

JOHANN JOSEPH FUX

(um 1660–1741)

Missa Sancti Joannis Nepomucensis K 34a (FuxWV IV.I.6)

Critical Commentary

by

Ramona Hocker and Rainer J. Schwob
based on *Johann Joseph Fux – Werke*, vol. A/I/1

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CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Johann Joseph Fux, *Missa Sti. Joannis Nepomucensis* (K 34a)

The Edition

This edition is based on the already published score *Johann Joseph Fux: Missa Sti. Joannis Nepomucensis*, ed. by Ramona Hocker and Rainer J. Schwob (Johann Joseph Fux – Werke, vol. A/I/1), Vienna: Hollitzer, 2016. Addenda and corrigenda are available on [Fux-online](#). Two previously discovered errors from the edited score have been corrected in the parts.

The parts were prepared for the modern premiere in Graz Cathedral (2018).¹ They comprise a vocal score with basso continuo or alternatively single parts for the voices. The vocal parts can be doubled in the tutti by colla parte winds (here: cornetto, 2 trombones, bassoon). In the instruments, individual parts for the two trumpets, for violin I and II, viola and a combined part for violoncello and violone (continuo) are provided. For the organ, the score or choir score should be used. The parts contain both solo and tutti passages; no separate concertato or ripieno parts have been created.

Source

The only known source is Fux's autograph compositional score, showing traces of revision and correction in some places. It is in the possession of the archives of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna under the shelf mark "Musikautographe Johann Joseph Fux 2 (I 12023)".² Fux uses ten staves for tromba I, tromba II, violino I, violino II, viola, soprano, alto, tenore, basso and continuo on the twelve-line paper in horizontal format.

The instrumental scoring normally becomes evident through the use of clefs and the order of the score, as Fux explicitly notes the instrumentation only in the case of special requirements – such as the two trumpets – or in the case of ambiguous changes of instrumentation. Soloistic parts are notated in the same staves as the tutti, marked with verbal explanations for the changes. Not all voices are consistently provided with indications for dynamics and instrumentation, but Fux often writes the instructions as 'frames' in the systems for soprano and continuo. In the edition, they are applied to all voices;³ and in the individual parts, these additions are usually given without being marked, as the points of change can be clearly located from the instructions provided and the musical structure.

Scoring

Fux fixes the structure in the compositional score, while gradations of the sonority, the size of the ensemble and the tutti instruments are not specified in detail. They are usually derived from contemporary part material, which, however, has not yet been found for K 34a. A further complicating factor is that the contexts of the first performance are unclear. The present edition is based on practices as documented for the Viennese Imperial Court – the *Missa brevis solennitatis* (K 5),⁴ which was probably written at the same time, served as a concrete reference. This applies in particular to the scoring of the colla parte winds with the cornetto, which was no longer usual in other places in the 1720s, and two trombones and bassoon. They support the vocal parts in the tutti passages and remain silent during the solos. Other instrument combinations are also conceivable here: For example, transcriptions made for performances outside Vienna testify that oboes were used instead of the cornetto, but that Fux himself did not include

1 High Mass for Rupert and Virgil on Sunday, 23 September 2018, with the Graz Cathedral Choir and Orchestra under the chapel master Josef M. Doeller.

2 For a detailed description of the source see *Johann Joseph Fux, Missa Sti. Joannis Nepomucensis K 34a*, edd. Ramona Hocker and Rainer J. Schwob (Johann Joseph Fux – Werke, vol. A/I/1), Vienna: Hollitzer, 2016, pp. 62–63.

3 This also applies to the string parts that are not correspondingly marked in the score. In transitional passages (Credo bar 195, Sanctus bars 80–82), it is suggested that the transition be played in tutti despite the solo instruction still being valid.

4 Autograph score: A-Wn Mus.Hs.19193; parts: A-Wn Mus.Hs.16132.

them in his sacred music. The vocal bass can be joined by a trombone instead of the bassoon; it was not standard in Vienna, but was occasionally used for this purpose in larger works (e.g. in the *Te Deum* K 271). In smaller ensembles or rooms, the colla parte accompaniment can be omitted altogether.

The continuo is to be scored in accordance with the strength of the other voices, whereby a sonorous balance should be observed. Based on Viennese practices, organ, violone and cello are suggested here; in large ensembles a plucked instrument (theorbo) may be added. Modifications in sonority such as pausing violone are indicated in the score by changing clefs (c-key) or verbal instructions: These are fugal entries and passages without vocal bass, where the continuo doubles the lowest voice. In general, organ, violone and cello play in both tutti and solo passages. This practice is documented, for example, by the parts for the *Missa* K 5, where the corresponding passages are written out in all parts.

In general, it can be assumed that the soloists also participate in the tutti. For this edition, Fux's terms for modifying the scale of the instrumentation have been adopted, which is why "soli" appears exclusively in the plural. On one hand, this is a collective term that can be applied to all voices, and on the other hand, the plural provides indications of performance practice: "Soli" indicates a reduction of the number of parts and the pausing of the colla parte winds, although the exact proportions of solo and tutti instrumentation are variable and can be adapted to the particular acoustic and vocal circumstances.

The score's construction suggests that closed, lesser-set sections should be executed soloistically: "Et incarnatus", "Et exspecto", the "Benedictus", the melismatic "Christe" as well as the arioso "Qui propter nos" and "Et unam". It is conceivable that the soloistic parts in tutti section were performed by lesser-set groups.⁵

This results in a differentiated spectrum of nuances in sonority, ranging from a full tutti with trumpets, strings, vocals, colla parte winds and continuo to a tutti accompanied only by strings, an unaccompanied tutti or one amplified only by the winds, solo ensembles with or without instrumental accompaniment and solo arioso.

In preserved continuo parts, for example in the mass K 5, it is hard to deduce the consequences for the sonority from the solo/tutti marks: Maybe Fux expected a lesser-set accompaniment or a reduced dynamic force during a solo section. In K 34a this question becomes important in the five purely instrumental passages with "Soli" marks; they are introductions, endings or transitions comprising no more than two to four bars in duration. In the concertante instrumental passages "Soli" can be found only in the continuo, referring primarily as a hint for the continuo players to react to the soloistic texture in the other parts with a modified manner of accompaniment.

Directions for Performance

Tempo marks are not given for each movement, but one has to assume a "Tempo giusto" unless stated otherwise by Fux. Tempi are valid until a new indication or as long as an inner section lasts (double bar line). The tempo marks should not be understood in a modern sense, but rather indicate affects between the two extremes Presto (Gloria: "Qui tollis", Credo: "Patrem") and Grave (Gloria: "Gratias"), which go along with certain notions of tempo.

General volume indications are not notated either; instead, a principle of a 'basic dynamic' applies – with specified deviations (Forte, Piano, Pianopiano). These dynamics are valid only for the so-marked sections, not until the next indication. They appear solely within the violins, and for the edition they have been adopted in the viola and continuo. Sections with dynamic marks for singled-out voices (for example vl I in the Gloria, bar 58) raise the question of whether those dynamics are valid for the other voices as well.

⁵ The frequent duplication of the concerto parts in contemporary part materials suggests that, in larger instrumentations, solo parts could also be played by smaller groups (with probably four players); see for example the duplicates of the violin parts for the *Te Deum* K 271 (A-Wn Mus.Hs. 16409). Whether this practice also applies to K 34a cannot be decided due to the lack of concrete information on the circumstances of its performance.

Slurs mostly occur in the violins, but they were quite sparingly employed by Fux. In the Kyrie (bars 76ff), the diphthong in the word “eleison” is often musically separated. The slur leading to the isolated “i” suggests a slurring of the vowels as well.

Notes on the Edition

Editorial additions are basically limited to the most necessary. For the practical edition, the marking with square brackets has been reduced to a minimum of cases that cannot be clearly resolved. For the vocal parts, the c-clefs no longer current in modern scores were replaced with the usual g-clefs. The key signatures are in accordance to the main source. Modern rules apply for accidentals, and their use has been silently exercised: Accidentals are valid for the remainder of their bar instead of for a single note, and a ♭ or ♯ used in the sense of a natural is replaced by ♮. Occasionally, accidentals are also used as warnings or reminders, in accordance with their appearance in the sources. The beaming generally is as in the original, but is sometimes unified and the colla parte parts have been adapted to the instrumental ductus. Slurs follow the source. Long ending notes (*longa, brevis*) are according to the original. Dots beyond a bar line are represented by tied notes, ties at staff breaks can be rewritten in longer note values. For dynamics, the modern abbreviations are used (*f, p, pp* instead of *for., pia., pianopiano* etc.). Expression marks on individual notes are faithful to the edition’s source (standardized where applicable). Trills indicated in the source by “t.” are shown in the edition as *tr*; they should be executed according to baroque practice.

The continuo figures in the source are retained in principle, they were normalized in the vocal score in a few cases (for example ♮ instead of ♭ for the minor third).

The continuous and reliable wording in the vocal parts of the autograph has been adopted for the edition; abbreviations were tacitly resolved and orthography, capitalizations and punctuation are carefully normalized according to the *Kyriale Romanum*. In the case of repeated text, punctuation marks (commas) are inserted for better orientation. The original pronunciation (e.g. “coeli”) is retained.

DETAILED PROOFS

The following list contains only those passages where the edited text differs from the original in content or which are important for performance practice; for detailed individual references, please refer to the Critical Report in the printed score volume.

For the positioning in the bar, the signs (notes and rests, but no brackets, accidentals, slurs, dots) are counted. In the case of ambiguities and for a more precise location especially of the bass figurations, detailed references according to the measure may be given.

Bar.Sign	Voice(s)	Reading, remarks
Kyrie		
62.8	bc	wrong continuo figure „ ⁴ ♯“
Gloria		
29.4	bc	wrong continuo figure ♮
42.4–43.1	a	despite the slur, the syllable “[ma-]gnam” is falsely positioned in bar 43.1
49.7	bc	continuo figure “6” erroneous here instead in bar 49.9
57.5	bc	wrong continuo figure “6”
110	s	text underlay different from the parallel section in bar 87
123–132	all	notated as five double bars despite the time signature “3/2”

Credo		
13.4	bc	wrong continuo figure “4”
102.2	bc	wrong continuo figure “5”
186.1	bc	wrong continuo figure “7”
Sanctus, Benedictus		
74.1	s I	wrong slur to the first note
78.2–3	s I	wrong slur, in the edition adapted to s II
Agnus Dei		
39	vl I	inexact slur position; adapted to vl II
52.3, 52.5	vl II	inexact slur position (on the 4th and 6th eighth note); adapted to vl I
64.4, 64.6	vl I	inexact slur position (on the 4th and 6th eighth note); adapted to vl II
68.6	vl II	inexact slur position (on the auf 6th eighth note); adapted to vl I

ABBREVIATIONS

a	alto	t	tenor
b	basso	tr	tromba (trumpet)
bc	basso continuo	trb	trombone
cnto	cornetto	vc	violoncello
fag	fagotto / bassoon	vl	violin
org	organo	vla	viola
s	soprano	vln	violone

Ramona Hocker, Rainer J. Schwob, 2018
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