

# *Some thoughts on "Play Bach"*

**Johann Sebastian Bach** (March 31, 1685 - July 28, 1750) was a German composer and musician of the late Baroque period. He is known for instrumental compositions such as the Cello Suites and the Brandenburg Concertos, for piano works such as the Goldberg Variations, the Well-Tempered Clavier, and organ music such as the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, and for vocal music such as the St. Matthew Passion and the Mass in B minor. Since the Bach revival in the 19th century, he is generally considered one of the greatest composers in the history of Western music.

**Mauricio Raúl Kagel** (\* December 24, 1931, Buenos Aires; † September 18, 2008, in Cologne), himself a composer, once said, "Not all musicians believe in God, but all musicians believe in Bach."

***Yeah, that is correct.***

I'm not the first (and certainly not the last); others have done something similar before me; e.g., "The Nice," "Emerson, Lake&Palmer," "Walter Carlos on LP Switched on Bach," "Ian Anderson (Jethro Tull)," and "Jacques Loussier (\* October 26, 1934 in Angers; † March 5, 2019 in Blois, France)" played baroque music in a modern way on current instruments.

Well, this music here is my interpretation of BWV 779 (Invention No. 8) by Johann Sebastian Bach. All I've added is the percussion track, the little word "swing" in the first bar, which in this case makes 16th notes "swing 65 to 35%", some synthesizer sounds (mix of "Square Lead/Polysynth" from MuseScore's GM soundfont), and a repetition for a second pass.

I put special emphasis on the rhythmic syncopation between drums and synthesizers. My arrangement is being played by a computer, too, but it should not sound like a "groove machine", the mostly misunderstood tool of some self-proclaimed "DJ's" in hip hop or disco remix. At the end there is no music coming out, if you play the same Measure, the same two or four bars of drums over and over again and over again and pull up the volume, but only yawning boredom. My hearing can only tolerate something like that with more than 2 per mille of alcohol. Frankly speaking: As a jazz fan I cannot listen to such amateurish wannabe music. I resist this attempt of middle ear poisoning with the "off" switch whenever a radio station or some internet influencer wants to attempt this attentat on my cochlea tympanis. And it doesn't impress me in the least when a DJ lets his groove computer play drum rolls with 1/128th , 1/256th , 1/512th or even faster. People hear that anyway only as humming and unwanted noise. And, to be honest, my computer can do MUCH MORE than just that!

The notes printed as .PDF with the excerpts of all instruments show, among other things, how seriously I take the drums. And they show that I create a "room sound +" - arrangement as follows: First the Square Lead Synth (stereo right) sounds, then the "Poly Synth" (stereo left, a bit more quiet and "delayed by a 1/64th pause") for the room reverb and to create the "chorus effect". (I didn't invent the principle, but transferred it from the Amiga Pro Tracker to today's 64-bit PC running MuseScore 6.6.2). The whole SoundMix can be heard best from a .MP3 file.

Could anyone consider the use of Bach's music in this way as "without respect for Johann Sebastian Bach, the great Baroque musician"? No, sir! It all starts with the question: If he were alive today, what kind of music would the great master composer, Johann Sebastian Bach, create with the instruments and recording studios, the PCs and software like Cubase, Finale, Sibelius, MuseScore, Audacity, all the VST and effects, etc. that we have today?

I'm a Bach believer and I believe that if Johann Sebastian Bach happens to meet a good ragtime, blues, skiffle, Dixie-land jazz, swing or rock musician at Sound Paradise Studio in musician heaven (think Scott Joplin, Irving Berliner, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Gene Krupa, Albert Ammons, Glenn Miller, Aker Bilk, Janice Joplin, Jimi Hendrix or Rory Gallagher for example)? They will have a little drink first, then put a few chords on a lead sheet, pick up their instruments and then there will be a VERY BIG JAM SESSION! With dancing blessed souls, swinging angels, standing ovation from all the saints, and after that even the 12 apostles will rename themselves "The hot 12"!

***In eternity, Amen!***

***FarrierPete***

***(1953 - ?)***