quintessential work of musical counterpoint) but also as a general principle in life and in other arts. We will move on to looking at the overall structure of *The Art of the Fugue*, examining how that structure arises in part from the nature of the opening subject itself. We will explore the relationship between counterpoint and harmony, and, especially, the emotional and philosophical implications of counterpoint in general and of the uses of counterpoint in this work in particular.

Other topics will include various performance issues, especially those that arise from the relationships between sonority and counterpoint, sonority and rhetoric, and sonority and emotional content; the history of the work in performance; various ways in which this work relates to the rest of what Bach did in his career; and, perhaps most intriguingly, various implications of the fact that the work is incomplete.

During, especially, the second half of the day we will go through some of the specifics of individual movements of the piece. The day won't include a concert performance of the work as a whole, but Gavin Black will play many excerpts and occasional whole movements or sections. Workshop attendees who wish to do so will be able to try out the instruments – at least a little bit, maybe more, time permitting. We will use the Paul Fritts organ in the Seminary Chapel as well as Gavin Black's Keith Hill German double-manual harpsichord.

An overarching aim of this workshop is to *demystify* this long, complicated, and imposing work. In spite of the length and complexity, *The Art of the Fugue* is both lucid and imbued with emotional immediacy. Engaging with the work over a leisurely day in a relaxed and informal setting is an ideal way simultaneously to become more and more comfortable with the piece – indeed deeply comfortable with it – and thereby actually to increase one's sense of its power, intensity, force, and importance.

The workshop is free, and open to everyone. There are no advance reservations or tickets required: it is OK just to show up. However, if you let PEKC know that you are coming, we can keep you posted directly about any changes or updates. If you let us know that you are planning on attending, you are very welcome at the same time to tell us anything in particular that you are hoping to get out of the experience. That will enable us to shape some of the details in accordance with what the workshop attendees are most interested in.