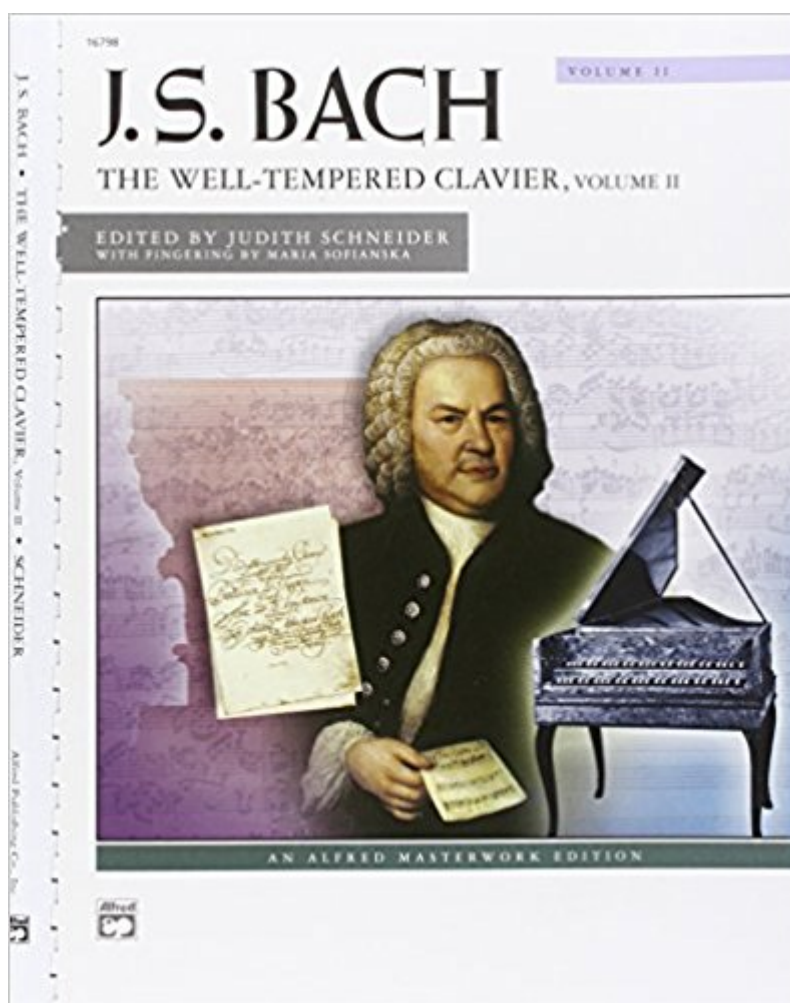


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Bach -- The Well-Tempered Clavier, Vol 2: Comb Bound Book (Alfred Masterwork Edition)



Synopsis

Edited by Baroque scholar Judith Schneider, with expert fingering suggestions by Stuttgart Professor Maria Sofianska, the long-awaited Volume II of Bach's essential masterpiece contains 30 pages of extensive research and insight into Baroque music. Painstakingly compared with the most important autograph and manuscript sources, this comprehensive edition includes thorough analysis of written and improvised ornamentation, a discussion of period keyboard instruments, insight into pedaling, touch, tempo and rhythm issues, as well as a discussion of preludes and fugues. The comb binding creates a lay-flat book that is perfect for study and performance.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

It came in perfect condition. The description said it was used but it came to us in brand new condition. Very, very satisfied!

Good scholarship. Usable binding so it stays open. I will use it until it wears out then buy another. The paper is not good quality but I believe it will stand up because of the binding.

Very informative about Bach's music and correct techniques for playing it - especially on how to correctly play the ornaments!

Outstanding, well-researched fingering!

Of use for all players who are attempting to learn keyboard technique that is presumably similar to what was used in the Baroque period.

Returned it. Well be buying an urtex because this has too much editing. I normally buy Alfred a lot for my intermediate students, but my college age student wants an urtex edition.

I am extremely happy with the Alfred Masterwork Editions of WTC I & II. Yes, they are more expensive than some other editions you find on , but the quality you get with these volumes, both in terms of the physical materials used and the painstaking effort that has gone into editing them, is fantastic. Both Willard Palmer (editor of WTC I) and Judith Schneider (editor of WTC II) seem to have done their very best to piece together versions of the WTC that are more accurate to the intentions of Bach than any other version I have seen in print. Each volume starts with a 25-30 page introduction explaining various aspects of WTC I & II. These sections are very valuable to beginning and intermediate students of Bach because they briefly explain the background of the WTC, including the historical developments that prompted Bach to write them. Also described are the surviving manuscripts (some incomplete from Bach, and some complete but contradictory from other sources) and the difficulty any editor would face in piecing together "accurate" volumes of the WTC I & II. Finally, the introductions of each edition have a great section on baroque ornamentation and style that serves as a very handy reference for just about anyone but the most experienced players. Let me just run through a few of the things you may or may not like about these editions to help you figure out if these are the best volumes for you. (1) They have plastic comb bindings. I actually enjoy this kind of binding, but I know some people don't. (2) They have fingering suggestions. I sometimes find fingerings annoying, but I mostly like them in Bach because the fingering can sometimes get pretty complex (particularly in the fugues). Also, the suggestions are written in a light gray to distinguish them from the music and make them less of a distraction. Still, these can get a little annoying at times. (3) There are some (but relatively few) dynamic and tempo indications. As you may already know, these don't exist in the originals. I didn't find them to be distracting at all, even less so than the suggested fingerings; the editors just seemed to put them in when a certain tempo or dynamic has become the norm. Again, these markings are in light gray to indicate that they are not part of the original manuscripts. (4) There are footnotes. I love these, but I can understand how someone wouldn't. The footnotes are used to add all kinds of information about

the differences between various manuscripts and stylistic choices that the player can make. To me, this shows just how thoughtful the editors were in putting these volumes together. (5) The print is pretty big. I'm guessing most people will like this, but I thought I'd mention it because this makes each volume pretty big, especially because each also contains an introductory section. Volume I ends up at around 225 pages, and volume II is about 240. If for some reason you are looking for something more portable, these probably aren't the best editions for you. One reviewer for WTC II claimed that there was "too much editing" in this product, and that s/he would be returning this and purchasing a Urtext edition. To be completely honest, I partially understand where this reviewer is coming from; however, I think the criticism is unfair because these volumes aren't really intended as performance editions, but rather learning editions. The editor of each volume goes to great lengths in the introductory section to explain exactly how these volumes were put together, and from which sources. Considering the age of the works, and the various contradictory manuscripts, I think the editors do a phenomenal job of explaining their editorial principles; each editor's goal seems to be to create a very historically accurate version of WTC I & II that's helpful to any player who does not wish to compare and work through facsimile copies of the original manuscripts. In cases where there are contradictions between various source-materials, the editors will often make a note of it and show how the versions differ. As such, these are great volumes (the best I've seen at least) from which to learn. In my mind, these editions combine the right amount of scholarly work and detail without being overly-burdensome. I can totally understand someone wanting Urtext editions of music, but with something like WTC I & II, where no complete surviving manuscript in Bach's own handwriting exists, I'm not really sure whether any edition can be more "accurate" than this one. If the reviewer meant to say that there are too many marks on the page (fingerings, dynamics, etc.), I kind of understand their complaint, but I honestly believe that the majority of people who pick up these volumes (especially first time players) will enjoy all of the additional information and suggestions that have been included. Again, I do think some people, especially performers, would find value in a version that removed some of the indications that the editors have added. If I ever decide to perform some of these works, I could see the benefit of finding something that appears a little less cluttered on the page.

helpful. just fine. my sister, EVERYTHING IS GREAT. Excellent product, just what I needed for my crusty artisan breads. Best bread product I ever owned, hands down. And at such a reasonable price.

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