

Giacomo Puccini

Nessun Dorma



There's a real treat this month as **Bridget Mermikides** brings you a solo guitar arrangement of a tune made famous by the greatest tenor of them all.

ABILITY RATING

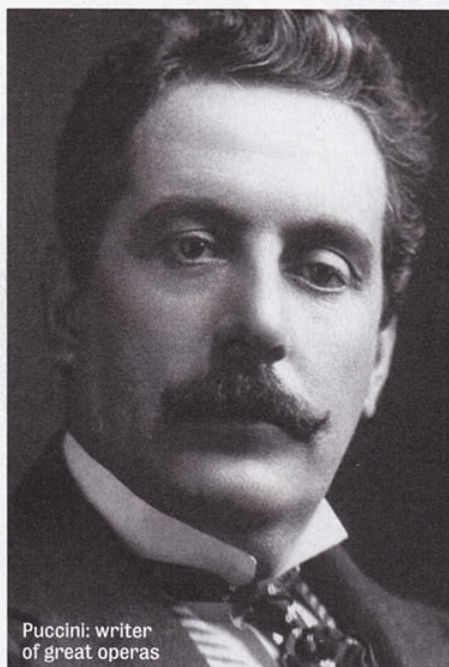


Moderate

INFO	WILL IMPROVE YOUR
KEY: D	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melody & accompaniment
TEMPO: 60 bpm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classical guitar technique
CD: TRACK 31	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General repertoire

THIS MONTH we are looking at an extremely popular classical piece that is loved by music critics, opera aficionados and the general public alike. It is the short but devastatingly beautiful aria: Giacomo Puccini's *Nessun Dorma* (None Shall Sleep). It is one of the most famous tenor arias of all time and its popularity has spread far beyond the usual opera audience thanks to Luciano Pavarotti's famous rendition for the 1990 FIFA World Cup in Italy; Paul Potts' winning performance on Britain's *Got Talent*; versions by numerous artists of all styles (including Russell Watson, Aretha Franklin, Michael Bolton and Jeff Beck); and film soundtracks (*Bend It Like Beckham*, *The Sum Of All Fears* and *The Killing Fields*).

Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini (1858-1924) was an Italian composer who wrote more operas than he had middle names - including *La Bohème*, *Tosca* and *Madame Butterfly*. These have remained hugely popular and frequently performed since their composition. *Turandot*, from which *Nessun Dorma* appears in its final




Puccini: writer of great operas

act, is Puccini's last work and was left unfinished when he succumbed to throat cancer due to his chain-smoking. The opera is based on a Persian fairy-tale translocated to ancient China (Puccini was novel in the use of exotic locales in Italian opera) and the aria is sung by Calaf (an 'unknown prince') when he falls in love with the beautiful but unattainable princess *Turandot*. The Prince's aria starts with reflective sorrow as he muses on the princess, and builds as his hope of winning her grows until the climactic defiant "*Vincéro*" ("I will win") sung on a B note at the top of the tenor's range, which leaves few listeners unmoved.

This arrangement keeps the original key of D major but I've used a drop D and drop G

tuning on the sixth and fifth strings respectively. Not only does this really help with fingering, but it also enhances the guitar's resonance, adding real gravitas to the piece.

This arrangement combines many orchestral parts onto a solo guitar but I've aimed to maintain the essence of the piece and use the guitar to the best of its abilities. The challenge here is to create a flowing melody while maintaining an accompaniment. This is tricky and it's really important to know the melody of the aria in order to play it effectively and create the sense of 'line' in the performance - so do listen to the opera version a few times in order to fully absorb it. There are some very natural ebbs and flows in the piece that are essential to the expression in the music, but in order to play them effectively the arrangement has to be really secure so take your time with each bar, and use the tab captions to help improve your technique.

Nessun Dorma is a wonderful piece to learn, both popular and effective, and I really hope you enjoy playing it. Just make sure you don't cry all over your guitar. See you next time for some more popular classics! 

TECHNIQUE FOCUS

FREE STROKE, REST STROKE

Two common picking techniques in classical guitar are free stroke and rest stroke. With rest stroke the picking finger plucks a string and then comes to rest against the adjacent one. With the thumb this is the next string down (towards the floor) and with fingers it's the next string up (towards the face). With free stroke the finger doesn't rest on an adjacent string after plucking, but floats free until it's required to pick again. Rest stroke is often favoured for single note playing, while free stroke is for polyphonic playing (chords and arpeggios).

“We keep the original key of D but use drop D and drop G on the 6th and 5th strings”



TRACK RECORD The most famous renditions of *Nessun Dorma* are most probably by the tenor Luciano Pavarotti. You'll find one on Pavarotti's *Greatest Hits* (Decca) and also on the *3 Tenors* project with Jose Carreras and Plácido Domingo. The popularity of *Nessun Dorma* has attracted others to create arrangements, for example Jeff Beck's version from his *Emotion And Commotion* album.

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 31

[Bars 10-14] As the big famous melody begins at bar 10 the accompaniment introduces 16th notes. Although this does not occur in the original score, it fits really well on the guitar and adds to the drama of the music as a solo performance. At the height of this section (bar 14) there's a big fretting hand

stretch between the low F# and high A. The low F# should be held to sustain through the bar. If this proves too awkward, the low F# can be played an octave higher on the 4th fret of the fourth string. The accompaniment notes will need to be re-jigged somewhat, but this is easy to do.



The guitar score for Track 31 consists of five systems of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 2/4. The score includes a melody line and a guitar accompaniment line with fret numbers. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: Em9, D/A, A7, G, Gsus2, Daug/F#, G, Daug, G, Daug, G, D, Dmaj9/F#, G, G/F#, Em, Gmaj7, A, Bm11, A/C#, A, G5, D/F#.

System 1 (Measures 15-16): Em9, D/A, A7. The melody line starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The guitar accompaniment line starts with a half note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3.

System 2 (Measures 17-18): G, Gsus2, Daug/F#, G, Daug. The melody line starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The guitar accompaniment line starts with a half note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3.

System 3 (Measures 19-20): G, Daug, G, D, Dmaj9/F#. The melody line starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The guitar accompaniment line starts with a half note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3.

System 4 (Measures 21-22): G, G/F#, Em, Gmaj7. The melody line starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The guitar accompaniment line starts with a half note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3.

System 5 (Measures 23-24): A, Bm11, A/C#, A, G5, D/F#. The melody line starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The guitar accompaniment line starts with a half note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3.

PLAYING TIPS

CD TRACK 31

[Bars 16-18] Again, keep some separation between the sound of the melody and the accompaniment - try adding expression to the tune but keeping the backing 'straight'. After the pause on beat 4 of bar 16, keep the tone sweet and simple in bar 17 and 18 and allow the melody to stand out again at the end of bar 18.

[Bar 30 to end] The climax occurs at the end of bar 30, emphasised by three accents. Although we cannot emulate the magnitude of Pavarotti, we can capture the beauty very successfully as a solo piece. The last five bars give a last rendition of the theme and end finally on the expressive sounding D chord.

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a treble clef staff and a six-string guitar tablature staff below it. Chord diagrams are placed above the staff at the beginning of each system.

- System 1 (Bars 27-29):** Chords are Em9, D/A, A7, and G. The tablature shows various fret numbers and fingerings.
- System 2 (Bars 30-32):** Chords are D, G, and G/F#. The tablature continues with more complex fingerings.
- System 3 (Bars 33-35):** Chords are Em, Em9, A, Bm11, A, A6, G, and D. The tablature concludes the piece.

BACK ISSUES LOOK WHAT YOU'VE MISSED!

Missed a copy of Guitar Techniques? Order a back copy now, but hurry – stock is limited



SPRING GT190

HOW TO PLAY A GREAT SOLO!

It's every guitarist's desire to leave 'em weeping in the stalls at your stunning solo. Follow John Wheatcroft's instructions and that could be you. Also: Dire Straits' Money For Nothing and Yngwie Malmsteen's Beyond The Sun tabbed!



MAY GT 191

STRING BENDING AND VIBRATO MASTERCLASS!

Play great notes but spoil them with dodgy vibrato and string bending? Then Jim Clark's feature will help sort you out! Tabbed: Joe Walsh's Life's Been Good and Emotions Wound Us So by Larry Carlton. Top issue!



JUNE GT 192

ALL RIGHT NOW!

We transcribe one of rock's all-time classic tracks and one of the best pub band numbers of all time! Plus there's a brilliant feature to hone your picking skills, a great arrangement of the William Tell Overture and Gene Vincent's rocker, Race With The Devil tabbed.

TO ORDER BACK ISSUES: Call 0844 848 2852 or visit www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

Please do not call or email the magazine directly as we cannot deal with subscriptions or back issues.

We regret that we cannot photocopy transcriptions from back issues

Each back issue costs (including postage and packing) ■ UK: £5.25 ■ Europe: £6.25 ■ Rest of the world: £7.25