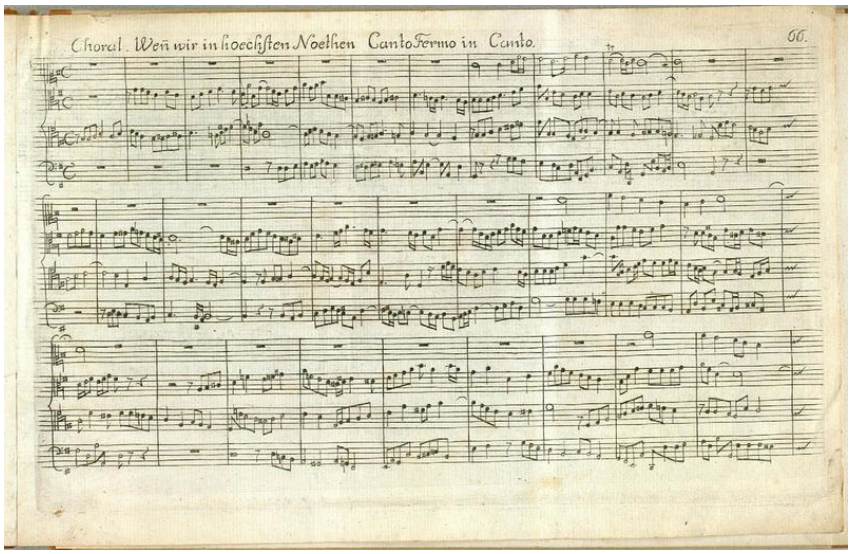
Johann Sebastian Bach

Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit

(Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein)

BWV 688



Arranged for piano by

Andrei Strizek

www.andreistrizek.com

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(Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein)

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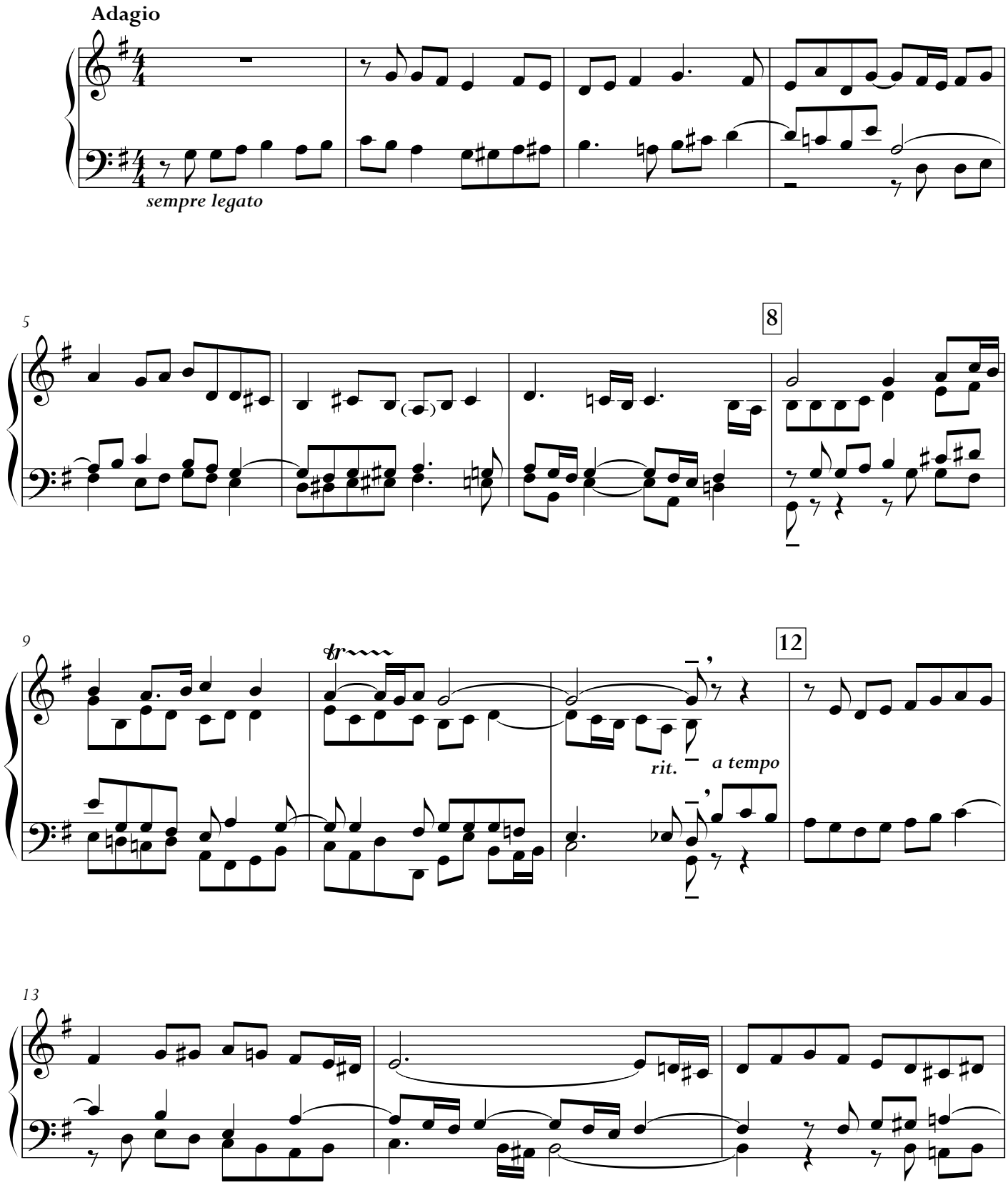
Johann Sebastian Bach
arr. Andrei Strizek



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16

19

20

22

23

rit.

a tempo

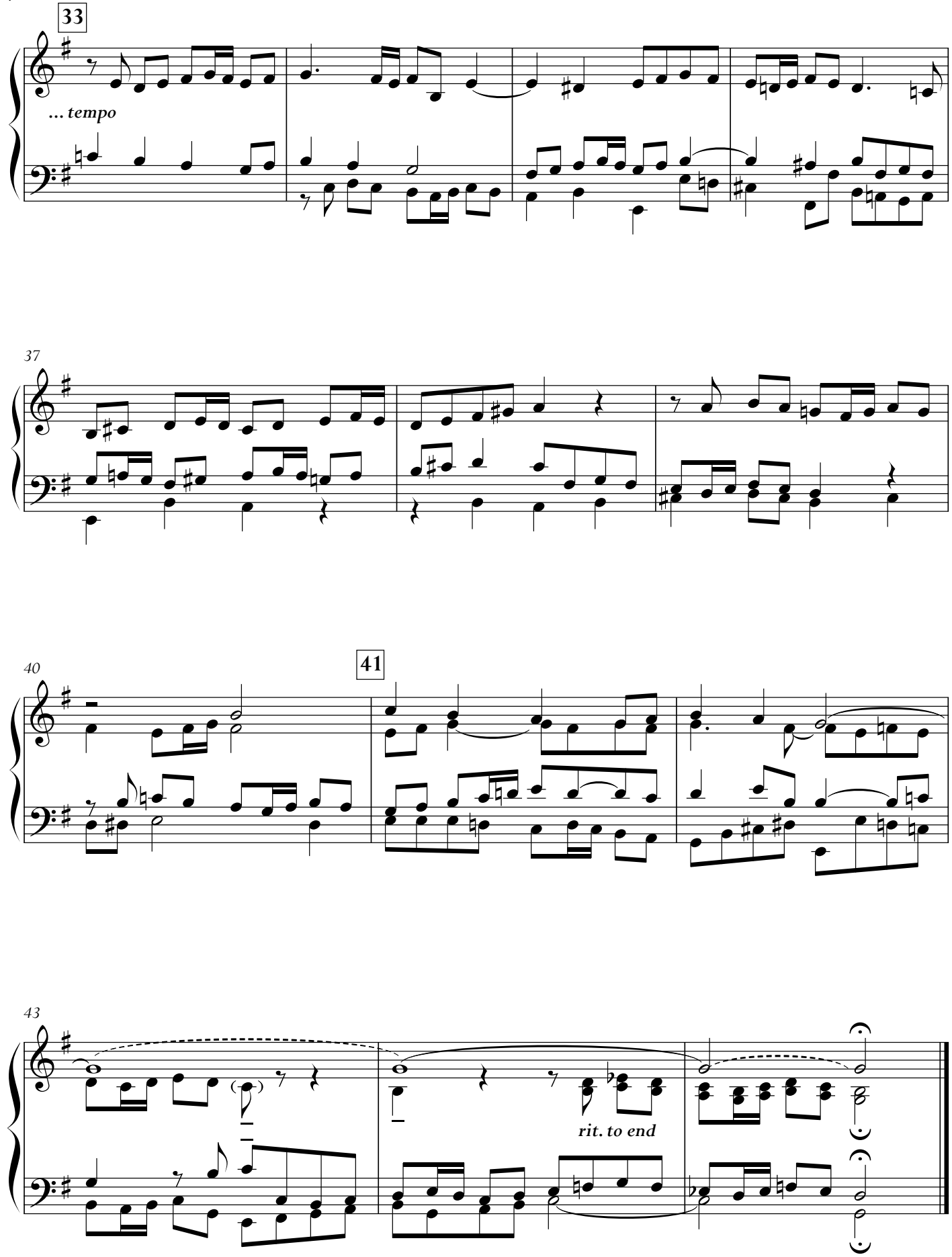
26

29

30

rit.

a ...


33
... tempo
37
40
41
43
rit. to end

Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit is most often performed at the end of Bach's *Die Kunst der Fuge (The Art of Fugue)*. Legends say that this was dictated from Bach's death bed; most likely that isn't true, although it adds the poignancy of the final, unfinished fugue that comes before this. Bach had actually set this tune earlier in his life, in *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*. This version, while not actually containing any true fugues, is full of counterpoint, inversions, stretto, all the while providing undulating interludes and accompaniment to the *cantus firmus*. Like many hymntunes, there are several different sets of lyrics. The choice of the title *Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit* – and thus implying the choice of those lyrics – could give us insight to Bach and how he felt during the end of his life:

Before your throne I now appear,
O God, and bid you humbly:
Turn not your gracious face
From me, a poor sinner.

Confer on me a blessed end,
On the last day awaken me,
Lord, that I may see you eternally;
Amen, amen, hear me.

In choosing to arrange this for piano, I did not want to take many liberties; I kept it as close to the *urtext* as possible. The editorial marks I did make can be treated as such. One of the things I love most about Bach is how open to interpretation his music is. A smart pianist will make good decisions when it comes to performing this piece.

There are several recordings of this piece, for various instruments or ensembles, and I encourage you to listen to them as you craft your own interpretation of this beautiful, contrapuntal chorale.

Please be in touch if you perform this piece. I would love to hear from you.

Pax,
Andrei Strizek

1 December 2014
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