

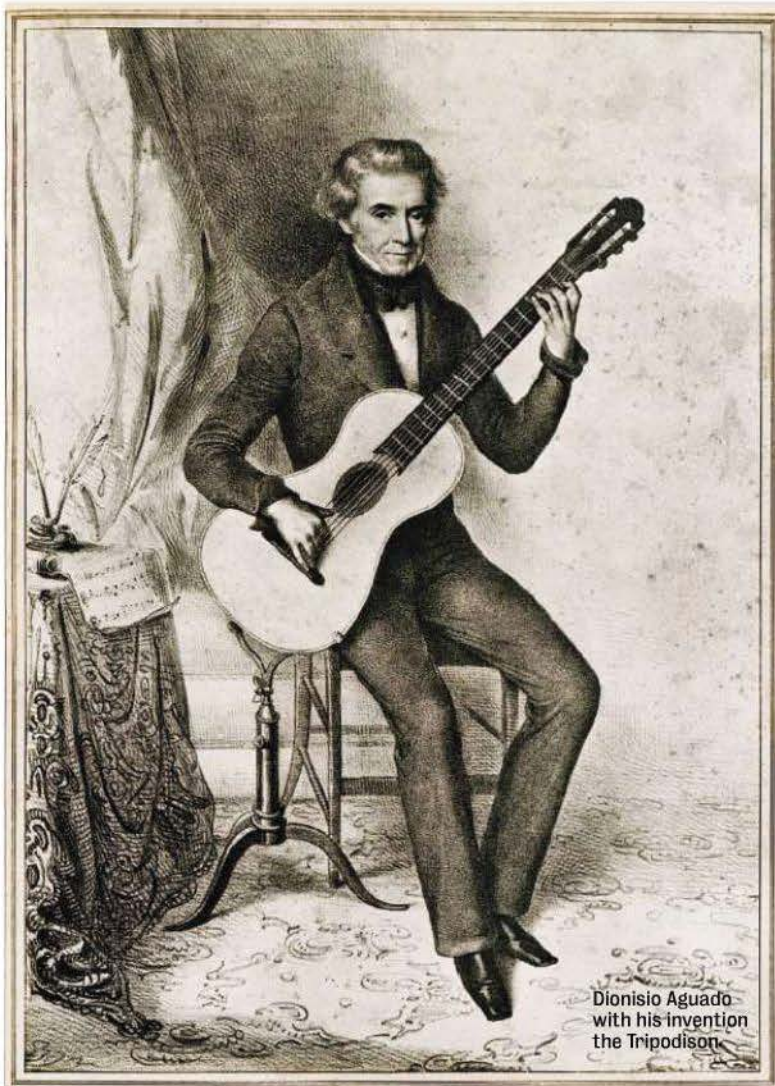
Dionisio Aguado Study No.16



This month **Bridget Mermikides** introduces you to Spanish classical guitarist and composer, Dionisio Aguado, and includes a study in playing Aguado style scales and arpeggios...

A LEADING CHARACTER in the world of 18th and 19th century guitarists, Aguado (1784 – 1849) devoted his entire life to the guitar. He was revered by the public and praised by such great musicians as Paganini, Giuliani and Rossini for his virtuosic and flawless playing. His book *The New Method For Guitar*, which contains all the essentials of guitar technique, was first published in the mid 1840s and is still published today by Tecla.

His advice on hand positions, angle of the fingers, types of stroke, use of the nails, tone production, arpeggio technique and so on remain completely relevant to today's classical player. It also has information about Aguado's invention: the Tripodison, a three-legged wooden stand with a metal clamp at the top that gripped and held the guitar. In a famous picture of Aguado, which you see on your right, he is seen using this device, the intention of which was to support the instrument, giving the player more freedom of arm movement, and to increase the volume and resonance of the guitar by limiting the damping effect of contact with the human body. Although it didn't catch on at the time, we do




Dionisio Aguado with his invention the Tripodison

and their friendship resulted in Sor composing the duet *Les Deux Amis* (The Two Friends), opus 41. Their tones must have been quite different from one another; Sor plucked with just the fingertips and disapproved of Aguado's nails, calling them 'inconvenient'. But Aguado's approach to tone-projection (using a combination of fingernails and flesh) has now become standard practice of almost all of today's serious classical guitarists.

Aguado's compositions consist of purely solo guitar pieces, including numerous studies and lessons for his students, waltzes, minuets and light pieces. More substantial works include *Trois Rondos Brillants*, *Le Menuet Affandangado* and *Le Fandango Varie*.

This month we are looking at his Study in D major (No.16 from Aguado's set of 24 studies), which consists of single line arpeggios and scales throughout.

If you have suggestions for pieces or artists to cover in this column, please email the magazine. 

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ABILITY RATING



Moderate

INFO	WILL IMPROVE YOUR
KEY: D	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arpeggio playing
TEMPO: 58 bpm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hammer-ons
CD: TRACKS 38-43	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Free stroke playing

have some similar products on the market today: The MBrace Guitar Holder and the K&M Guitar Performer Stand (used by Santana) bear a remarkable resemblance to Aguado's original invention. So it seems our friend Dionisio was ahead of his time in more ways than one.

In the 1830s Aguado shared accommodation with Fernando Sor in Paris

“Aguado's approach to tone projection, combining nails and flesh, has now become standard practice for almost all serious classical guitarists”



TRACK RECORD There are plenty of recorded examples of Aguado's pieces. Check out Liona Boyd's album *Romanza*, which includes a nice version of his Study No.7, and Antonio Duro's *No Me Olvides*, which features a lot of Aguado. If you're after more sheet music, try *Dionisio Aguado: The Complete Works For Guitar*, which is available to buy from Amazon.

BUILDER EXERCISES

CD TRACK 39

[Exercise 1] This is a warm-up and accuracy drill for the fretting hand third finger hammer-on. Keep the finger in a fixed curved shape as it moves towards and away from the fretboard and allow the movement to come from the large knuckle joint. Do not straighten the finger at any point.

[Exercise 2] The first arpeggio of the study starts with the same hammer-

on then the planted picking hand fingers play the remaining notes free stroke. Do not use a barre.

[Exercise 3] Here we emphasise the first note of the descending arpeggio with a single rest stroke before swiftly planting a *m* *i* on the second, third and fourth strings to play the remaining notes, free stroke. This planting of the fingers is to gain security and stability of the plucking hand.

Tempo 1: ♩ = 55

Tempo 2: ♩ = 40

Plant *i* *m* *a* on top 3 strings here. Play free stroke throughout.

(no barre)

1 2 1 4

3

Plant *i* *m* *a* on strings 2, 3 & 4 here. Play free stroke.

i plays rest stroke

2 2 1

3 0 2 2 0 2 0

p p p p p i m a m p i a m i p

BUILDER EXERCISES

CD TRACK 41

[Exercise 4] This descending scale begins with a rest stroke to punctuate and emphasise the beginning of the phrase. Play the remaining notes free stroke and keep the alternation of *i* and *m* as indicated.

[Exercise 5] Again begin with a single rest stroke to emphasise the first

note. This longer descending scale makes use of an open first string to make a seamless transition from the 9th position to the 2nd position. For a fluid sounding scale use the fingering indicated. This is a common and effective way of organising the picking hand.

i plays rest stroke

4 3 1 4 2 1

free stroke

i plays rest stroke

2 4 2 1 3 2 1

free stroke

10 9 7 10 8 7 10

10 12 10 9 12 10 9 0 3 2 0 2

i m i m i m i m i m i a m i m i

PIECE AGUADO STUDY

CD TRACK 43

The first two bars are the realisation of our technique builders 1 to 3, so aim to execute them with the exact same fingering and technique. Half

way through bar 3 comes technique builder number 4, so again the same technique applies.

♩ = 58

A7 RS

D

A7 RS

D

N.C. RS

2 2 1

2 2 1

4 3 1 4 2 1

0 4 2 3 2 5 3 0 2 2 0 2

0 4 2 3 2 5 3 0 2 2 0 2

0 4 2 3 2 5 10 9 7 10 8 7

1 p i m a m i a m i p i m a m i m i m i

LESSON: CLASSICAL

PIECE AGUADO STUDY ...CONTINUED

CD TRACK 43

From bar 8 to 11 there is some very specific plucking hand fingering. This is intended to give a good solution towards landing on a rest stroke first finger of the scale in bar 10 (technique builder 5). You will hopefully begin to notice that ascending arpeggios across four strings are played *pima* whereas scales passages are played using alternating *i* and *m* with

the occasional 'a' finger thrown in for strategic purposes. Free stroke is used primarily throughout the study and rest strokes are added to give an accented kick to certain notes. These are indicated 'RS' above the note head. When learned consciously and authentically, fingerings such as this will eventually begin to flow more naturally.

The musical score is divided into four systems, each with a treble staff and a bass staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#).

- System 1 (Bars 8-11):**
 - Bar 8: Treble staff has a G6 chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 3, 4, 5, 3, 7, 2, 0, 5. Plucking: *p i m a m i p i m a m i*.
 - Bar 9: Treble staff has an A7 chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 5, 4, 5, 0, 2, 0, 2, 5. Plucking: *p i m a m i*.
 - Bar 10: Treble staff has a D chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 4, 2, 3, 2, 5, 10, 9, 7, 10, 8, 7. Plucking: *p i m a m i*. Includes 'N.C. RS' (Natural Chord Rest Stroke) above the first note.
 - Bar 11: Treble staff has a G6 chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 5, 4, 5, 3, 7, 2, 0, 5. Plucking: *p i m a m i*.
- System 2 (Bars 12-14):**
 - Bar 12: Treble staff has a D chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 3, 3, 3, 5, 4, 4, 4. Plucking: *p a a a i*.
 - Bar 13: Treble staff has an E/D chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 4, 2, 3, 2, 5, 0, 6, 4, 5, 4, 7. Plucking: *p i m a m*.
 - Bar 14: Treble staff has an A/C# chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 5, 5, 0, 9, 10, 12, 9, 4, 2, 2, 2. Plucking: *p i m a m i m m i a m*. Includes 'RS' (Rest Stroke) above the first note.
- System 3 (Bars 15-17):**
 - Bar 15: Treble staff has an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 10, 12, 10, 9, 12, 10, 9, 11, 3, 2, 0. Plucking: *i m i m i m i a m i m*. Includes 'N.C. RS' (Natural Chord Rest Stroke) above the first note.
 - Bar 16: Treble staff has an A chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 4, 2, 2, 0, 3, 0, 1, 2, 0, 2. Plucking: *p i m a m i a m i*. Includes 'E7 RS' (E7 Chord Rest Stroke) above the first note.
 - Bar 17: Treble staff has an A chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 4, 2, 2, 5, 3, 0, 1, 2, 0, 2. Plucking: *p i m a m i a m i*.
- System 4 (Bars 18-20):**
 - Bar 18: Treble staff has an A chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 5, 4, 2, 0, 3, 2, 0, 4, 2, 2, 2. Plucking: *i m i m i*. Includes 'N.C. RS' (Natural Chord Rest Stroke) above the first note.
 - Bar 19: Treble staff has a D chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 0, 4, 2, 3, 2, 5, 10, 9, 7, 10, 9, 7. Plucking: *p i m a m i*.
 - Bar 20: Treble staff has an A/E chord and an ascending arpeggio. Bass staff has a descending scale. Fingering: 5, 9, 5, 9, 4, 3, 0, 4, 7, 7, 6, 5. Plucking: *p i m a m i sim.*

PIECE AGUADO STUDY ...CONTINUED

CD TRACK 43

Chords: A, N.C., D, N.C., A/E, E7

16

Chords: A, N.C., RS, RS, RS

19 i m i m i m i m i m i m i etc.

Chords: D, A7, RS, D, A7, RS, D, D7, RS, RS

22 p i m a m i m i i

Chords: G, D7, RS, RS, G, D7, RS, RS, G, D

25 sim. p i m a m

Chords: A#dim7, Bm, G6, A7, D

28 p i m a m i p i m a m p i m a m i