

David Schulenberg
The Music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
Supplement 9.9. Individual Concertos of W. 43

The first concerto in W. 43 contains a number of features that would have delighted connoisseurs, even if they startled amateurs. The written-out cadenza in the first movement, which begins without the conventional grand fermata on a 6/4-chord, represents the first, relatively modest, incursion of fantasy style into the work. In the last movement, the soloist enters after just eight measures, repeating the theme just stated by the tutti—which, however, interrupt the soloist to play one measure on their own, afterwards continuing with the remainder of the ritornello. Bach never repeats the joke exactly, although it has echoes in several unpredictable interruptions of the solo episodes by the violins (online example 9.37).

[Example 9.37. Concerto in F, W. 43/1, movement 3, mm. 9–13 \(without horns\)](#)

By contrast, the C-Minor Concerto, the “one-movement” work (W. 43/4), would almost be a normal concerto allegro if the inserted adagio and minuet movements were removed. Yet the second ritornello is unusually short—only eight measures—and after the recapitulation there is an additional solo episode in the tonic containing new material (at measure 325; see table below).¹ The Minuet is a self-contained binary form or small rondo comparable to movements in the

¹ The table counts measure numbers in three alternative ways. The first “m.” line counts all measures in a single sequence; the second (marked “Allegro”) counts only measures of the Allegro portions of the work, as if these constituted a normal opening movement. The third “m.” line (marked “CPEBCW”) shows measure numbers from the edition in CPECEW, vol. 3/8, which resets the measure count to 1 at the beginning of each section.

sonatinas, but the Adagio is a distinctive type of shortened transitional slow movement peculiar to this set of concertos, although similar to slow movements in some of the string sinfonias of W. 182.

The Concerto in C Minor, W. 43/4

“movement”:	Allegro					Adagio					
section:	R	S	r	S	r	R	S	r	S	r	s
key:	c	c->	Eb	->	f	d-g	->	Bb	c->	Eb	->
m.	1	31	70	78	113	122	130	139	143	152	156
m. (Allegro)	1	31	70	78	113	—	—	—	—	—	—
m. (CPEBCW)	1	31	70	78	113	1	9	18	22	31	35

“movement”:	Minuet							
section:	A (tutti)	A' (solo) :	b1 (solo)	a2 (tutti)	b2 (solo)	a1 (tutti)	a2' (solo) :	coda
key:	Eb	Eb	Eb->	Bb	->	Eb	Eb	->
m.	159	175	191	199	207	223	231	239
m. (Allegro)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
m. (CPEBCW)	1	17	33	41	49	65	73	81

“movement”:	Allegro					adagio minuet allegro (end)					
section:	r	s	s ¹	r ²	S	r	S	cadenza		R	
key:	f	f	->	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
m.	245	253	265	273	281	320	325	351	354	358	366 (384)
m. (Allegro)	113	121	141	149	149	188	193	219	222	226	234 (252)
m. (CPEBCW)	1	9	21	29	37	76	81	107	110	114	122 (140)
parallel passage in first Allegro	1-8	9-20		1-8	39-40,	24-	52-	122-	159-		4-7, 16-30

R = main ritornello r = short or secondary ritornello
 S = main episode s = additional episode
 || = parallel to -> = modulating to the next key shown

¹retransition ²return

In fact, Bach did not simply insert two contrasting movements into an ordinary concerto Allegro. The proportions of the latter are altered such that the third ritornello, which in a normal movement would have functioned as the retransition, occurs less than halfway through. Instead, the third ritornello functions as a bridge to the first of the two inserted movements. After the Minuet, the Allegro continues where it left off, at a point corresponding to measure 113.² But the retransition, that is, the modulating passage that returns to the tonic, does not begin until

² Without the inserted movements, the Allegro contains 252 measures, not counting the bridge in measures 113-21 to the Adagio.

somewhat later than it would have done in a normal concerto movement (at measure 265), and the recapitulation is, as noted above, expanded by an additional solo episode (at measure 325). The latter, although not breaking any new tonal ground, serves as an extended lead-in to the cadenza, which plays a more important role than usual, recapitulating fragments from both of the inserted movements. These are briefly recalled before being cast aside for good by the concluding ritornello of the Allegro.³

The C-Minor Concerto is therefore an unusually integrated work; whether the other concertos of the set are equally coherent is less certain. At times one wonders whether the modulating bridges or codas at the ends of movements are merely superficial links between what are still essentially self-contained compositions, as in the ensemble sonatinas. Thematic integration would be a nineteenth-century solution to this problem, but only in no. 3 does thematic material from one movement return in the course of another: the slow movement abandons its own theme after the initial ritornello, and subsequent tutti passages instead present a triple-time variant of the ritornello theme from the first movement (online example 9.38). The slow movement's opening theme is not heard again in its original form, although the keyboard twice states a variation of it (in measures 9–16, repeating the entire ritornello as in W. 41, and the opening once again in measures 26–27).

[Example 9.38. Concerto in E-flat, W. 43/3, movement 1, \(a\) mm. 1–2, \(b\) mm. 16–20 \(without horns and flutes\)](#)

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Violin 1 (vn. 1), Violin 2 (vn. 2), Viola (va.), and Bassoon (bs.). The score is divided into two sections, (a) and (b). Section (a) is marked 'Allegro' and covers measures 1 and 2. Section (b) covers measures 16 through 20. The key signature is E-flat major (three flats). Section (a) is in common time (C), while section (b) is in 3/4 time. The score includes various musical notations such as trills (tr), dynamics (f for forte, p for piano), and fingerings (7 6 5, 4 3, 7 6 5) for the bassoon part. The bassoon part in section (a) has a 7-measure rest in the first measure and a 6-measure rest in the second measure.

³ The three measures that restate the theme of the Poco adagio are marked *Poco allegro*, but the cadenza doubles the original note values.

Elsewhere these concertos will disappoint anyone seeking integration in the nineteenth-century sense. Even if the cyclic construction of no. 4 anticipates Beethoven's Fifth or Ninth Symphony, the other concertos seek no such grand unification. Still, not all the linkages between movements are entirely superficial. In no. 3, the surprising tonality of the slow movement—C major, within a work in E-flat—prefigures the out-of-key opening of the final movement, which begins on the dominant of F minor (V of ii). This opening, moreover, is integrated into the design of the latter movement in a way not seen in earlier modulating ritornellos, such as that of the slow movement in the Concerto W. 23. In that case the movement as a whole had a conventional tonal design, modulating after the initial ritornello to the dominant and then the mediant. Concerto no. 3, however, makes iii (G minor), not V (B-flat), the initial modulating goal; the dominant is reached only much later, at the beginning of a short tutti passage best described as the start of a retransition (m. 158). As in no. 4, moreover, the final section in the tonic is unusually lengthy, reflecting the need to confirm the home key after the tonal peregrinations not only of this movement but of the concerto as a whole. Disproportionately long within the context of the finale alone, the extended recapitulation (mm. 180–255, not including the last ritornello) makes sense within the three-movement cycle.

In no. 5, on the other hand, the opening of the last movement, comprising four measures in the subdominant (C), seems to be completely unprepared. The concluding four measures of the Adagio prepare the dominant of G, as expected, but the Allegro therefore seems to begin in the wrong key, producing the jarring progression D–C at the boundary between the two movements. C major is reinterpreted as IV by the end of the opening phrase, but the main theme of the Allegro never appears in the tonic G. Subsequent tutti entries do begin in their proper keys, stating the theme on the dominant and subdominant, respectively (D at measure 75, C at measure 104). This, however, is also part of the joke, for the C-major entry of the tutti is hardly a ritornello; rather it commences a step sequence that modulates quickly to D major, then E minor.⁴ The progression is reversed in the actual third ritornello (mm. 135–46), which functions as the retransition, descending from E minor through D to C. The latter marks the return, in the subdominant as at the opening of the movement. Whether this works may depend on the listener, but it is possible that in this instance Bach miscalculated and that the last movement is tonally incoherent. The *sinfonias* of the next few years succeed in pulling off a number of comparable tricks; only one other ostensive linkage between movements in any Bach work seems equally problematical.⁵

⁴ On “step sequences,” see [online supplement 8.4](#).

⁵ In the keyboard sonata W. 58/2, which begins in G, the transition to the last movement, in E major, is perhaps even less prepared (further discussion in chap. 10).