

pianist will need to strike a careful balance between observation of such detail, and overloading of the texture with undue resonance. Any use of the sustaining pedal is particularly ill-advised here.

In some circumstances, Saint Lambert’s “rule” can be applied to melodic material which the notation actually conceals:

The image shows a musical score for a minuet in G major, BWV 825, by J.S. Bach. It is in 3/4 time. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system has three measures, and the second system has four measures. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melodic line with stems on notes marked with asterisks (*). The left hand (bass clef) plays a simple accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Ex. 25: J. S. Bach: Partita I BWV 825, Menuet 1, bars 1–7

This passage is an obvious candidate for this treatment. By imagining stems on the more important notes of each pair in the right hand (indicated by *) — sustaining them, in other words, beyond their written length — these notes become long, which has two effects: the texture beneath and including these notes becomes, as Saint Lambert implied, chordal, although only written in two independent parts; and the music now projects a simple but effective melodic line, singing above the rest of the texture. Occasionally Bach did write such stems¹¹; that he did not do so here should not cause us to assume that such a treatment was thought undesirable. Once again, the opportunity presented to the player of different approaches to the same material is a refreshing one.

However, we should perhaps note certain apparently similar passages which arguably ought **not** to be so treated... in particular circumstances, and for particular 18th century reasons:

The image shows a musical score for a prelude in C# major, BWV 848, by J.S. Bach. It is in 3/8 time. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system has six measures, and the second system has one measure. The right hand (treble clef) plays a complex melodic line with many notes. The left hand (bass clef) plays a simple accompaniment. The key signature has four sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#).

Ex. 26: J. S. Bach: Prelude in C# major WTC Book I BWV 848, bars 1–7