

Beethoven

Ode To Joy



For your aural delight **Bridget Mermikides** transcribes her own classical guitar arrangement of the uplifting finale from Beethoven's magnificent 9th Symphony.

ABILITY RATING

● ● ● ● ● Moderate


| INFO | WILL IMPROVE YOUR |
|-------------------------|---|
| KEY: D major | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melody and bass line separation |
| TEMPO: 108bpm | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melodic phrasing |
| CD: TRACKS 32-33 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classical repertoire |

IN THIS ISSUE of the classical guitar series, we turn our attention to a symphonic masterpiece by perhaps the most famous composer of all time, Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827). This month I've made a solo guitar arrangement of one of the best-known classical works ever composed, the Ode To Joy from his last completed symphony No 9 In D minor, op.125. Completed in 1824, while the composer was almost completely deaf,

this is a stunning work which was as progressive (with its use of a choir in a symphony, and its recursive symphony-within-a-symphony structure) as it has proved enduring. Despite the misanthropy

internationally a countless number of times, used in TV and film scores (including A Clockwork Orange, Die Hard and the Coen Brothers' hilarious second movie, Raising Arizona) and even the original CD duration standard of 74 minutes was justified by its ability to neatly accommodate the length of the symphony.

For my arrangement, I've kept Ode To Joy's original key of D major using drop D tuning and aimed to emulate the entries of each instrumental section and rousing build of the symphonic orchestration on just one guitar. You'll hear - even in this solo guitar arrangement - how ingeniously Beethoven treats this simple but powerful tune, adding beautiful counter-melodies and harmonies to maintain the listener's interest and lift his or her spirits. Remember 'simple' is rarely 'easy' so, as ever, take your time to really get this piece under your fingers - using the tab captions as necessary - so that you can perform this with the fluency, evenness of rhythm and clarity that it deserves.

Have fun, and I'll return next issue with another classical masterpiece arranged for guitar. See you then! 

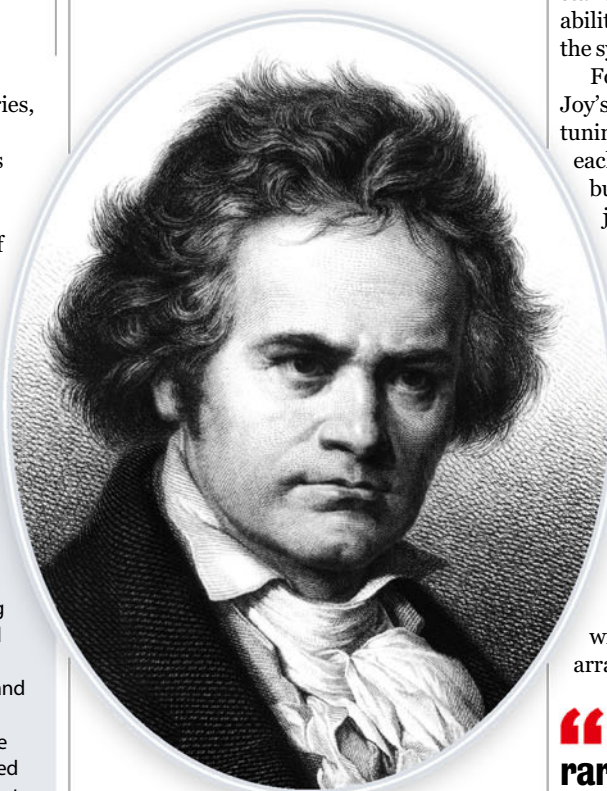
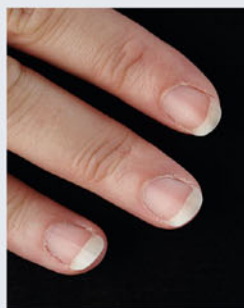
“Remember ‘simple’ is rarely ‘easy’ so, as ever, take your time to really get this piece under your fingers. Aim to perform it with the fluency, evenness of rhythm and clarity it deserves.”

TECHNIQUE FOCUS

Warmth and clarity

Creating a good quality tone on the classical guitar requires time and effort. To produce a sound that has clarity, resonance and projection it is necessary for the picking hand fingernails to have length just beyond the end of the fingertip and they should be

shaped, filed and smoothed to perfection. The string is plucked with the nail but the flesh of the fingertip is also involved and it is the combination of the two that creates warmth as well as clarity.



Beethoven often displayed in his life, his adaption and scoring of Schiller's inspiring poem with a melody of tremendous power and emotional resonance has become an international representation of brotherhood and community and indeed the European anthem. It has been performed and recorded



TRACK RECORD We recommend the classic Berliner Philharmoniker (conducted by Herbert von Karajan) recording of the Complete Beethoven Symphonies (Deutsche Grammophon, 1963), and for historical resonance Bernstein's performance at the Berlin Wall in 1989 titled Ode To Freedom (Deutsche Grammophon, 1990). There are also other great recordings of Beethoven's 9th available.

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

The main 8-bar melody starts out as a single note line, emulating the double basses in the original score. This should be played in the fourth position (first finger by the 4th fret) and on the fourth and fifth strings as indicated in the tab. Play it smoothly with the thumb to give a warm, cello-like sound.

At bar 9 a bass line comes in and again it closely resembles the original orchestral score where this section is played by the string section (violins, violas, cellos, basses). It is not completely obvious how to finger this, so

there is some indication from bar 9 to 12 to help. Notice in bar 10 the fourth finger shift from the C# to D in the bass line and also take note that in bar 12, 3rd beat, the first and second fingers are 'reversed' on the B and E to help keep the two-part writing legato (smooth). In bar 15, 3rd beat, I use a short barre (first finger, 2nd fret) to press the fourth and fifth strings simultaneously until the last half beat of the same bar when it is released for the open A. It avoids 'hopping' with the fretting hand first finger.

$\text{♩} = 108$

Dropped D tuning

E B G D A D

1 p p p p

5

D Gadd9/B D G6 G D/F# Em D A/C# A/B A

E B G D A D

9

D/A D Gadd9/B D G6 G D/F# Dsus2 A/C# B5 A6 G6 A D/F#

E B G D A D

13

A/G D/A Bm A/C# D D/E D/F# G6 F#7/A# Bm A/C# A D

E B G D A D

17

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

At bar 33 the melody is repeated an octave up with the previous bass line appearing as an inner voice over a new low D bass note. This provides a

particularly pleasing resonance on the guitar and I think it works really well within the overall piece.

Chords: D/A D7/C G/B A7/C# D G6 G D/F# Dsus2 A/C# B5 A6 A/G A D/F#

Chords: A/G D/A Bm A/C# D D/E D/F# Em/G F#7/A# Bm A/C# A D

Chords: D/A D7/C G/B A7/C# D G6 G D/F# Dsus2 A/C# B5 A6 G6 A D/F#

Chords: D Gadd9/D G/D D A7/D G D/F# Em D D/C# A/B A

Chords: D Gadd9/D G/D D A7/D G D/F# D Bm A7 A D

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

Notice the fretting hand fingering in bar 42 – hammering on the G with the fourth finger helps the rest of the bar work, technically. The rest of this section is relatively straightforward. At bar 57 the theme appears again,

this time as a fanfare and is where the brass section appears in the original score. It is characterised by a harmonised melody and emphatic dotted rhythm in the bass.

41

45

49

53

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

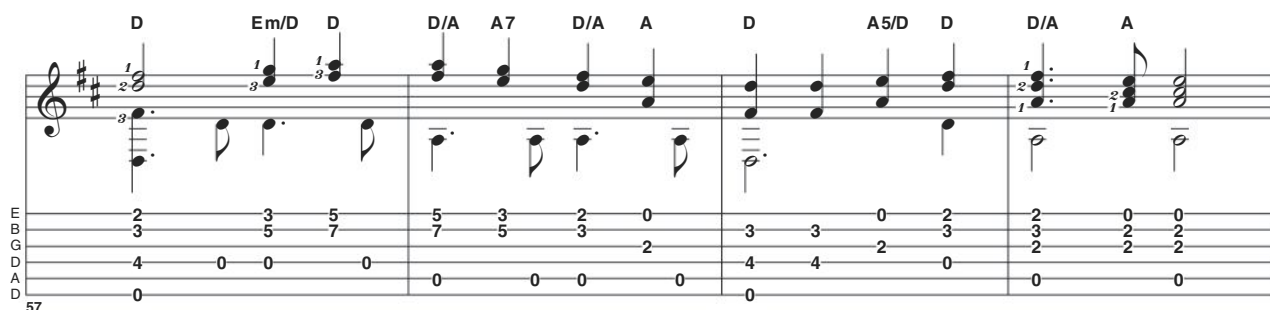
Chord progression for measures 57-60:

Measures 57-58: D, Em/D, D

Measures 59-60: D/A, A7, D/A, A

Measures 61-62: D, A5/D, D

Measures 63-64: D/A, A



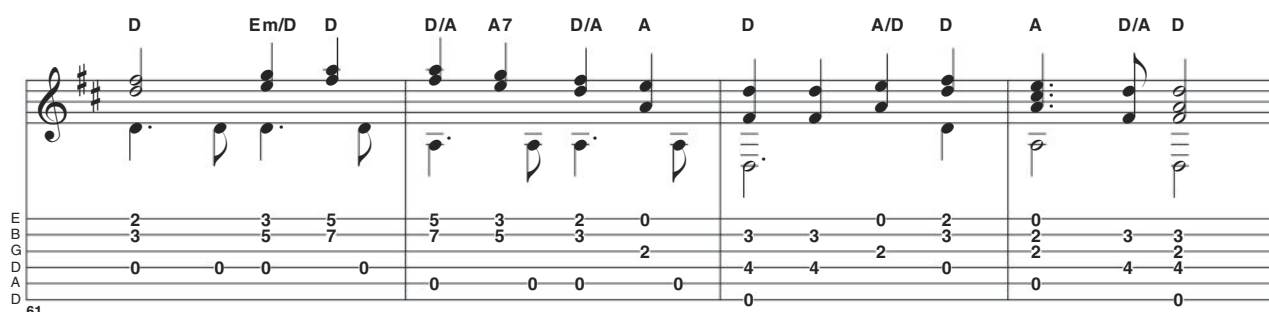
Chord progression for measures 61-64:

Measures 61-62: D, Em/D, D

Measures 63-64: D/A, A7, D/A, A

Measures 65-66: D, A/D, D

Measures 67-68: A, D/A, D



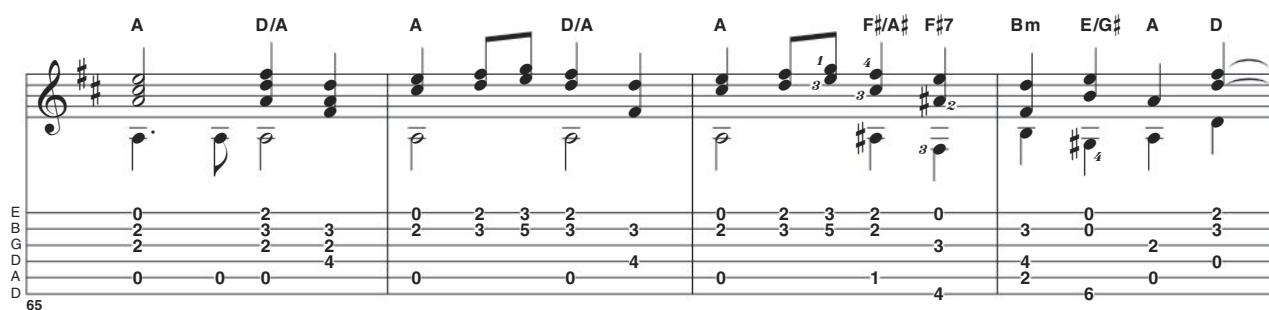
Chord progression for measures 65-68:

Measures 65-66: A, D/A

Measures 67-68: A, D/A

Measures 69-70: A, F#7, F#7

Measures 71-72: Bm, E/G#, A, D



Chord progression for measures 69-72:

Measures 69-70: D7, G, A/G, D, G6

Measures 71-72: D/A, A, D/A, A, A7, D

Measures 73-74: D/A, A, D/A, A, A7, D

