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| <b>GRADE</b>   | <b>II</b>                                     |
| <b>AUTHOR:</b>   | <b>Johann Sebastian Bach</b>                  |
| <b>TITLE:</b>  | Prelude in E Minor BWV 941<br>(Or.: No title) |
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| <b>HISTORICAL NOTES</b>  |   |
| <p>The prelude in question is located among a set of 57 handwritten folders that make up the collection of Johann Peter Kellner (1705-1722), a German composer and organist who, while he knew J. S. Bach, was never one of his students. In particular, the collection of preludes which also includes prelude BWV 939 is located in folder number 53, that was transcribed by an unknown copyist from an original manuscript by Bach and which came into Johann Peter Kellner's possession much later.</p> <p>Some critics have noted a different quality in the composing of these preludes compared to other Bach compositions, thereby creating the assumption that they could have been composed by his son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach (1710-1784) or by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) with their father's assistance.</p> <p>Folder 53 contains 5 pieces of which BWV 941 is the second. None of these pieces have titles, however, the folder also includes a copy of the Prelude in F Major BWV 927 from the "Clavier-Büchlein vor Wilhelm Friedemann Bach". Therefore, by analogy, all of the pieces in the booklet were considered preludes.</p> |   |
| <b>CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PIECE</b>  |   |
| <p>Prelude BWV 941 is a very short piece, ideally divided into a small first part exposition ending at bar 11 and a second section 12 bars in length that leads to the conclusion. Built on the broken E minor arpeggio, the first part of the prelude maintains a more rhythmic and intense character leaving the second part the task of developing a polyphonic 'game' between the two voices followed by a brief recurrence of the initial figuration in the left hand that rapidly leads to the final cadence.</p>  |   |
| <b>PERFORMANCE NOTES</b>   |   |
| <p>A relatively fast tempo for this small and musically dense prelude so as to highlight these few notes and enhance its musical qualities. Always mindful of writing derived from music for strings, I chose to play the sixths with a supported while still detached sound, so they can better blend with the supported legato sound in the left hand. In the central section I continued to preserve the cantabile with a certain intensity, a choice that seemed to me to be consistent with the unitary nature of the piece before the first item returns in the left hand and concludes with the final cadence.</p>  |   |