

# Giuliani's Allegro



**Bridget Mermikides** continues her classical guitar series with a transcription of a fabulous piece by the Italian guitar virtuoso, Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829)...



David Starobin:  
Interpreter of  
Giuliani's songs

highly thought of was he that he could number such notable composers as Rossini and Beethoven among his list of acquaintances. He published over 200 works including three guitar concertos, sonatas, studies and variations for solo guitar, quartets and many duos (with flute or violin) and songs. Well known among classical guitarists is a superb set of technical exercises by Giuliani: his 120 studies for picking hand development. These can be found easily in many publications and are a must for all classical guitar students.

The piece in this month's lesson is a technical study by Giuliani entitled Allegro and focuses solely on the repeated picking hand arpeggio pattern: p-i-m-a-m-i. The term arpeggio is used here to describe a 'broken' chord - the chord tones are plucked individually while the fretting hand holds down the chord shape.

One of the great difficulties of classical guitar playing is achieving picking hand technical security. One major enemy of arpeggio playing is an unstable and 'bouncing' picking hand. In order to work on this issue the technique builders here introduce the method of 'planting'. This is where picking hand fingers are planted on the strings simultaneously before executing the arpeggio pattern. Planting the fingers in this way helps to stabilise the picking hand, minimising the movement of the arm and hand. It also keeps the fingers close to the strings, as well as allowing the fingertips to feel the strings for a brief moment and sense the amount of grip and fingertip that's going to be required. Studies such as these are an invaluable tool in building good technique, so are worthy of your time and effort. 

**“So highly thought of was Mauro Giuliani that he could number both Beethoven and Rossini among his list of acquaintances”**

## ABILITY RATING



**Moderate**

### INFO

**KEY:** E minor  
**TEMPO:** Various  
**CD:** TRACKS 53-61

### WILL IMPROVE YOUR

- ☒ Picking hand planting
- ☒ Picking hand arpeggios
- ☒ Picking hand stability

WELCOME TO THE second in a series of easy to intermediate lessons exploring the music and technique of the classical guitar.

These lessons present pieces and studies by the guitar masters of the 18th and 19th centuries and demonstrate useful and common techniques of this style. This month introduces the Italian guitar virtuoso and composer Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829). Along with last month's composer Fernando Sor, Giuliani was one of the greatest classical proponents of the guitar and achieved considerable fame during his lifetime as an outstanding performer and teacher. So



**TRACK RECORD** There are vast numbers of performances featuring Giuliani's music, but we'd really recommend you check out Italian classical guitar virtuoso David Starobin's album *Mauro Giuliani - Solo Guitar Music Performed On 19th Century Guitar* on Bridge Records. It does exactly what it says on the tin and is available from Amazon or iTunes.



**EXAMPLE 1 PLANTING, CONSISTING OF A FOUR-NOTE ASCENDING ARPEGGIO ACROSS FOUR STRINGS****CD TRACK 54**

The planted blocks of notes are indicated throughout these exercises by brackets, and an arrow shows the exact point where the fingers make the plant. Begin Exercise 1 by planting p-i-m-a on the four strings together. When p plays, i-m-a stay planted and remain in position until individually released. When the 'a' finger plays, the thumb should plant itself simultaneously back on the next bass note. When p plays this time around i-m-a are planted again in a block as p is playing and the process repeats as indicated by the brackets.

The fingers always play free stroke, but the thumb should be practiced both free stroke and rest stroke. Rest stroke is where the thumb plucks the string in a downward motion and lands resting on the adjacent string. The thumb can remain on that string while the fingers play, creating more security for the hand. When it is not possible to leave the thumb on the adjacent string (because it obstructs the next to be played), it can still play a light rest stroke, which springs back off the adjacent string leaving room for the finger to play.

Plant p i m a simultaneously on the strings here

Plant p here

Plant i m a here

Plant p here

Plant i m a here

Plant p here

Plant i m a here

Play 4 times

E B G D A E

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

p i m a p i m a etc

**EXAMPLE 2 REVERSE ARPEGGIATING****CD TRACK 55**

Plant p a m i

Plant p here

Plant a m i

Plant p here

Plant a m i

Plant p here

Plant a m i

Play 4 times

E B G D A E

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

p a m i p a m i etc

**EXAMPLE 3 ALTERNATING SECOND AND THIRD FINGERS****CD TRACK 56**

Exercises 3 & 4 address the alternation of m and a. These two fingers are the most difficult to alternate smoothly so it is beneficial to isolate and focus on them here. Use the same principle as Exercise 1 and plant p-m-a

simultaneously as indicated and play. Notes not falling inside a bracket should be treated as individual 'planters': The finger or thumb should jump back onto the string like a magnet before playing.

Plant p m a

Plant m a

etc

Play 4 times

E B G D A E

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

p m a m p m a m etc

**EXAMPLE 4 ALTERNATING SECOND AND THIRD FINGERS (VERSION 2)****CD TRACK 57**

Plant p m a

Plant a m

etc

Play 4 times

E B G D A E

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

p a m a p a m a etc



## LESSON: CLASSICAL

### EXAMPLE 5 THE SIX-NOTE PATTERN (VERSION 1)

**CD TRACK 58**

In the next two examples we reach the full six-note pattern, this time requiring two blocks of planting for each six-note group indicated by brackets and arrows.

The musical score for 'Plant a Tree' is presented in a three-staff format. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music, each starting with a repeat sign and a '6' indicating a sixteenth-note triplet. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, and E5. Above the first two measures are the lyrics 'Plant a tree' and 'Plant a tree' respectively, with arrows pointing to the notes. Above the third and fourth measures are the lyrics 'Plant a tree' and 'Plant a tree' respectively, with arrows pointing to the notes. The bottom two staves are for guitar, with the first staff being the high E string and the second staff being the low E string. The high E string staff has a '6' above the first measure and a '6' below the first measure. The low E string staff has a '6' below the first measure and a '6' below the first measure. The lyrics 'p a m i m a p a m i m a etc' are written below the guitar staves, with arrows pointing to the notes. The score ends with a double bar line and a '6' below the first measure of the guitar staves.

### EXAMPLE 6 THE SIX-NOTE PATTERN (VERSION 2)

**CD TRACK 59**

## GIULIANI'S ALLEGRO FULL STUDY

**CD TRACK 60-61**

Now that the picking hand has done some groundwork, this piece should be ready to go! There is nothing of particular difficulty in the fretting hand, just be sure to press the chord shapes nicely on the tips of the fingers so adjacent

strings aren't obstructed. The main goal is to keep a good degree of control in the picking hand: work hard on maintaining consistent tone and rhythmically even sextuplets throughout. Start slow and build speed very gradually.

The solo consists of four measures. The first measure is in E major (Em) with a 4/4 time signature. The second measure is in B7add11/E. The third measure is in Am6/E. The fourth measure is in E7. The solo is written for guitar and includes a bass line. The chords are: Em, B7add11/E, Am6/E, E7, Am, Em.

GIULIANI'S ALLEGRO ...CONTINUED

CD TRACK 60-61

**F#7b9/A#**

E B G D A E

7

**B7b9/F#**

E B G D A E

9

**Em** **Am6**

E B G D A E

11

**Em/B** **B7sus4 1/2 CII** **B7**

E B G D A E

13

**Em**

E B G D A E

15

E B G D A E

17