

1408. Ave Maria (Bach-Gounod)

Backgrounds Of S. Radic

The **Ave Maria** by "Bach/Gounod", actually *Méditation sur le premier prélude de Bach*, is a composition by Charles Gounod for voice (or a melody instrument) and piano using a prelude by Johann Sebastian Bach as well as the text of the Ave Maria and one of the most famous pieces of classical music.

Gounod composed the piece in 1852 as an improvisation exercise during his studies. In 1859 it was accompanied by the text of the Latin prayer Ave Maria. The work is based on Prelude No. 1 in C major from Bach's Well-Tempered Piano (BWV 846), a harmonic study of broken chords. Gounod adopted the movement largely unchanged. Thus Gounod stands in the long line of composers who approach Bach by using his works as a basis for their own compositions.



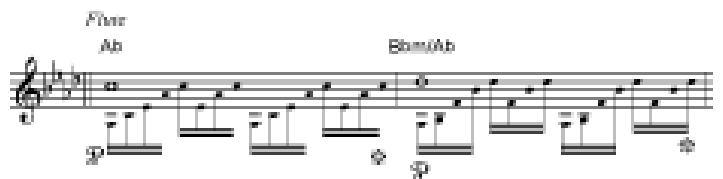
The hybrid composition thus represents a combination of the harmonic development and the movement pattern of Bach's prelude, which is used for pure accompaniment, and Gounod's melody with its wide range of tones and wide dynamic range, which stylistically pushes the result strongly into the Romantic age. Bach/Gounod is usually cited as the composer - also to distinguish the composition from Gounod's own Ave Maria setting.

The work has enjoyed great popularity to this day and is often used for the musical arrangement of ceremonial occasions (e.g. weddings). In addition to the original version for piano and voice, numerous arrangements for practically every conceivable instrument combination have now been created. In particular, many pop musicians and vocal soloists have included the piece in their repertoire.

CURT PRINA version. The MIDI processing of the organ version by Curt Prina was a real challenge, not so much because of the melody transcription, but the fact that Curt was playing a "baroque version" with a full-featured jazz organ version to the other one!



However, since his recording falls into the analog era in 1979, he had nothing to do with midi sequencing or styles programming. His studio technician "accompanied" him the way he wanted: Baroque beat with tempo 70 - and then the Swingfox improvisation with a decent drive with swing tempo 140. My task in 2018 was to first put these two rhythms into one style, which I finally succeeded in doing (read more about this in the style info). The sine organ sound of Curt Prina's Wersi Galaxis is hardly comprehensible - all I had left in my Wersi Pegasus was the choice of the two GM organ sounds, GM No.17, which sounds like the "organ rotor sound". Here you should definitely listen to the Prina original - unfortunately not available on YouTube - therefore my Curt original in the MWP internet presentation. Compared to the original notes from the left side, the Prina version looks like this:



I'm sorry, 4 Be's? Oh yes, Curt Prina had always chosen the best key for his titles with a serene absolute ear. He first plays the harpsichord accompaniment in baroque style and the flute solo, which later also sounds with strings. And then the "cosy" 16th beat of his baroque introduction stops and a triplet transition to the full-featured jazz improvisation sounds:



(Have fun!)

Barock-16Beat, T=70 + Swing-Fox, T=140

The musical score is presented in a standard staff format with five staves. The top staff is for Strings, the second for Cembalo, the third for Guitar, the fourth for Bass, and the fifth for Drums. The score is divided into two main sections: Main 1 and Main 2. Main 1 consists of two measures of Barock-16Beat, and Main 2 consists of two measures of Swing-Fox. The Cembalo part features a melodic line with a dynamic marking 'P' and an asterisk. The Guitar part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the second measure of Main 2. The Bass and Drums parts provide a steady accompaniment.

Programmieranweisung

In this title CURT PRINA has used two really "opposing" styles - and put us style programmers in relative distress! How is that supposed to work? A "Barock-16-Beat" and a "Swing-Fox" together in one style? But: Nobody said that a baroque style and a swing fox should take place in a 4/4 beat - even if the notes suggest that! The solution is a 2/4 beat with the following characteristics: The tempo remains at 70, so that first of all the baroque 16th beat is satisfied, because the 16th harpsichord must remain "existential". And how does a "Swingfox" deal with this now? The solution can be found in doubling the note play values: two quarter notes in a 2/4 time then become four eighth notes - and suddenly these four eighths move in the tempo 140! The guitar now goes into the full four beats per bar with short eighths and the bass with the drums does everything with 2 quarters per bar. All right?