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The Music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
Supplement 6.2. Further Sonatas of the 1740s

Two further sonatas that deserve mention are W. 52/4 in F-sharp minor and W. 62/6 in F minor, which were composed consecutively during 1744. The first movement of W. 52/4 is another dialog between two opposing characters, now represented by contrasting dynamic levels and rhythmic textures within a regular sonata-form design. The opening Allegro of the F-minor sonata incorporates serious contrapuntal work, which helps explain why Bach withheld it from publication until 1761. In addition, the invertible counterpoint, together with the key, makes the first movement unusually awkward for the player.¹

The difficulties in W. 62/6 recall passages in the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, which might have been on Emanuel's mind when composing these pieces (Part 2 of his father's work had probably been completed only a few years earlier). Several other ambitious sonatas of the period also explore rarely used tonalities, including E and A-flat, and imitative subjects similar to the one used in W. 62/6 recur in the contemporary concertos W. 12 and 15 (see online example 6.7). In no case is the counterpoint particularly complex, but it signals the aspiration to meld fugue with sonata or concerto form. Yet although these works might have seemed unusually serious or impressive to listeners unfamiliar with Sebastian's music, their counterpoint is essentially decorative, incorporated into a sonata design that does not differ in essence from that used in other works of the period.

[Example 6.7a. Sonata in F Minor, W. 62/6, movement 1, mm. 9–13](#)



¹ The voice leading is better, however, than shown in the most recent edition (in CPEBCW 1/5.1), which in measure 18 adds several d's suggested by a stray accidental in the original, and on the downbeat of measure 19 adds a superfluous b; the new edition also leaves out notes in measures 40–41, where the left hand states the theme, and fails to indicate the voice crossing suggested by the original notation in measure 72 (cf. the author's edition in CPEBE 1/18).

Example 6.7b. Concerto in F, W. 12, movement 1, mm. 1–3 (for W. 15, see [online example 5.4a](#))

Allegro

vn. 1

vn. 2

va.

b.c.