Imitative Dissonance in J. S. Bach's Stretto Fugues

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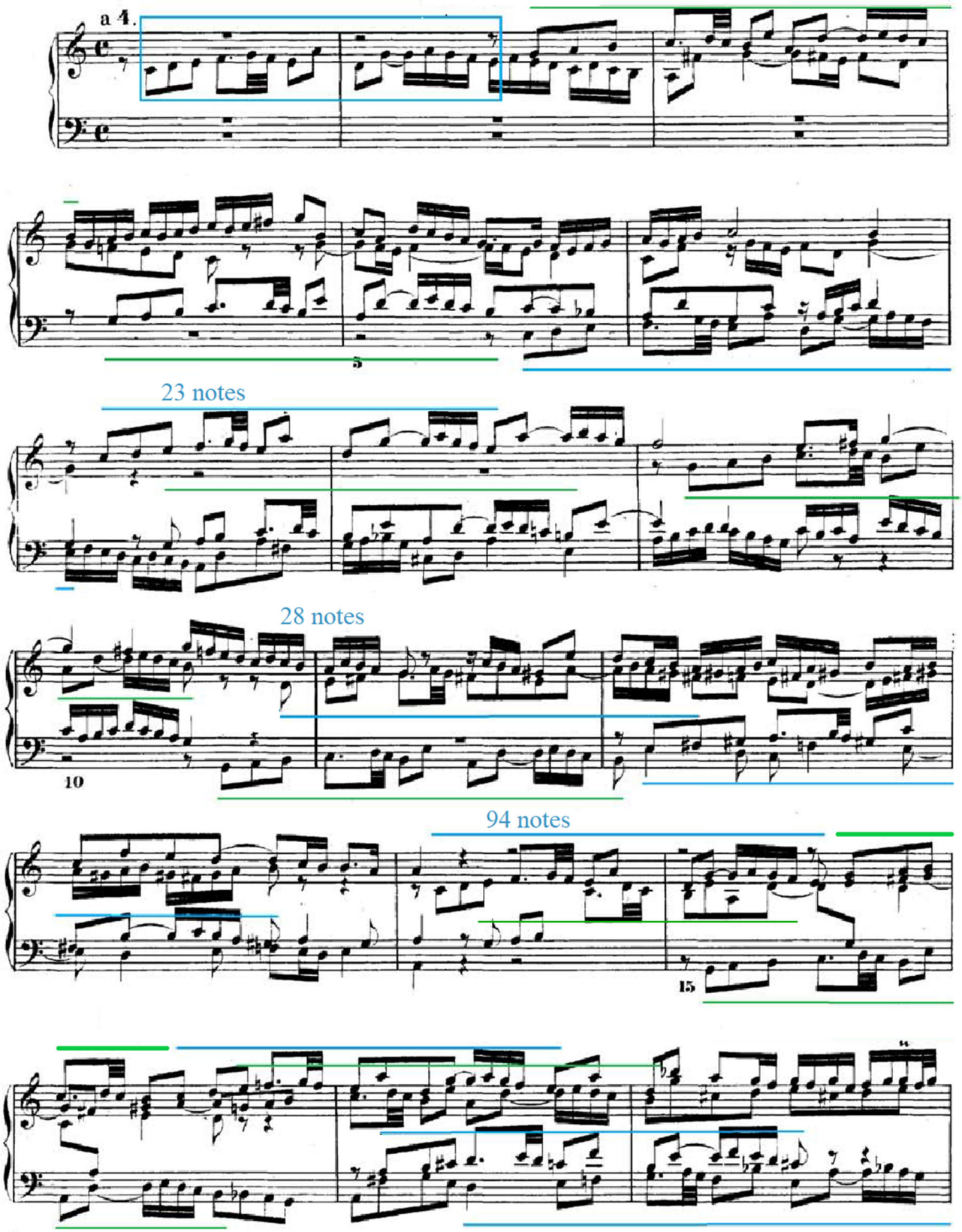
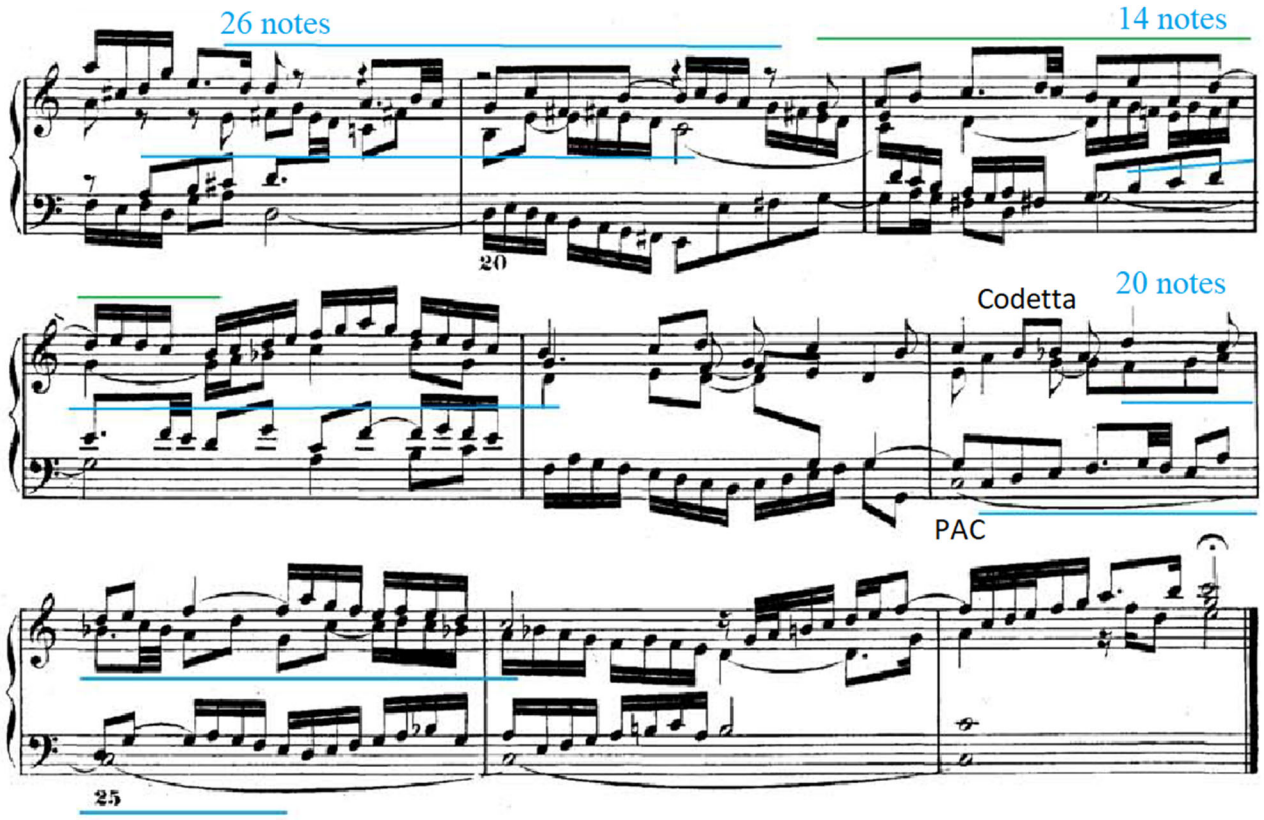
Example 1. Bach's C-Major Fugue, BWV 846.



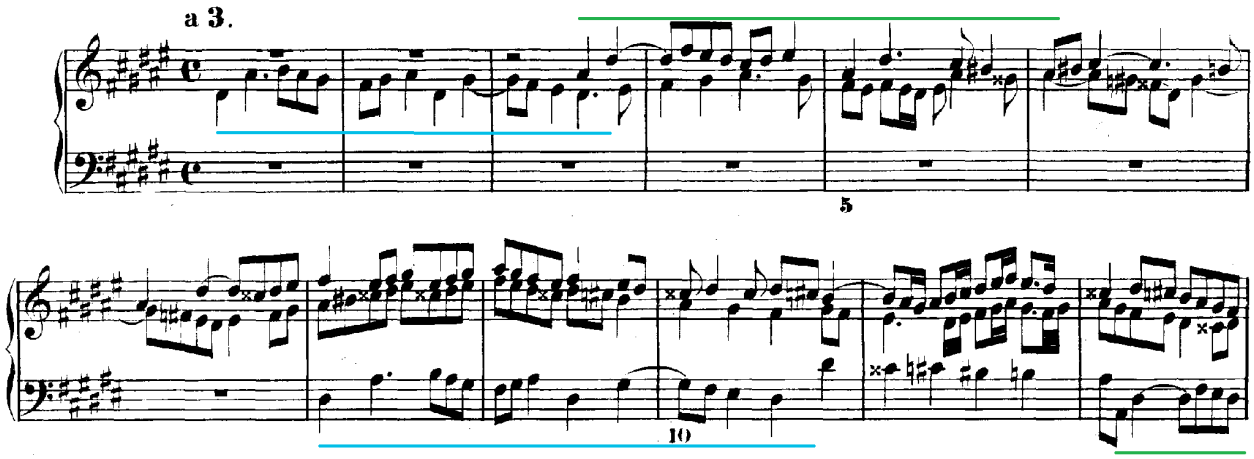
Example 1 continued



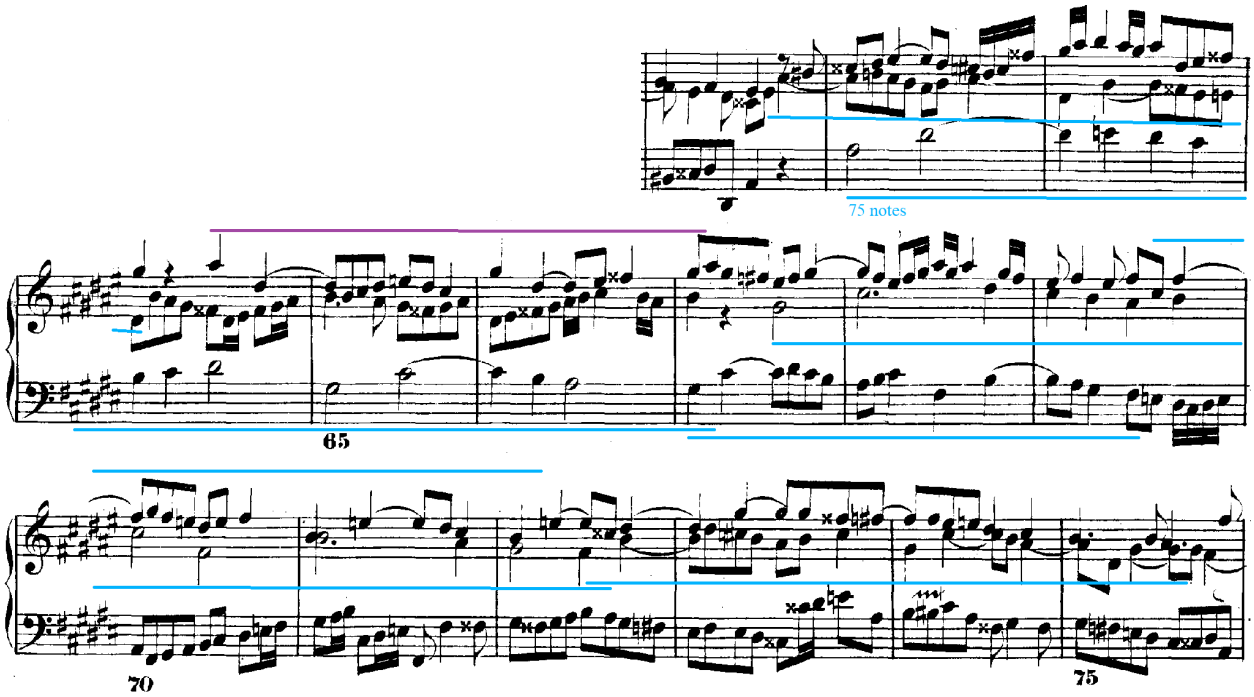
Subject entries are marked in blue, answers in green

BWV	# of conflicting notes in successive stretto passages	highest-rated stretto location (mm.)	total # of measures	location's relative position
846 (C major)	23, 28, **94**, 26, 14, 20	14-19	27	52-70%

Example 2. Bach's D#-Minor Fugue, BWV 853, Exposition.



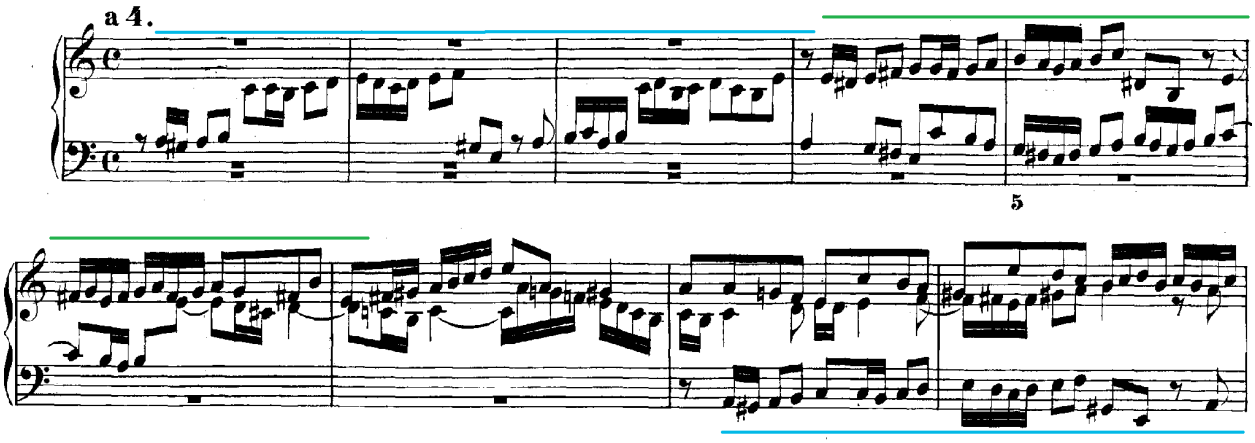
Example 3. Bach's D#-Minor Fugue, BWV 853, mm. 61-75 (stretto with 75 conflicting notes)



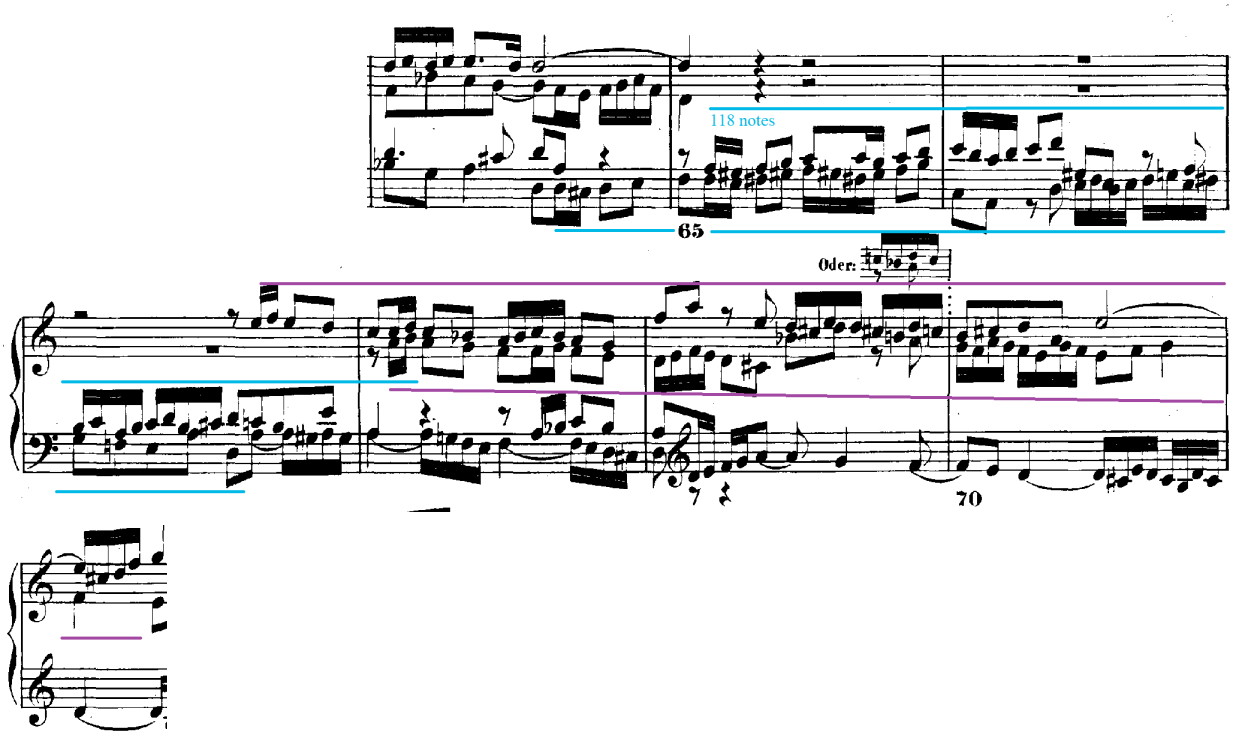
blue line = subject entry; purple line = inverted subject entry

BWV	# of conflicting notes in successive stretto passages	highest-rated stretto location (mm.)	total # of measures	location's relative position
846 (C major)	23, 28, **94**, 26, 14, 20	14-19	27	52-70%
853 (D# minor)	23, 22, 24, 22, 22, **75**	61-75	87	70-86%

Example 4. Bach's A-Minor Fugue, BWV 865, opening.



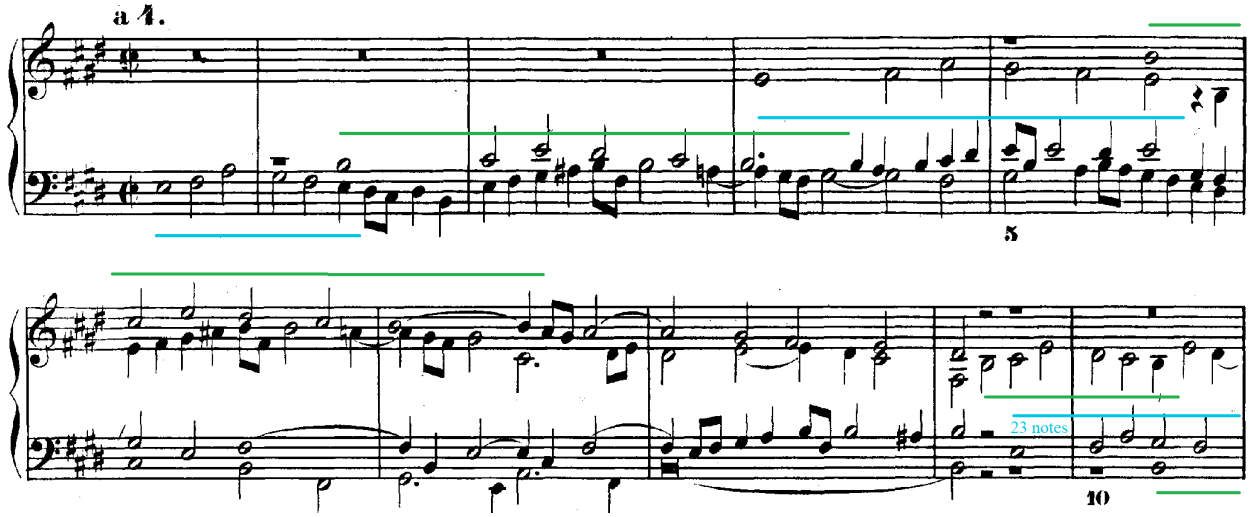
Example 5. Bach's A-Minor Fugue, BWV 865, mm. 64-71.



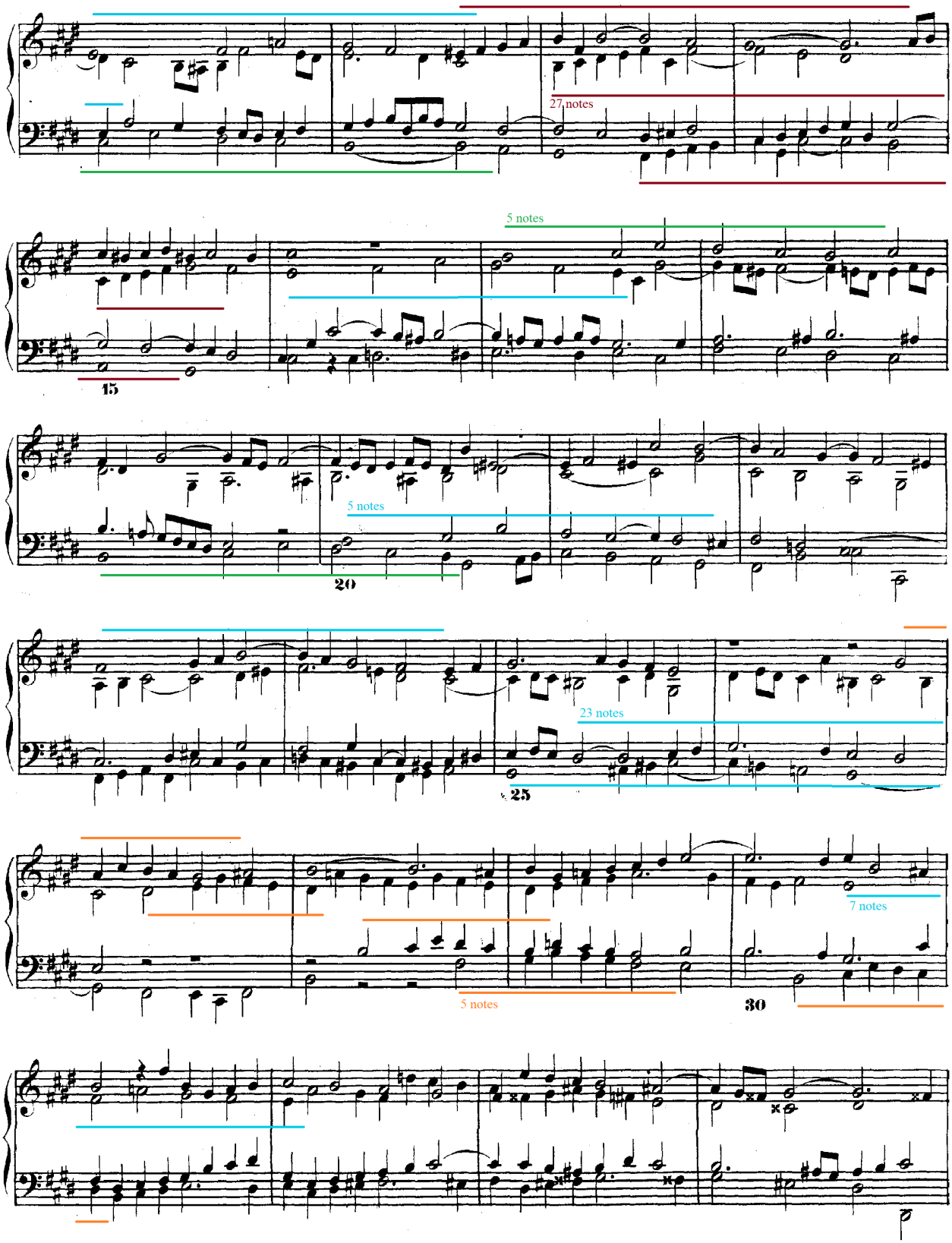
blue line = subject entry; purple line = inverted subject entry

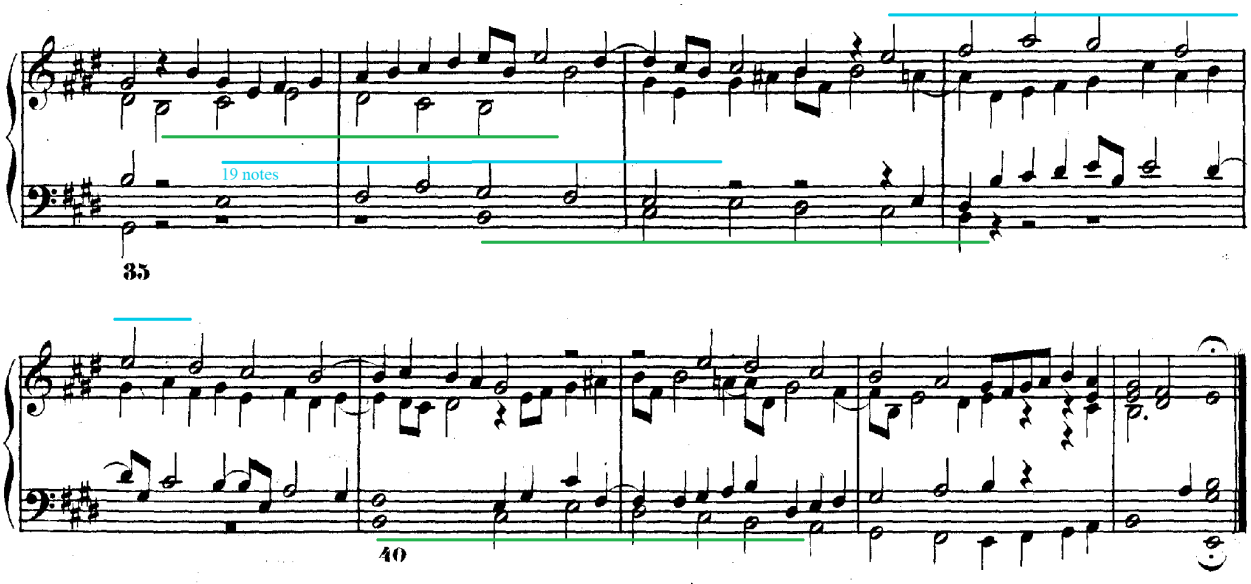
BWV	# of conflicting notes in successive stretto passages	highest-rated stretto location (mm.)	total # of measures	location's relative position
846 (C major)	23, 28, **94**, 26, 14, 20	14-19	27	52-70%
853 (D# minor)	23, 22, 24, 22, 22, **75**	61-75	87	70-86%
865 (A minor)	53, 55, 55, 67, 53, 54, 46, **118**, 46, 36, 79	64-71	87	74-82%

Example 6. Bach's E-Major Fugue, BWV 878.



Example 6 continued





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846 (C major)	23, 28, **94**, 26, 14, 20	14-19	27	52-70%
853 (D# minor)	23, 22, 24, 22, 22, **75**	61-75	87	70-86%
865 (A minor)	53, 55, 55, 67, 53, 54, 46, **118**, 46, 36, 79	64-71	87	74-82%
878 (E major)	23, 27*, 5, 5, **23(28?)**, 5, 7, 19	25-28(-29?)	43	58-65(67?)%

*the stretto with 27 metrical conflicts in mm. 12-15 of BWV 878 is not based on the initial subject

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