

Fugue

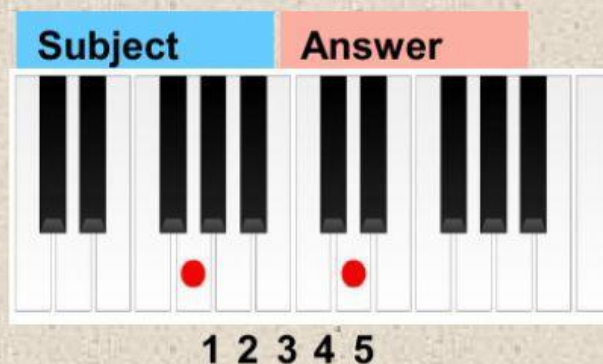
A **FUGUE** is a **polyphonic** and highly imitative piece based on a main theme, called a **SUBJECT**. It is used mainly in Instrumental music but can also be found in Vocal music.

The first section is known as the **EXPOSITION**.

e.g. Bach *Organ Fugue in G minor*



The subject is then imitated by another part called the **ANSWER**, usually in the dominant (ie a 5th higher or a 4th lower)



- A **REAL ANSWER** is an accurate note for note repeat of the subject,
- A **TONAL ANSWER** is one where certain notes are altered to fit harmonically with the other parts.

While the **ANSWER** is heard, the **COUNTER SUBJECT**, a new theme, begins in the first part. This overlapping texture creates counterpoint. In between repeats of subject and answer themes are small sections called **EPISODES**.

Compare the subject in the tonic

Subject

with the **real answer** that follows in the dominant key

Counter subject

Answer

Between presentations of the subject and counter subjects are transitional sections called *episodes*

Episode – downward sequence

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akPjhsL_tRM&t=45s&ab_channel=MitchBoucher-Composer

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEo5YHYWnK8&ab_channel=ChristopherPalmer

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAFETgpt9PA&ab_channel=UnderstandingMusic

Fugal textures can be seen in other types of music.
Listen to a **vocal** fugue – *And with his stripes* (Messiah)
NB - Listen out for the leap of a **diminished 7th** on the word 'stripes'

Hedwig's Fugue

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-fd8tWN8lw&ab_channel=ChristianPerrotta

Stretto

- Statements of the subject pile up in quick succession. One voice begins a subject before the previous voice has finished its own rendition of the subject, thus creating an overlap. This often occurs in the final section of the fugue.

e.g. Bach Fugue no 1 in C major

Subject



Now listen to the subject overlapping in stretto

Musical score for Bach's Fugue No. 1 in C major, showing the subject overlapping in stretto across four staves. The score is numbered 14 at the beginning. The first staff (treble clef) shows the subject starting in the second measure. The second staff (treble clef) shows the subject starting in the first measure. The third staff (bass clef) shows the subject starting in the first measure. The fourth staff (bass clef) shows the subject starting in the second measure. Red rectangular boxes highlight the subject in each voice, demonstrating how they overlap in quick succession.

Fugue no 9 in Dm - The Art of Fugue

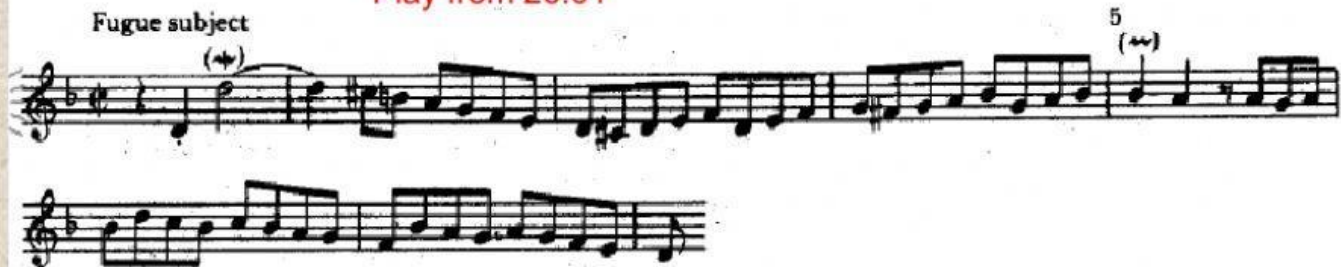
The Art of Fugue is collection of fugues and four canons based on this main theme:

Play from 0:00



Fugue No. 9 has its own distinctive **subject**, beginning with an octave leap:

Play from 26:01



Listen to a recording of this **fugue** played on the harpsichord.

As the **fugue** progresses you will hear the main theme, heard in long notes (**augmentation**), played by solo string instruments, in counterpoint with the **fugue subject**:



Summary of Fugue

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFt7FAxdaBM&ab_channel=PolychoronProductions