

# Matteo Carcassi Opus 60 no.6



For the sixth in her series of intermediate level classical guitar lessons, **Bridget Mermikides** returns with another piece by the Italian guitarist and composer Matteo Carcassi...

MATTEO CARCASSI ACHIEVED fame in his lifetime both as a performer and a teacher, and his Complete Method for Guitar remains valuable, relevant and widely used today. The 25 Studies, Opus 60 are widely available and are standard repertoire for students and professional performers around the world.

This article follows on from last month with the use of simultaneously played rest stroke finger and free stroke thumb technique. However, we are now introducing the idea of two or more independent musical lines (or polyphony) rather than just a melody and bass line or simple arpeggio pattern. In this study, the bass line becomes as important as the top line, and requires a developed thumb technique. When practising the piece, become familiar with both top and bottom melody lines so you can play them separately; and make sure you can hear them both at all times.

The technique exercises that precede the main transcription are designed to pinpoint and highlight some key features of the piece and give simple examples with detailed instruction on how to practise them. They should be followed very precisely in order to gain the most benefit.

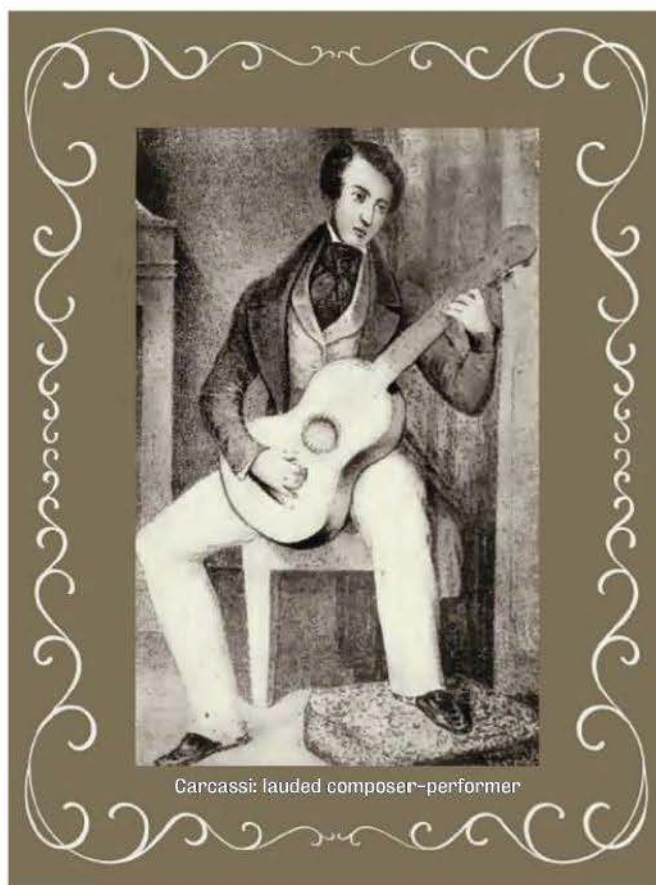
As ever, be patient and enjoy the learning process rather than rushing towards your end goal.

## ABILITY RATING



Moderate

INFO	WILL IMPROVE YOUR
KEY: C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Free stroke thumb technique
TEMPO: Various	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Combining thumb and fingers
CD: TRACKS 43-47	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Polyphonic voice leading



Carcassi: lauded composer-performer

Preparation: Polyphony is where two or more independent melody lines of music appear in the same texture. In Exercise 1 we have a moving bass line and upper melody notes. This is reminiscent of the beginning of the piece and points out the basic techniques; the thumb is nicely featured as the main moving part and should be played free stroke (the digit follows through and does not come to rest on the adjacent string). A full and warm tone should be the goal for the thumb with the right wrist arched fairly high for get a good angle of attack. The upper notes are played with the fingers and should be rest stroke where

possible (the digit comes to rest on the adjacent string) but on the first beat of the bar only. Free stroke is needed on beat 3 due to the thumb playing the fourth string; we do not want to mute it.

In Exercise 2 this two-part writing is now reversed; the moving line is now on top and played with the fingers, and longer notes are in the bass, played with the thumb. Thumb again is free stroke and this time the fingers will play all free stroke except for the open E note which will be rest stroke. This teaches the plucking hand fingers to switch easily between free and rest stroke - taking care not to alter the picking hand position or forearm. The bass notes should last a full two beats each which means holding down the fretting hand finger for the full duration of each note. It does not mean holding them down for longer than their allocated time; there should be no over-ringing of these notes, just seamless connection.

For Exercise 3: again we have two voices here and this exercise represents the technique that

would be appropriate in bars 24/25 of the study. Use a strong rest stroke for the top notes and hold on to it whilst executing the bass notes with the thumb. The upper note must sustain over the moving bass line. ■

“The technique exercises that precede the main transcription are designed to highlight some key features of the piece and how to practise them”



**TRACK RECORD** Award winning David Tanenbaum is chair of the guitar department at San Francisco Conservatory and has been artist in residence at the Manhattan Music School. Along with many recordings featuring modern classical guitar repertoire he has also produced a range of albums in the more traditional style. His Estudios - Carcassi, Sor & Brouwer comes highly recommended.

**EXERCISE 1 MOVING BASS WITH UPPER MELODY**

**CD TRACK 44**

Here are three short exercises that will prepare you for the Matteo Carcassi's Opus 60 No 6.

In particular, focus on clarity between the two parts augmented by free strokes and rest strokes.

$\text{♩} = 60 + 95$

Free stroke thumb  
Rest stroke finger  
Free stroke thumb & finger  
Do not allow bass notes to over-ring when changing strings

E B G D A E

m p p p i p p p m p p p i p p p

**EXERCISE 2 REVERSING EXERCISE 1**

**CD TRACK 45**

Fingers and thumb both play Free stroke except for the E, which is Rest stroke  
Rest stroke  
Hold bass notes for 2 full beats

E B G D A E

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

**EXERCISE 3 REST STROKE STUDY**

**CD TRACK 46**

Rest stroke fingers  
Hold notes down for 2 full beats:  
Free stroke thumb

E B G D A E

m p p p m p





# LESSON: CLASSICAL

## EXAMPLE OPUS 60, NO 6

## CD TRACK 47

The first eight bars should use free stroke in the thumb with a good strong tone (as Ex 1) and, where possible, rest stroke in the fingers. The thumb, which is often neglected, gets a good workout here and the fingers should get used to the feeling of switching between rest stroke and free stroke. Aim to balance

the tone and volume evenly between the two parts. The plucking hand should also strive to adopt a position that does not deviate much from one physical position. Aim to avoid excess movement of the hand and forearm, working the fingers and thumb from their base knuckle and finger joints.

$\text{♩} = 95$  C F/A Dm G/B G C/E

*mf*  
*p* (on repeat)

1, 9  
m p p p p p p p

C A D/F# G Em C D G

5, 13

G/B G Am D D/F# G

17

G/B E/G# E Am D/F# D G Em C Am G Am G D G7

21

*mf* *a tempo* *mp*

25

*rall* - - -

The musical score is written for guitar in 4/4 time with a tempo of 95 beats per minute. It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble clef staff and a six-string guitar staff below it. The guitar staff shows fingerings (0-4) and picking patterns (m, p, i, p, p, p, p, p). Chords are indicated above the treble staff: C, F/A, Dm, G/B, G, C/E, A, D/F#, Em, D, D/F#, G, E/G#, E, Am, D/F#, D, G, Em, C, Am, G, Am, G, D, G7. Dynamics include *mf*, *p* (on repeat), *mf* *a tempo*, and *mp*. A *rall* (rallentando) marking appears at the end of the fourth system. The score is numbered 1, 9, 5, 13, 17, 21, and 25 at the beginning of each system.

EXAMPLE OPUS 60, NO 6...CONTINUED

CD TRACK 47

There is a lot of scale-like movement in this piece and the aim should be to play smooth flowing lines throughout. To achieve this effect we must work on connecting one note to the next without making them seem detached or staccato (cut off quickly). At the other end of the scale we must also not

allow notes to over-ring when changing strings. As you can see, getting the articulation and note lengths just right is a crucial ingredient to sounding great. It is this kind of attention to detail that makes all the difference, so try to ensure that you get each section right before moving on.

Chords: C, A, Dm, C, G7, C, A

Measure 29: *mp* *f*

E B G D A E

0 2 3 2 0 3 2 3 0 1 3 0 1 0 0 1 3 5 3

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

Chords: Dm, G, C, A, C/G, G7, C, A

Measure 33: *mp* *f*

E B G D A E

1 3 0 1 3 1 0 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 0 1 3 5 3

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

Chords: Dm, G, C, C7, F/A, A7, C/G, Am, G7, C, Fdim/C

Measure 37: *1/2 Cl*

E B G D A E

1 3 0 1 3 1 0 1 2 1 3 0 1 0 0 3 1 0 3 1 0

0 3 0 2 3 2 0 3 2 1 1 0 2 0 3 2 0 3 3 3

Chords: C, G7/C, C, Fdim/C, C, G7/C, C, Fdim/C, C, G7/C

Measure 41: *dim* *p*

E B G D A E

0 3 1 3 0 3 0 0 3 1 0 3 1 0 0 3 1 0 3

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Chords: C, Fdim/C, C, G7/C, C, Fm, C

Measure 45: *rall* *f a tempo* *sf lento* *mp*

E B G D A E

0 0 1 0 0 0 1 0 3 8 1 0 0 1 0 0

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