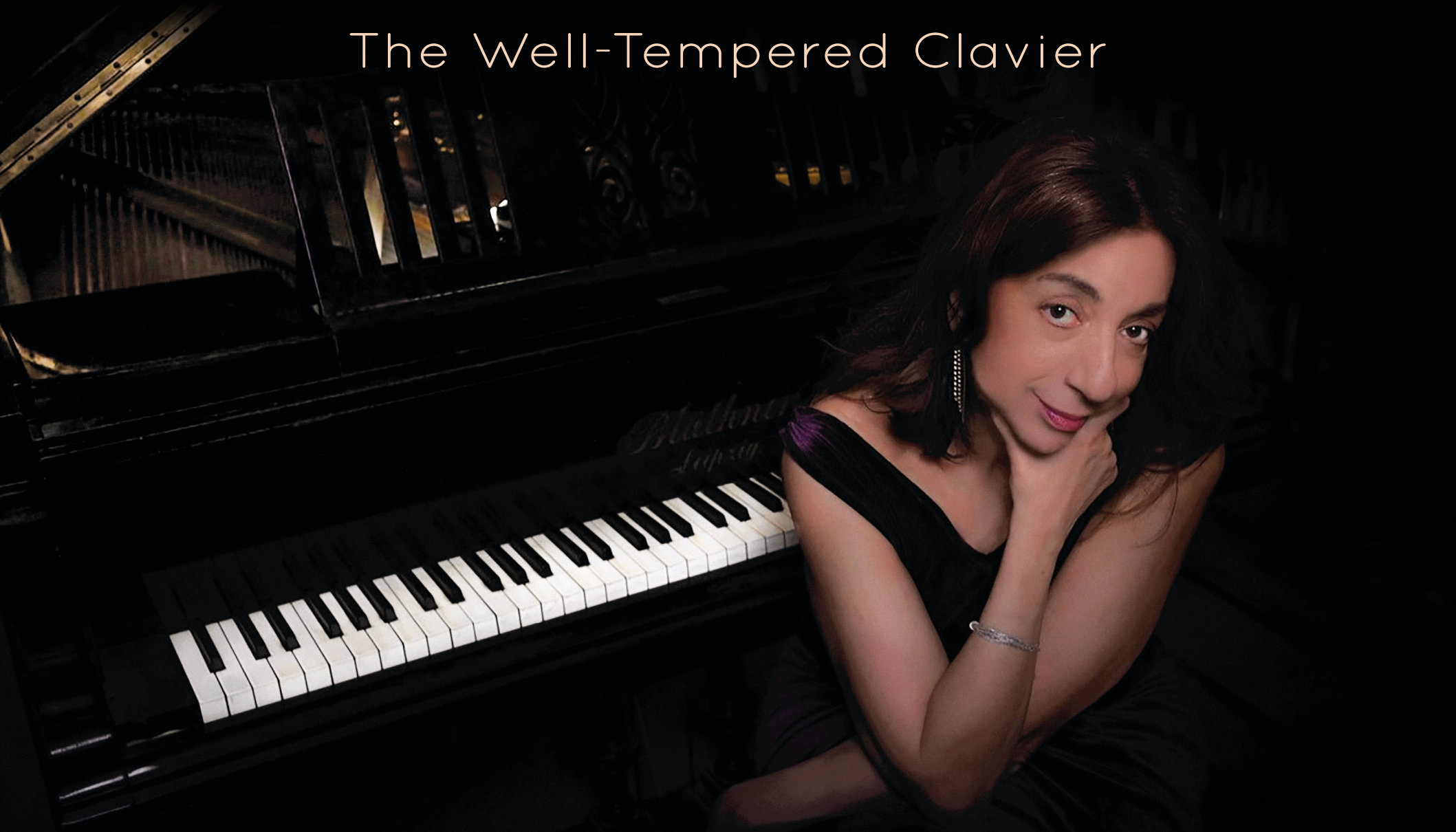




# J. S. BACH

The Well-Tempered Clavier



Alexandra Papastefanou

## The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I (24 Preludes and Fugues: Nos. 1-12, BWV 846-857)

### CD1

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 1 in C major, BWV 846

- 1 Prelude
- 2 Fugue

[4:04]  
[1:54]  
[2:06]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 7 in E flat major, BWV 852

- 13 Prelude
- 14 Fugue

[5:47]  
[4:10]  
[1:36]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 2 in C minor, BWV 847

- 3 Prelude
- 4 Fugue

[2:58]  
[1:28]  
[1:29]

#### Prelude in E flat minor & Fugue in D sharp minor No. 8, BWV 853

- 15 Prelude
- 16 Fugue

[9:08]  
[3:37]  
[5:30]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 3 in C sharp major, BWV 848

- 5 Prelude
- 6 Fugue

[3:41]  
[1:23]  
[2:17]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 9 in E major, BWV 854

- 17 Prelude
- 18 Fugue

[2:40]  
[1:28]  
[1:10]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 4 in C sharp minor, BWV 849

- 7 Prelude
- 8 Fugue

[8:05]  
[2:57]  
[5:06]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 10 in E minor, BWV 855

- 19 Prelude
- 20 Fugue

[3:29]  
[2:17]  
[1:10]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 5 in D major, BWV 850

- 9 Prelude
- 10 Fugue

[3:08]  
[1:14]  
[1:52]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 11 in F major, BWV 856

- 21 Prelude
- 22 Fugue

[2:12]  
[1:00]  
[1:10]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 6 in D minor, BWV 851

- 11 Prelude
- 12 Fugue

[3:31]  
[1:24]  
[2:05]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 12 in F minor, BWV 857

- 23 Prelude
- 24 Fugue

[7:02]  
[2:07]  
[4:52]

**Total timing:**

**[56:19]**

**The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I (24 Preludes and Fugues: Nos. 13-24, BWV 858-869)**

**CD2**

<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 13 in F sharp major, BWV 858</b>	<b>[3:43]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 19 in A major, BWV 864</b>	<b>[3:38]</b>
1 Prelude	[1:32]	13 Prelude	[1:26]
2 Fugue	[2:10]	14 Fugue	[2:10]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 14 in F sharp minor, BWV 859</b>	<b>[5:26]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 20 in A minor, BWV 865</b>	<b>[4:56]</b>
3 Prelude	[1:20]	15 Prelude	[1:08]
4 Fugue	[4:04]	16 Fugue	[3:47]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 15 in G major, BWV 860</b>	<b>[3:27]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 21 in B flat major, BWV 866</b>	<b>[2:58]</b>
5 Prelude	[0:51]	17 Prelude	[1:21]
6 Fugue	[2:34]	18 Fugue	[1:36]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 16 in G minor, BWV 861</b>	<b>[3:40]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 22 in B flat minor, BWV 867</b>	<b>[6:58]</b>
7 Prelude	[2:00]	19 Prelude	[2:58]
8 Fugue	[1:41]	20 Fugue	[3:58]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 17 in A flat major, BWV 862</b>	<b>[4:16]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 23 in B major, BWV 868</b>	<b>[3:20]</b>
9 Prelude	[1:19]	21 Prelude	[1:07]
10 Fugue	[2:55]	22 Fugue	[2:11]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 18 in G sharp minor, BWV 863</b>	<b>[4:05]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 24 in B minor, BWV 869</b>	<b>[13:06]</b>
11 Prelude	[1:38]	23 Prelude	[6:14]
12 Fugue	[2:24]	24 Fugue	[6:49]
		<b>Total timing:</b>	<b>[60:11]</b>



## The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II (24 Preludes and Fugues: Nos. 1-12, BWV 870-881)

### CD3

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 1 in C major, BWV 870

- 1 Prelude
- 2 Fugue

[4:25]  
[2:43]  
[1:41]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 7 in E flat major, BWV 876

- 13 Prelude
- 14 Fugue

[4:21]  
[2:37]  
[1:42]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 2 in C minor, BWV 871

- 3 Prelude
- 4 Fugue

[5:03]  
[3:01]  
[2:02]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 8 in D sharp minor, BWV 877

- 15 Prelude
- 16 Fugue

[7:39]  
[3:43]  
[3:54]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 3 in C sharp major, BWV 872

- 5 Prelude
- 6 Fugue

[3:31]  
[1:42]  
[1:48]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 9 in E major, BWV 878

- 17 Prelude
- 18 Fugue

[8:16]  
[5:22]  
[2:52]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 4 in C sharp minor, BWV 873

- 7 Prelude
- 8 Fugue

[6:11]  
[4:10]  
[2:00]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 10 in E minor, BWV 879

- 19 Prelude
- 20 Fugue

[6:35]  
[3:43]  
[2:50]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 5 in D major, BWV 874

- 9 Prelude
- 10 Fugue

[8:42]  
[5:30]  
[3:12]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 11 in F major, BWV 880

- 21 Prelude
- 22 Fugue

[5:35]  
[4:05]  
[1:28]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 6 in D minor, BWV 875

- 11 Prelude
- 12 Fugue

[3:21]  
[1:37]  
[1:43]

#### Prelude & Fugue No. 12 in F minor, BWV 881

- 23 Prelude
- 24 Fugue

[5:58]  
[4:05]  
[1:52]

**Total timing:**

**[70:06]**



**The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II (24 Preludes and Fugues: Nos. 13-24, BWV 882-893)**

**CD4**

<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 13 in F sharp major, BWV 882</b>	<b>[5:47]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 19 in A major, BWV 888</b>	<b>[3:12]</b>
1 Prelude	[3:03]	13 Prelude	[1:58]
2 Fugue	[2:43]	14 Fugue	[1:13]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 14 in F sharp minor, BWV 883</b>	<b>[7:49]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 20 in A minor, BWV 889</b>	<b>[6:50]</b>
3 Prelude	[3:06]	15 Prelude	[5:10]
4 Fugue	[4:42]	16 Fugue	[1:39]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 15 in G major, BWV 884</b>	<b>[3:43]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 21 in B flat major, BWV 890</b>	<b>[10:25]</b>
5 Prelude	[2:33]	17 Prelude	[8:09]
6 Fugue	[1:08]	18 Fugue	[2:15]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 16 in G minor, BWV 885</b>	<b>[5:34]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 22 in B flat minor, BWV 891</b>	<b>[6:52]</b>
7 Prelude	[2:46]	19 Prelude	[3:02]
8 Fugue	[2:47]	20 Fugue	[3:50]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 17 in A flat major, BWV 886</b>	<b>[6:58]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 23 in B major, BWV 892</b>	<b>[6:22]</b>
9 Prelude	[3:32]	21 Prelude	[1:47]
10 Fugue	[3:26]	22 Fugue	[4:35]
<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 18 in G sharp minor, BWV 887</b>	<b>[8:30]</b>	<b>Prelude &amp; Fugue No. 24 in B minor, BWV 893</b>	<b>[4:08]</b>
11 Prelude	[4:08]	23 Prelude	[2:10]
12 Fugue	[4:21]	24 Fugue	[1:57]
		<b>Total timing:</b>	<b>[76:35]</b>

## Johann Sebastian BACH: The Well-Tempered Clavier

One of the greatest achievements in musical composition history, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* of Johann Sebastian Bach, was actually written with instructional intention. It should be remembered that ‘the 48’ were written as two books of 24 *Preludes and Fugues* some twenty years apart.

The first book was written in 1722 when Bach was 57 years of age. He formulated an idea of writing a prelude and fugue in all of the twelve major and minor keys thus making twenty-four. In order to make this clear, he wrote an elaborate title page to the work, which reads in translation:

*The Well-Tempered Clavier, or Preludes and Fugues in all the tones and semitones, relating to the major third, or Ut Re Mi, as well as those related to the minor third, or Re Mi Fa. Compiled and prepared for the benefit and practice of young musicians desirous of instruction, as well as for the entertainment of those already versed in this particular study. Composed and prepared by Johann Sebastian Bach, at present Kapellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen and Director of his Chamber Music. In the year 1722.*

It is known that Bach himself tuned his harpsichords and clavichords to something near what we would today call ‘equal temperament’, which basically means that the instrument is so tuned in order that one can modulate to any key without the intervals sounding out of tune. As we see from

the title page, the first book of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* was designed for the benefit of students and learning musicians as well as those in pursuit of entertainment.

Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen had married his musically disinterested 15-year-old cousin in December 1721 and Bach was looking for a new position. At this time Johann Kuhnau, who had been Kantor of St Thomas Church in Leipzig for 21 years, was plagued by ill health and the pressure of his position resulting in his death in June 1722 at the age of 62.

Bach’s idea of an instructional work would therefore be a perfect trump card at any interview for a post that required teaching and performance skills, let alone compositional ones. However, it was not an idea out of the blue; there were a few existing examples of which Bach was aware. In 1719 Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) had published a teaching manual for figured bass including 48 *leichter und schwerer Exampel aus allen Tönen* (24 easy and 24 more difficult examples from all keys) while Friedrich Suppig wrote two works on tuning systems – *Calculus musicus* and *Labyrinthus musicus* whose *Fantasia* uses all 24 keys using pure major thirds and an enharmonically tuned keyboard with 31 notes per octave. Both manuscripts are dated Dresden, 24 June 1722, the month in which Kuhnau died.

Like all geniuses, Bach took a good idea and made it great, but he had limited time. He recycled eleven preludes from



*Klavierbüchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann Bach*, a collection of works compiled for his eldest son in 1720. These all appear in the first 12 *Preludes and Fugues* (No. 7 in *E flat major* is the exception) while Nos. 13-24 appear to have no antecedents. Perhaps Bach took just the first twelve to his interview in Leipzig.

Many of the *Preludes* exhibit their origins in improvisation. The famous first *Prelude in C major* is basically a harmonic

progression, a series of chords explored by the performer. Indeed, in the original version found in the *Klavierbüchlein* the first five bars are written out, then the rest is a written chord progression, a common practice from the time where they serve to provide the player with an opportunity for improvisation with perhaps a small cadenza to finish the piece. This is what Bach does at the end of many of the *Preludes* – a short written-out cadenza or harmonic flourish concludes



Praeludium

The Praeludium section is written on ten systems of two staves each. The notation is dense and features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, as well as rests. The ink is dark brown and the paper shows signs of age and wear.

The first part of the Fuga section is written on five systems of two staves each. It begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation is complex, with many beamed notes and rests, characteristic of a fugue's intricate texture.

Fuga

The second part of the Fuga section is written on three systems of two staves each. It continues the complex polyphonic texture of the first part, with multiple voices moving in parallel motion. The notation is dense and fills the staves.



many of the first 12 *Preludes* (1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7). He also provides instructional variety in his writing. The *Preludes* range in technical and emotional breadth from the gravity of *Prelude No. 8 in E flat minor* and *No. 22 in B flat minor* to the technically demanding toccata of *No. 21 in B flat major*. The impressive variety of emotional and technical style is also evident in the *Fugues* with the number of voices ranging from two to five.

The manuscript of *Book II* of 'the 48' resides in the British Library in London. It is in the hand of Bach, his son Wilhelm Friedmann and his wife Anna Magdalena, and dated between 1739 and 1742. There is another copy by Bach's son-in-law Johann Christoph Altnikol dated 1744. Although the two books of *Preludes and Fugues* are often published together as 'the 48', the second book, written twenty years after the first, is of a different musical nature and style. By now, equal temperament was established and a more melodic and less contrapuntal musical style was in vogue. Bach reflects his time in this new work. The level of technical demand is similar to that of the first book, even though he had completed the technically very demanding *Goldberg Variations* around the same time in 1742. It would seem that, like the first book, this second book was written primarily for educative personal and private use in the home – probably to be played on the intimate clavichord.

Whereas in *Book One* the *Preludes* are often improvisatory in style, in *Book Two* they are of a more formal structure, often in two clearly delineated parts, with the second beginning the main idea in the dominant or relative major. They are also

more vocal and instrumental in style. It has been pointed out that Bach's exact contemporary Domenico Scarlatti published his thirty *Essercizii per Gravicembalo* in London in 1738, all of which take this form.

Although Bach's last great work was *The Art of Fugue*, by the time of his death contrapuntal music was seen as out of date. His music fell out of fashion in the second half of the 18th century but was re-discovered in the first few decades of the 19th century when 'the 48' *Preludes and Fugues* were published for the first time in 1801 in Bonn, Leipzig and Zurich. Mendelssohn, and most notably Beethoven, experimented with the fugue, pushing its form to new heights in such works as the '*Hammerklavier*' *Piano Sonata* and *Grosse Fugue*.

Pianist Hans von Bulow called Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* 'the Old Testament of the piano' with Beethoven's *Piano Sonatas* as 'the New Testament'. As a young man Schumann wrote:

*'I have taken the fugues one by one and dissected them down to their minutest parts. The advantage of this is great, and seems to have a strengthening moral effect on one's whole system, for Bach was a thorough man all over; there is nothing sickly or stunted about him, and his works seem written for eternity.'*

Later in life Schumann referred to it as the young musician's 'daily bread' and 'the work of all works.' Chopin had a copy of 'the 48' while he was writing his own set of *Preludes, Op. 28* (1835-1839) although he would also have been aware of the

1815 set of 24 *Preludes* by Hummel Op. 67 and the *Preludes, Op. 73* by Moscheles written in 1827. His pupil Camille Dubois tells us that she studied Clementi's *Gradus ad Parnassum* with Chopin as well as Bach's '48'. At her last meeting with Chopin he said to her, 'toujours travailler Bach – ce sera votre meilleur moyen de progresser' (practise Bach constantly – this will be your best means to make progress). Another student, Friederike Streicher, who studied with Chopin from 1839-1841 wrote that, 'one morning he played from memory fourteen *Preludes and Fugues* of Bach's, and when I expressed my joyful admiration at this unparalleled performance, he replied: "Cela ne s'oublie jamais".' (This is never forgotten).

The great Russian pianist and composer Anton Rubinstein included two *Preludes and Fugues* plus two extra *Preludes* from 'the 48' in his Historical Recitals. A colleague was in the presence of Rubinstein while he played the *F sharp major Prelude and Fugue* from *Book Two*. When he finished, he 'turned to me with that enthusiasm so natural and charming in him, and as he threw back his thick hair, said quickly, "Do you know it is the only music I like now!"'

Instructional, educational, full of infinite variety, these works form one of the pinnacles of achievement in western classical music, providing endless nourishment for musical souls everywhere.

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### **Alexandra Papastefanou – Pianist**

Born into a musical family, Alexandra Papastefanou graduated from Athens Conservatoire, where she studied piano under Aliki Vatikioti. She followed her studies with Olga Zhukova at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, with Peter Solymos, at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest and, on a scholarship from the Alexander Onassis Foundation, at the University of Indiana in Bloomington, with György Sebők. She has also taken lessons from Alfred Brendel who praised her playing and as well as her edition of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (Ph. Nakas Music Publications).

Papastefanou was a finalist at the Clara Haskil Competition in Switzerland and received the Liebstoekel and Fazioli Prizes at the International Geneva Competition, as well as the Spyros Motsenigos Prize from the Academy of Athens.

Whilst pursuing her piano studies, Papastefanou took up music theory and composition, firstly with I.A. Papaioannou, and then later, in the United States, with Frederic Fox.

Along with her activity as a performer, Papastefanou pursued her in-depth study of J.S. Bach's music, the meaning and enduring appeal of which she examined in a lecture series. She has performed all of Bach's keyboard works and, in a series of recitals, has presented his complete *Well-Tempered Clavier, Goldberg Variations, The Art of Fugue*, and *The Musical Offering* as well as his keyboard concertos. She has also performed and recorded the works of Robert Schumann.





Papastefanou's diverse repertoire extends from composers of the baroque era to more recent composers such as George Crumb, György Ligeti, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Toru Takemitsu. She has also repeatedly performed and recorded the piano works of major Greek composers Dimitris Mitropoulos, Nikos Skalkottas, George Koumendakis, I.A. Papaioannou and Vangelis Katsoulis. Her musical career has also extended to lecture-recitals, featuring innovative thematic cycles that she has chosen and presented, including *Fantasias for Piano*, *Works Inspired by Fairy Tales*, *Romantic German Literature and The Music of Robert Schumann*, *The Tradition of the French Clavecinists in the Piano Works of Debussy and Ravel*, *Sounds of Nature and the Exotic Element in Music*, *Music and Astronomy*, *Music and Poetry*, and *Music and Myth*.

Papastefanou has appeared, always to enthusiastic acclaim, with symphony orchestras, in solo recitals and with chamber music groups across Europe (Germany, France, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain, the Czech Republic, Russia, Finland and Hungary), the United States and Canada.

Papastefanou has also recorded her début album as a composer, entitled *Enamel* (Smalto, in Greek), a collection of songs to her own lyrics and musical arrangements (Lyra Records). Her composition cycle *12 Minerals* for solo piano, and *12+1 Shells and Shadows* for voice and piano, were recently published by Ph. Nakas Music Publications.

Papastefanou teaches and heads the piano department at the

Philippos Nakas Conservatory, Athens.

In 2018, Papastefanou plans to record the *Goldberg Variations* of J.S. Bach in the The Corycian Cave in Greece, famous for being the place of worship of the mythical Greek god Pan.

For more information, please visit:

**[www.alexandrapapastefanou.com](http://www.alexandrapapastefanou.com)**

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Alexandra Papastefanou thanks Athens Conservatoire for the use of their Aris Garoufalas Concert Hall for this recording.



Fuga 14

The first system of handwritten musical notation for 'Fuga 14'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a cursive, historical style, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The notation includes various note heads, stems, and beams, with some notes having flags or beams indicating sixteenth or thirty-second notes.

The second system of handwritten musical notation for 'Fuga 14'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music continues with the same complex rhythmic pattern as the first system, featuring many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The notation is dense and intricate, with many beamed notes and some accidentals.

The third system of handwritten musical notation for 'Fuga 14'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music continues with the same complex rhythmic pattern, featuring many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The notation is dense and intricate, with many beamed notes and some accidentals.

The fourth system of handwritten musical notation for 'Fuga 14'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music continues with the same complex rhythmic pattern, featuring many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The notation is dense and intricate, with many beamed notes and some accidentals.





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