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Abstract, Bach Festival 2019:

J.S. Bach on Exhibit in the Museum of Music Theory

This paper is in two parts. Part one explores how notable music theorists have approached Bach's music from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, the types of analytical claims they make in their research and pedagogy, and the ways in which many contemporary music theorists simultaneously idealize Bach yet ignore a central part of his oeuvre—the church cantatas. Part two examines how present-day theory pedagogy uses Bach's music, focusing especially on the chorales and the fugues from the Well-Tempered Clavier.