

Francisco Tárrega

Pavana



This month our classical maestro **Bridget Mermikides** transcribes a wonderful piece by one of Spain's most respected and celebrated 19th century composers.

ABILITY RATING

● ● ● ● ● Moderate

INFO	WILL IMPROVE YOUR
KEY: C	✓ Melodic phrasing
TEMPO: 58 bpm	✓ Fretting hand slurs
CD: Tracks 32-33	✓ 19th century repertoire

THE SPANISH guitarist-composer Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909) is one of the most important figures in the classical guitar heritage. Tárrega's contribution to the discipline is immense, his compositions (including such works as *Lagrima*, *Danza Mora*, *Capricho Arabe*, and the tremolo piece *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*) are to this day hugely popular among guitarists and their audiences. His studies and technical approaches are vital components of guitar pedagogy, and used by countless guitar teachers and students (see his *Prelude in E minor* in GT issue 181). Tárrega also expanded the guitar repertoire significantly by transcribing and arranging music by other composers including Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert and the piano music of Albeniz, including the iconic *Asturias* (GT149). Incidentally, he also composed what can claim to be the most played


“His studies are vital components of guitar pedagogy, still used by countless guitar teachers and students alike.”

melody of all time, an extract from his *Gran Vals* (GT201) - now known as the *Nokia Tune* - it is heard somewhere in the world over a million times every minute (probably during a guitar recital)!

This month's piece, *Pavana* is one of Tárrega's guitar miniatures; a set of charming pieces that he wrote for himself to perform at his recitals. Written for the guitar by a master

Spanish guitarist it is idiomatic, full of Spanish flavour and captures beautifully the essence of the classical guitar with its E major key signature, slurs, slides and whimsical melody.

The piece has a simple AABA structure. The first A is bars 1-8, the second A bars 9-16, and bars 17 to the end make up the B section. The last A is not written out but you'll notice a 'Da Capo' instruction in the notation, indicating that after the last written bar is played, you return to the top of the piece (Da Capo = from the head) and continue until the 'fine' marking (pronounced fin-nay = end) at the beginning of bar 8.

This is a very rewarding piece to learn, and one of the easier pieces of this series, but still has its challenging moments, particularly in the execution of the all-important slurs, so do use the tab captions. There is also lots of flexibility and opportunity for expression in how you play it, so check out the listening suggestions as well as my performance for inspiration. 



Tárrega: set down many vital guitar playing disciplines

TECHNIQUE FOCUS

PICKING HAND FINGERNAILS

The classical guitar is a fairly quiet instrument and producing a sound that projects requires the use of plucking hand fingernails. This is normal practice among all professional players. The nails should be a length reaching just beyond the end of the fingertip and will need regular shaping, filing and smooth polishing for a good quality tone. All serious players have their own 'nail kit' with a variety of files - some use the glass crystal files for heavier shaping, and then varying degrees of soft files and very fine sand paper. Getting the length and nail shape just right for you, takes practice but is worth pursuing in order to achieve that beautiful tone!



TRACK RECORD Virtuoso David Russell delivers a masterful performance on Tárrega: *Integral de Guitarra* (Complete Works for Guitar) Opera Tres: 1995. For a more introspective approach try Manuel Barrueco's rendition on Tárrega! (2010 Tonar Music). You may also want to check out Anders Øien's performance on his 2009 album, *Recuerdos De Tárrega* (Musikkoperatørene).

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

[Bars 1-3] The first three bars have clear fretting hand fingering indicated by the note heads. Once this is mastered it will see you through much of the piece as this main tune repeats a number of times. The first two melody notes – B to E on the first string – are often played as a glissando where the top E is not plucked. This way of playing is very in keeping with the style. On my version I lightly pluck the high E as a matter of personal taste. Either way is fine! A handy tip for bar 2 is that the third finger of the fretting hand can remain in contact with the second

string when moving from beats 2 to 3 – G# to D#. I call this a 'guide finger'. A 2nd fret barre is needed on beats 3 and 4 of the same bar. On the first beat of bar 3 hold on to the half barre – notes B and G# on the third and first strings while simultaneously executing the bass note ascending arpeggio and follow the fretting hand fingering. This requires a stretch for the fretting hand. On the last beat of bar 3 there is a double-stop glissando (slide) into the E and C# notes. Keep this slide swift and light sounding – it is a light embellishment, not a big feature.

♩ = 85 approx

5

10

15

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

[Bars 16-36] Half way through bar 16 is where the second section begins. It starts with the grace note D# to F# - again this slide should be played lightly and quickly. On beat 1 of bar 17 hang on to the two lower harmony notes (C# and E) while playing the descending quaver melody line. Wherever the bass or harmony

notes are written as minims (two-beat notes) they should be sustained for two beats underneath the melody, so pay attention to the notation as well as the tab for a full understanding of the music. Aim for nice, crisp hammer-ons and pull-offs wherever they occur as they add grace to the melody lines.

20

B F#sus4 F#7 G#msus4 G#m B/F# F#7

E 0 2 4 0 2 4 6 7 7 6 12 11 12 14 12 6 9 7 11 9 7 6 4 2 4 2
 B 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 G 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 D 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 A 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 E 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2

24

B F#7/C# F#9 Badd9 B E E6 F#7

E 0 4 7 7 7 6 4 4 6 4 2 0 0 4 7 9 7 9 7 2 5 3
 B 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 G 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 D 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 A 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 E 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2

28

B F#sus4 F#7 G#msus4 G#m B/F# F#7

E 0 2 4 0 2 4 6 7 7 6 12 11 12 14 12 6 9 7 11 9 7 6 4 2 4 2
 B 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 G 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 D 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 A 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 E 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2

32

B

E 0 0 2 4 5 2 4 2 4 0 2 4 5 2 4 5 7 5 7 4 0 7 9 10 7 9 11 9 7 10 7 8 9 7 9
 B 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 G 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 D 1 4 5 6 4 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 A 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2
 E 2 4 6 6 6 8 11 9 7 5 4 4 3 4 2

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 33

[Bars 37 to end] Here's the return of the main theme. Listen to the audio to form an idea of how to play bar the slowing down (rit) and returning to the original

speed (a tempo) in bar 36. I hope you've enjoyed playing this charming piece and look forward to transcribing another one for you next month!

36

40

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