

Prelude from Suite in C, Z 666 by Purcell

What does the title mean?

A prelude is an improvisatory-like movement that usually precedes more complex movements. This is the first movement in a suite. A suite is a set of dances that include for example gavottes, sarabandes, minuets, allemandes, gigue. In a suite, all the dances are in the same key - only the characters change according to the dance style. Z 666 is the catalogue number.

What key is this in?

C major

Modulations:

Bar 11 to 16 G major

Bar 17 to 30 C major

Bar 31 to 33 F major

Bar 33 to end C major

What period is this from?

The Baroque period (1600-1750) - Baroque means ugly or misshaped pearl and was applied in a derogatory way to the period. However, it is now known by that name.

What is the style of this work?

Counterpoint is used (eg bars 1-2 RH and then similar material LH bars 3 to 4); question/answer phrases, continuous pulse, strong cadences outlining sections e.g. bars 15 to 16; ornamentation; repeated theme (subject).

Notation:

f - forte - loud

staccato - short and detached

ornamentation - trills and mordents

tie - hold notes for combined value

cresc - crescendo - gradually getting louder

Structure:

Binary

Section A bars 1 to 15

Section B bars 16 to end

Could also be episodic e.g. bars 13 to 18 could be an episode

Tonic - C major

Sub-Dominant - F major

Dominant - G major

Relative minor - A minor