



Andrea  
**BACCHETTI** plays  
**BACH**

**GOLDBERG VARIATIONS**

5 PIECES FROM THE CLAVIERBÜCHLEIN  
FOR ANNA MAGDALENA BACH

**DYNAMIC**

CDS 659 - DDD  
DIGITAL RECORDING

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# JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

(Eisenach, 1685 - Leipzig, 1750)

## GOLDBERG VARIATIONS BWV 988

5 PIECES FROM THE CLAVIERBÜCHLEIN FOR ANNA MAGDALENA BACH

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ANDREA BACCHETTI

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## Goldberg Variations BWV 988

**65'19"**

<b>1</b> - Aria	03'19"
<b>2</b> - Variatio 1. a 1 Clav.	01'48"
<b>3</b> - Variatio 2. a 1 Clav.	01'24"
<b>4</b> - Variatio 3. Canone all'Unisono. a 1 Clav.	01'57"
<b>5</b> - Variatio 4. a 1 Clav.	01'03"
<b>6</b> - Variatio 5. a 1 ô vero 2 Clav.	01'37"
<b>7</b> - Variatio 6. Canone alla Seconda. 1 Clav.	01'20"
<b>8</b> - Variatio 7. a 1 ô vero 2 Clav.	01'45"
<b>9</b> - Variatio 8. a 2 Clav.	01'46"
<b>10</b> - Variatio 9. Canone alla Terza. a 1 Clav.	01'25"
<b>11</b> - Variatio 10. Fughetta. a 1 Clav.	01'37"
<b>12</b> - Variatio 11. a 2 Clav.	02'03"
<b>13</b> - Variatio 12. Canone alla Quarta. a 1 Clav.	02'02"
<b>14</b> - Variatio 13. a 2 Clav.	03'36"
<b>15</b> - Variatio 14. a 2 Clav.	02'02"
<b>16</b> - Variatio 15. Canone alla Quinta. a 1 Clav.	02'42"
<b>17</b> - Variatio 16. Ouverture. a 1 Clav.	02'43"
<b>18</b> - Variatio 17. a 2 Clav.	01'58"
<b>19</b> - Variatio 18. Canone alla Sexta. a 1 Clav.	01'24"
<b>20</b> - Variatio 19. a 1 Clav.	01'10"
<b>21</b> - Variatio 20. a 2 Clav.	01'51"

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<b>22</b> - Variatio 21. Canone alla Settima. a 1 Clav.	02'00"
<b>23</b> - Variatio 22. a 1 Clav. alla breve	01'22"
<b>24</b> - Variatio 23. a 2 Clav.	02'03"
<b>25</b> - Variatio 24. Canone all'Ottava. a 1 Clav.	02'30"
<b>26</b> - Variatio 25. a 2 Clav.	05'13"
<b>27</b> - Variatio 26. a 2 Clav.	02'03"
<b>28</b> - Variatio 27. Canone alla Nona. a 2 Clav.	01'38"
<b>29</b> - Variatio 28. a 2 Clav.	02'20"
<b>30</b> - Variatio 29. a 1 ô vero 2 Clav.	01'58"
<b>31</b> - Variatio 30. Quodlibet. a 1 Clav.	01'28"
<b>32</b> - Aria da Capo	02'13"

### **5 Pieces from the Clavierbüchlein for Anna Magdalena Bach**

**07'26"**

<b>33</b> - Menuet in G major (by Christian Petzold) Anh. 114 (Canone alla Nona)	00'58"
<b>34</b> - Chorale <i>Wer nun den lieben Gott Laesst walten</i> BWV 691	01'18"
<b>35</b> - March in G major (by P. E. Bach) BWV Anh. 122	00'40"
<b>36</b> - Aria for Clavier in G major (by J. S. Bach) 988, 1 (Quodlibet)	02'00"
<b>37</b> - Praeludium in C major (by J. S. Bach) BWV 846, 1	02'30"

**Total time**

**72'49"**

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The genre of "theme and variations" enjoyed great fortune in the instrumental music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the fields both of keyboard and of string instruments: one of the most famous and universally known examples was represented by the variations on the theme of the *Follia di Spagna* which form the twelfth and last of the *Sonatas for violin and basso continuo* opus 5 by Arcangelo Corelli, a collection published in 1700, which was to serve as a model in the field of violin music for decades. Created primarily as a virtuoso genre, seeking to highlight the accomplished technique of the great instrumental soloists, who could thus stand up to the most famous, and most highly-paid, singers of the time, the "theme and variations" flooded the publishing market and, especially in the nineteenth century, became a consumer product, above all in piano versions, giving life to an abundance of occasional pieces, often linked to the successes of the opera seasons. Themes heard in the latest opera were varied, and of course these works had to be written quickly so as not to lose their novelty appeal; they also had to be not excessively difficult or demanding in order to find a market among a public of amateurs. Naturally not all composers (and not always) considered the "theme and variations" in this purely utilitarian, commercial manner. An ideal history of the "theme and variations" is full of exceptions and nuances, and among the most famous we are hardly surprised to find works by the great names, like Bach and

Beethoven. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and Beethoven's *Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli*, in fact, represent two of the most brilliant examples of the far-reaching overturning of the most traditional canons of the varied theme as conceived by instrumental virtuosos in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the advent of a wholly new concept of the genre. As Alberto Basso so rightly wrote in his *Frau Musica*, in the case of Bach "the prodigious attention to musical construction and the immaculate impulse to range through all the grades of speculation into the system of sounds and their organisation in geometrical and symbolic concatenations which had so filled Bach's mind in the previous ten years drove him to seek the solution to this question and led him to set up a new principal of construction which tore up and dispersed the system that had been adopted previously." The *Goldberg Variations* BWV 988 are one of the highest moments of this particular approach by Bach, where the composer's *esprit de géométrie* is blended with a conception of the variation that goes well beyond the limits of the typically ornamental model in which it was generally understood at the time. The event which gave origin to the composition, said to be a request from one of Bach's pupils, Johann Gottlieb Goldberg, for quite a long a harpsichord composition which might bring pleasure to the sleepless nights of count von Keyserling, is narrated by Bach's first biographer, Forkel, though the doubts raised as to its authenticity are quite legitimate, given

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that with all the difficulties it presents the work is hardly one that would help the performer relax and feel sleepy. Whatever the case may be, the *Goldberg Variations*, with the title of *Aria mit verschiedenen Veränderungen* was first printed at the end of 1741, as part four of the *Klavierübung*. The *Aria* which provides the pretext for the thirty variations that follow is written by Bach himself and is repeated at the end of the composition, so that the work has a strongly symmetrical form made up of 32 elements (*Aria* – *Variations 1/30* – *Aria*). Exactly halfway through the composition, there appears as variation number 16, an *Overture* which presents a second fugal part. All the pieces are in two-part form and remain faithful to the home key (G major) except for numbers 15, 21 and 25, which are in G minor. Within these coordinates, however, there are very many pieces in “stile osservato” (numbers 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24 and 27 are canons, number 10 is a *Fughetta*, number 22 is a fugue *Alla Breve* and number 30 is a *Quodlibet*), in that continuous osmosis between virtuosity and strict counterpoint which indelibly marks the production of the late Bach.

Bach wrote two sets of harpsichord pieces, both entitled *Clavierbüchlein*, the first in 1722 and the second three years later in 1725, for his second wife Anna Magdalena, whom he married in Köthen in 1721. Alongside various single pieces that were not used again, the collections contain the first drafts of works

that were later to become parts of other important collections, like the *French Suites* and the *Well-tempered Clavier*. This is seen, for example, in the *Präludium* in C major (track 37) which will be found identical at the start of the first volume of the *Well-tempered Clavier*; in the *Aria* in G major (track 36), which, with some variants, will be the starting point for the *Goldberg Variations*; and again in the chorale *Wer nun den lieben Gott* (track 34), which will be found again in a later manuscript collection of chorales. Other pieces are works by various composers: in some cases they are composition exercises of Bach's children – like the *March* in G major Anh. 122 (track 35), which may be attributed to his son Carl Philipp Emanuel – whereas others are simple transcriptions, like the *Menuet* in G major Anh. 114 (track 33), which in reality was written by Johann Christian Petzold (1677-1733).

Danilo Prefumo  
(Translated by Timothy A. Shaw)



Born in 1977, Andrea Bacchetti received at an early age the counsel of musicians such as Karajan, Magaloff, Berio and Horszowski. He made his debut at the age of eleven with *I Solisti Veneti* directed by Claudio Scimone. Since then he has played several times in international festivals in Lucerne, Salzburg, Belgrade, Santander, Antibes, Bologna, Brescia and Bergamo, Turin, Milan (MI.TO), Como, La Coruña, Pesaro, Spoleto, Bellinzona, Ravenna, Ravello, Bad Wörishofen, Husum, Sagra Musicale Umbra; and in prestigious music venues: the Konzerthaus (Berlin); the Salle Pleyel, Salle Gaveau and Piano 4\*\*\*\* (Paris); the Rudolfinum Dvorák Hall (Prague); the Teatro alla Scala and Sala Verdi (Milan); the Teatro Coliseo (Buenos Aires); the Ateneo Romano (Bucharest); the Rachmaninoff Saal, The Moscow State Philharmonic Society, the Moscow Conservatory; Auditorium Nacional de España (great performers cycle), the Teatro Real and Teatro Monumental (Madrid); the Mozarteum Brasileiro (San Paolo); Sociedad Filarmonica (Lima); the Zentrum Paul Klee (Berne); the Gewandhaus (Leipzig); the Scarlatti Association (Naples); the Università La Sapienza and the Accademia Filarmonica (Rome); with leading conductors and orchestras such as: the Lucerne Festival Strings, the Camerata Academica Salzburg, RTVE Madrid, ONBA Bordeaux and the MDR Sinfonie-Orchester Leipzig. He has been on tours in Japan and South America. He works with Rocco Filippini, Domenico Nordio, the

*Pražák Quartet*, the *Ysaÿe Quartet* and the *Quartetto di Cremona*. Memorable among his international recordings are Bach's "English Suites" and the CD "Berio Piano Works" (DECCA); the DVD with the "Goldberg Variations" by Bach (Arthaus); the SACD with the "6 Sonatas" by Cherubini and the CD of Galuppi's Sonatas (RCA RED SEAL – Sony/Bmg). These recordings have all won numerous awards from the major specialist magazines and some of the world's leading newspapers. For Dynamic he recorded Bach's *Inventions and Sinfonias* last year. This is one of this recording company's most prize-winning publications. His concerts have been broadcast on radio by companies including: RadioTre (Italy), BBC Radio3 (UK), ORF (Austria), Radio France (also at the Roque d'Anthéron), RSI and DRS2 (Switzerland), New Zealand Radio, RNE (Spain), MDR Leipzig, and CBC Radio 3 (Canada).





[www.andreabacchetti.net](http://www.andreabacchetti.net)



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