

Johann Strauss I

Radetzky March



Bridget Mermikides arranges and transcribes for classical guitar the most famous piece written by Johann Strauss The Elder.

ABILITY RATING



Moderate to difficult

| INFO | WILL IMPROVE YOUR |
|-------------------------|--|
| KEY: D | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Slurs |
| TEMPO: 152 bpm | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melody-bass separation |
| CD: TRACKS 38-39 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romantic repertoire |

LAST ISSUE WE tackled an arrangement of the famous Vienna Blood Waltz, by Johann Strauss II and in this issue we're heading a generation back to a work by his father the imaginatively named Johann Strauss I (also known as Johann Strauss the Elder – or the Father – positioned as he was at the top of a formidable musical dynasty).

Johann Strauss I was a hugely influential composer in the early nineteenth century, not least of which to his sons the composer and polymath Josef Strauss, the aforementioned Johann Strauss II and the composer Eduard Strauss. The latter of which had a son, who was a conductor and composer by the name of – you guessed it – Johann Strauss III.

Johann the Elder was a central figure in the Viennese Waltz style, and despite his wide success with a number of works in that style, is most remembered by his 1848 Radetzky March – a piece that is embedded in British culture as much as it is in its native Austria (even if you don't know the name, you'll recognise it within a few bars of hearing the tune). It's a rousing work for symphony orchestra with a decidedly military flavour (dedicated as it is to the decorated Radetzky von Radetz, an Austrian general with

standard issue walrus moustache). The melody and rhythm of this work is so instantly captivating, that even from its first performance the audience have felt compelled (and it would seem now obliged) to clap and stamp along with the main theme, as you'll recognise from many a Last Night of the Proms performance. Sadly Strauss died in his mid-40s during the instrumentation of his




Johann Strauss I: never heard this piece performed

newly composed work, and never heard it performed.

Translating this epic symphonic work to solo classical guitar might seem like a step too far, but it works surprisingly well and with the help of drop-D tuning I've kept the original key of D major while maintaining the bass-line, harmonies and that all-important melody. What are distinctive in the piece are the short grace notes in the melody – ornaments with the grandiose term of acciaccatura. The term is derived from an Italian word meaning 'to crush' and you should perfect the technique so they are as short and crisp as possible.

As ever you'll want to practise this piece patiently – using the tab captions to guide you through the trickier sections – so that the technique becomes second nature and you can focus on the performance of the melody, and making a whole room of people clap on every beat!

To help make this piece sound articulate and clear it's best to decide and stick to precise fingering in both hands. Try the suggested fingering in the tab and notation and aim to keep the technique neat and tidy. Go slowly at first so that the position shifts and chord shapes become familiar and accurate. 

“Johann Strauss I was a hugely influential composer in the early nineteenth century.”



TRACK RECORD There are many stunning performances of this work, but you can't do much better, or get more authentic, than the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carlos Kleiber live at the 1992 Vienna New Year's Concert (Sony); or Nikolaus Harnoncourt's similarly superb conducting of the Concentus Musicus Vienna (Sony Classical).

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 39

[Bar 4] On the last beat of bar 4 plant all four fretting hand fingers down on the fretboard in their correct positions before beginning plucking - this will really help to 'seat' the hand in make the grace notes through the next 3 bars infinitely easier to execute.

[Bar 9] There is a little 'hopping' of the fretting hand going into bar 9 so follow the fingering - playing it fairly staccato is perfect for the style. On the 3rd beat of bar 12 the A7 chord is strummed downwards with the backs of the nails of the first two picking hand fingers.

♩ = 152 approx

Chords: D, A/C#, Bm, A, E/G#, E7, A, D/A, A/C#, D, E, E7, A, A7, D, E7, A7, D, Gadd#11, A, D

Staff 1 (Measures 1-4):

Measures 1-2: D chord. Fingering: 1 2 3 4 (fingers 1-4). Grace notes: 1 2 3 4 (fingers 1-4).
 Measures 3-4: A/C# Bm A. Fingering: 4 3 2 1 (fingers 4-1). Grace notes: 4 3 2 1 (fingers 4-1).

Staff 2 (Measures 5-8):

Measures 5-6: D chord. Fingering: 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 (fingers 2-1). Grace notes: 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 (fingers 2-1).
 Measures 7-8: E/G# E7 A. Fingering: 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 (fingers 2-1). Grace notes: 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 (fingers 2-1).

Staff 3 (Measures 9-12):

Measures 9-10: A/C# D. Fingering: 3 7 5 5 5 (fingers 3-5). Grace notes: 3 7 5 5 5 (fingers 3-5).
 Measures 11-12: E E7 A. Fingering: 7 7 5 5 7 (fingers 7-5). Grace notes: 7 7 5 5 7 (fingers 7-5).

Staff 4 (Measures 13-16):

Measures 13-14: D chord. Fingering: 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 (fingers 2-1). Grace notes: 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 (fingers 2-1).
 Measures 15-16: E7 A7 D. Fingering: 2 7 5 5 7 (fingers 2-7). Grace notes: 2 7 5 5 7 (fingers 2-7).

Staff 5 (Measures 17-20):

Measures 17-18: E7 A7 D. Fingering: 14 12 (fingers 14-12). Grace notes: 14 12 (fingers 14-12).
 Measures 19-20: Gadd#11 A D. Fingering: 9 7 10 8 7 9 (fingers 9-7). Grace notes: 9 7 10 8 7 9 (fingers 9-7).

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 39

21

G D/F#

E 10 12-10 9 10 12-10 9 10 15 12 12-10 9 10 12-10 9 10 12-10 9 10 14 10 5
B 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
G 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
D 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
A 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
E 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

25

A A7 D6/A D A A7 D/A

E 5 2 3 7 7 7 5 10 9 9 7 10 8 7 7 10 8 7
B 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2
G 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
D 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
A 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
E 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

29

A A7 D6/A D F#7 Bm F#7 Bm

E 5 2 3 7 7 7 5 10 9 9 11-12 10 9 9 11-12 10
B 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2
G 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
D 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
A 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
E 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

33

F# Bm F# Bm F# Bm F# Bm F#

E 14 14-14 14 14 14 14 14 14-14 14 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1
B 11 12 11 12 11 12 11 12 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11
G 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9
D 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
A 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
E 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

37

D

E 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 2 0 3 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 2 7 5 5 7
B 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 7 7 7
G 0
D 0
A 0
E 0

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 39

[Bar 53] As we go into the A major section there is again some suggested fretting hand fingering to get you started and help with the execution.

41

A/C# D E E7 A A7

45

D D/A D D/A D D/A D D/A D D/A D D/A

49

E7 A7 D Gadd#11 A D

53

E

57, 65

A

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 39

[Bar 73] From bar 73 to 78 the bass line becomes more of a feature and should have clear rests in between notes - one or two will need to be

damped with the thumb (listen to the audio to hear how it should sound). The rest of the piece is repeats. I hope you enjoy learning this!



61, 69

71

73, 79

75, 91

79, 95

83, 99

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 39

87, 103

88

104

107

111

116

120