

PROJECT UPDATE #2: Transcribing the Guitar Part, part 1

This past week I have been working on the guitar part of my transcription. It has been an absolute learning curve for me. I was very thankful for all the advice I received from one of my colleagues, Hu Bin. He gave me some great pointers to start my transcription, the best advice he gave me was that I had to try to be true to the bass line overall. This was a great challenge, and I had to face it from the first measure of the piece. The left hand of the piano starts with two C#s an octave apart followed by a step down to B. This octave motion is repeated for the next eleven measures; see the following graph:

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the right hand (treble clef) and the bottom staff is for the left hand (bass clef). The key signature is A major (three sharps). The time signature is 3/4. The tempo is Adagio ma non tanto. The left hand's bass line is highlighted with purple circles. In the first measure, two C#s are circled. In the second measure, a C# and a B are circled. In the third measure, a B and a C# are circled. This pattern repeats for the next eight measures, with a C# and a B circled in each measure. In the ninth measure, a B and a C# are circled. In the tenth measure, a C# and a B are circled. In the eleventh measure, a B and a C# are circled.

Due to the limitations of the guitars range, mostly lacking the lower register the keyboard possesses, I decided to transpose the first note of each measure to match its higher octave pitch and keep the chords in Bach's intended octave range. In that way I still remained true to the notes in the base and Bach's writing.

I have a short video of what this sounds like; I recorded the first 5 bars. Please check the video underneath this post on the website.

Next week, I will be recording all the first page of the transcription so look out for that!