

# **Giuliani 120+**

*by*

*Christopher Davis*

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## ABOUT THIS BOOK

### Why the 120 Studies?

Classical guitarists spend a lot of time playing right hand arpeggios. Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829) knew this, and his own music made extensive use of arpeggios. Its no wonder is very first opus number includes the 120 right hand studies.

Today these studies are still an essential part of any classical guitarist's curriculum. As an undergraduate guitar major, I worked extensively with the 120 studies. It's my pleasure to present this book, an expansion of Giuliani's work with additional arpeggio exercises and text.

In this book you'll find all of the 120 studies in standard notation, additional studies, practice suggestions, and a few ways to take Giuliani further. The studies are grouped into Levels. All studies in this book are listed with their original numbers next to them. Additional studies are presented at the end of levels one, two, and three where necessary.

### About the Levels

The groups of this book are based on two things: difficulty and purpose. The first groups are all what I call simple repeated patterns. The first covers three finger arpeggios (*p i m, p m i, p i a*, etc.). The second group covers three finger arpeggios with a repeated finger (*p i m i, p a i a*, etc.). The third group covers four finger arpeggios (*p i m a, p a m i*, etc.).

From there it gets a bit more complicated. Levels 4-6 are divided into two halves. The halves labeled "a" involve only one finger at a time; the halves labeled "b" involve combinations of fingers such as playing *p* and *i* together. Level seven contains the final, most virtuosic studies.

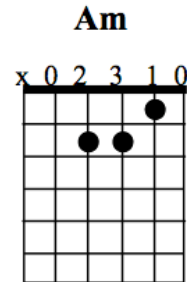
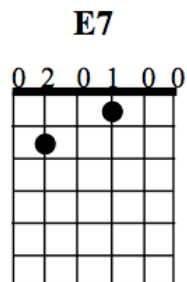
The original study numbers are retained only for your reference; because of the reordering they do not have much significance in this book.

## About the Notation

The notation of the studies found in this book is largely a product of my own personal preferences. Right hand fingerings are located above the staff whenever possible. If there are multiple notes being played at once, the right fingerings are stacked and correspond to the order of the notes below them.

For the most part I've avoided putting in left hand fingerings. However, some of the more complex studies required them. The major reason for this is because the left hand is not extremely important. In fact, if you're having trouble with a particular study, I suggest you drop the left hand completely; keep all the right hand fingerings the same (same strings, etc.) but just drop the left hand.

Another option for the left hand is to change the chords, or just keep the same chord throughout. Any open chords will work just fine. Be sure to keep the right hand the same for each study. Beginners will probably have an easier time use chords such as E7 and Am (below).



## About the Author

Christopher Davis began his musical education in fifth grade with clarinet. At fourteen, inspired by Black Sabbath and Metallica, Chris picked up the guitar.

Chris holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Guitar Performance and Music Business from Drake University, and is currently pursuing graduate studies in guitar performance. His primary instructors have included Scott Dalziel, Phil DeLong, and Stanley Yates. Chris has performed in masterclass for world-renowned artists such as the Assad brothers and Christopher Parkening.

# ARPEGGIO TECHNIQUE

## What We Can Learn from Anatomy

Any guitarist that has been playing for a while knows that using *m* and *a* is not easy. The two fingers seem to be fighting each other. This is due to the way our hands are built. The tendons in the hand work in essentially three units: the thumb, the index finger, and the rest. This can be viewed as a limitation or advantage. I choose to see it as an advantage. In the text below you'll find an explanation of developing arpeggio technique from the beginning to more advanced stages.

## Using *m* and *a* - The Compound Stroke

The studies in this book include brackets over some combination of *m* and *a* in succession. This is meant to indicate a compound stroke.

A compound stroke is the movement of two fingers as one. Try this: play *m* and *a* together; simply snap off any two strings with a free stroke. Easy, huh? Now put a bit of tension on *a* so it lags behind *m*. It should feel just like rolling a chord with two fingers. This is a compound stroke.

We can use this to our advantage and it can be practiced and developed so it's just as in control as any other two fingers in succession. The compound stroke is most useful at moderate to high tempos; at slow tempos it is not very useful.

There are two stages of the compound stroke. The first, as I'll explain below, is where *m* and *a* both prepare on their respective strings at the same time. This first stage works exactly as described above: by putting a bit of extra tension of the trailing finger (*m* or *a*). The second stage is a bit different. The trailing finger (*m* or *a*) does not prepare on the string. Instead, *m* and *a* extend together and the trailing finger hovers above the strings, and as the leading finger plays through the string it pulls the trailing finger onto its string, then the second finger plays. Another way to look at it is below.

**Stage 1:**

*m a plant* ..... *m plays* ..... *a plays*  
bit of tension on *a*

**Stage 2:**

*m plants* ..... *m plays* ..... *a plays*  
*a* extends beyond its string                      motion of *m* pulls *a* onto its string

The various stages are incorporated into the development of arpeggio technique below. The compound stroke can be used at any stage of arpeggio development.

For events such as *m a m* or *a m a* the first of the two should be played as a compound stroke, followed by a return of the first finger. A bracket over the right hand fingering indicates each instance of a compound stroke in this book.

**Developing Arpeggio Technique**

The eventual goal of developing arpeggio technique is to get to a fully sequential system of playing. This creates a much more legato and pleasant sound. But why do we prepare or plant a finger on the string in the first place? The biggest reason is accuracy: it is very hard to miss a string if the finger is already on it. The next big reason is tone. A well-developed arpeggio technique will prepare the finger on the string at a precise contact point and give a great tone.

There are several different stages that guitarists go through to develop a fully sequential technique. The studies in this book can be practiced with any sort of technique.

**Block Planting**

Prepare all the fingers for the arpeggio at once. So for the arpeggio *p i m*:

*p* plays ..... *i* plays ..... *m* plays ..... *a* plays  
*p i m* and *a* plant on their respective strings                      a bit of tension on *a* (compound stroke)

## **Planting in Two Units**

In this version of technique requires the hand to work in two units: *p* and *ima*. As *p* plays, *ima* extend and plant. So for *p i m a* again:

<i>p</i> plays.....	<i>i</i> plays .....	<i>m</i> plays .....	<i>a</i> plays
<i>i a</i> and <i>m</i> extend & plant			a bit of tension on <i>a</i>

## **Planting in Three Units**

Now we plant in three units. It's important to note that from here on out *ima* will always extend together. However, now we break down the planting in three units: *p*, *i*, and *ma*. For *p i m a* again:

<i>p</i> plays.....	<i>i</i> plays .....	<i>m</i> plays .....	<i>a</i> plays
<i>i m</i> and <i>a</i> extend	<i>m a</i> plant		a bit of tension on <i>a</i>
<i>i</i> plants			

## **Full Sequential**

The final stage of arpeggio technique combines the above planting in three units with a stage two compound stroke. For *p i m a* again.

<i>p</i> plays.....	<i>i</i> plays .....	<i>m</i> plays .....	<i>a</i> plays
<i>i m</i> and <i>a</i> extend	<i>m</i> plants	<i>a</i> is pulled onto the string	
<i>i</i> plants	<i>a</i> extends beyond its string	by the movement of <i>m</i>	

Certain arpeggios in the 120 studies are more suited for full sequential planting. A good starting point, if you're not comfortable with the methods listed above, is to block plant all ascending arpeggio sections and sequentially plant all descending. From there work towards full sequential planting.

## PRACTICE STRATEGIES

There's many ways to practice. I don't think practicing with a metronome and notching it up is the most effective way to increase speed and ability. Some metronome use is unavoidable, but it should be a portion of your practice. A metronome is not the center of all practicing. Presented here are some more practice suggestions. It's up to the player to decide which is most effective and which strategies should be incorporated into regular practice. These strategies are described in relation to the arpeggio studies present here, however, the strategies are equally effective for any piece or study.

### Slow/Fast

There's a reason this is the first practice strategy presented: it works. Simply, play the study slow, and then play it fast (about twice as fast as the slow version). To develop this strategy, work the ration of slow to fast down to 1:1.

Start with 3 or 4 slow for each fast version, then 2:1 and finally 1:1. After 1:1 is reached add in more fast versions. Something 1 slow then 2 fast.

### Isolate

Almost every study in the 120 consists of a repeating pattern. Find it and isolate it. Practice only the pattern independent of any left hand things (just use open strings).

There's several ways to develop an isolated arpeggio pattern:

1. Move the thumb to different strings.
2. Move the entire pattern across strings.
3. Start with a different finger:  $p i m$  becomes  $i m p$  then  $m p i$ .
4. Accent a different finger, play the other fingers quietly. For  $p i m$ : play  $p$  loud, and  $i$  and  $m$  soft. Play  $p$  soft,  $i$  loud, and  $m$  soft. Play  $p$  and  $i$  soft, and  $m$  loud.
5. Play fingers on the same string. For  $p i m$ :  $p$  and  $i$  play on the same string,  $m$  plays on a different string,  $p$  on a different string,  $i$  and  $m$  on the same.
6. Use slow/fast or any of the other practice strategies listed.



## Rhythmic Alteration

One of the biggest challenges in playing anything is rhythmic precision. Altering the rhythm of a given pattern or study can help even out rhythms. In addition, altering rhythm can create small bursts of speed, which is great for developing overall arpeggio ability and speed.

The simplest rhythmic alteration is to swing the rhythm. That is, alternating long and short rhythmic values. Long - short - long - short - long, etc. Or short - long - short - long - short, etc. In notation it might look like a dotted eighth, followed by a sixteenth (for the long-short) or sixteenth followed by a dotted eighth (for short-long).

There are no limits to rhythmic alterations. Try anything; keep what works. There are some suggests below. The first is for three note groups (ala triplets), and the second is for four note groups (like 16ths).



## Dynamics

Playing loud feels different than playing normally; playing soft feels different as well. Practicing a study *ff*, or as loud as possible, is a great way to practice any of the 120 studies. In the same way, practicing *pp*, or as quiet as possible, is great too.

The next step is to practice with graduated dynamics. Start quiet and crescendo through a study. Or start loud and decrescendo through it. Then combine both: crescendo to the halfway point, then decrescendo. Or start loud and decrescendo to the halfway point then crescendo.

## **Thunk Practice**

Hold your left hand lightly over all the strings, and play the study as normal (no left hand fingers, obviously). This gives a nice, thunk sound. This way of practicing is a great way to hear rhythmic inaccuracies.

Another version is to finger the study as normal, but don't press down the fingers, just lightly rest them on the strings at the correct frets. Let open strings ring normally, and play the study. This is a great way to nail a relaxed feeling in the left hand.

## **Awareness Practice**

Sometimes the easiest and most effective thing to do is to just pay attention. Listen carefully to what's going on. Many times technique practice turns into zone-out time. Focus carefully on the right hand and it might fix more problems than any of the other practice strategies combined.

Another option is to zoom in focus on just one finger of the right hand. Pay close attention to what that finger does. The same can be done for the left hand if necessary.

## **Which Practice Strategy Should I Use?**

I don't know. I know that, for me, slow/fast is the most effective arpeggio practice technique. I know that I also like thunk practice a lot. It's up to you to experiment and find out what works.

Don't try to use every practice strategy every on a single study. And don't fix what isn't broken. If a study is not giving you trouble, then practice strategies might not even be needed.

## **How Do I Get Fast?**

Playing fast is more of a feeling than a technique. When you play fast your technique goes into overdrive. One common misconception is that whatever works slow will work fast. It might work, but there's a good chance it will not.

To that end, one of the best ways to get fast is to play fast. Which is why I like slow/fast practice so much. You'll be playing fast from day 1. Playing slow is like programming, playing fast is like the execution--running the program.

The advantage of slow/fast is that it's easy to build up a relaxed, continuous fast playing. After a fast burst, there's an immediate return to slow playing and all tension from the fast playing should be released. As I mentioned above, the fast bursts can be added up, creating two or three fast repetitions in a row followed by a return to slow playing. Only play fast for as long as you can maintain relaxation, and slowly push your limits.

Rhythmic alteration also builds in small bursts of speed, which is great for developing overall speed.

## **TAKING GIULIANI FURTHER**

At some point you'll run out of studies; you'll be able to play every study fluently at an appropriate tempo. At that point, it'll be time to take Giuliani further.

### **The Thumb**

If you want to really have some fun with the 120 studies, focus on the thumb. Make every note value for the thumb precise. This means jumping around a lot and damping every bass note after its value has expired. It means coordinating your thumb to work almost independently. This is not easy, especially on more complex studies.

### **Polyphony**

The polyphony, or music in more than one voice, in the 120 studies is always present. I attempted to indicate this with stem directions and various voices. However, it made some things more complex to read. I ended up removing much of the stems and other elements for the sake of rhythmic clarity and overall readability.

The studies, especially those in the "b" levels, are polyphonic. There's a melody and an accompaniment. Bring out the melody or play it alone; bring out the bass or play it alone. There are many options, but the main idea is to treat the studies as you would treat any piece of music.

### **Make the Left Hand More Difficult**

Just switch up the chords, make them more complex. Push how far you can focus on the right hand patterns and still get a clean sound from the left hand.

There's also the option to combine open strings with chord shapes, Villa-lobos style.

## **PRACTICE SCHEDULES**

The goal of most guitarists is to play music. To that end, technique practice, such as the Giuliani 120+, should only make up a small portion of your practice time. I would suggest spending no more than 25% of your total practice time on technical exercises.

The levels presented in this book can easily be practiced in a short period of time. Levels one through three are the most fundamental studies, and should be practiced consistently. Developing a three day rotation helps with this: day 1: level I; day 2: level II; day 3: level III; day 4: level I, etc. You'll eventually get levels one through three down to a minimal time, and then other levels can be added in. Try focusing on one level at a time. Level IV contains two groups, IVa and IVb. Alternate between them on different days. Level V, however, contains three groups, and a three-day rotation can be developed.

After practicing the studies for a while, you'll notice that some come easier to you. Others are going to be hard. Set the hard studies aside for daily practice and additional work. Eventually you'll have a group of studies that give you trouble and can be practiced every day.

### **Do You Like This Book?**

Share it. That's right, I'm saying it's okay to email Giuliani 120+ to your classical guitarist friends. Just let them know where you got it!

Thanks! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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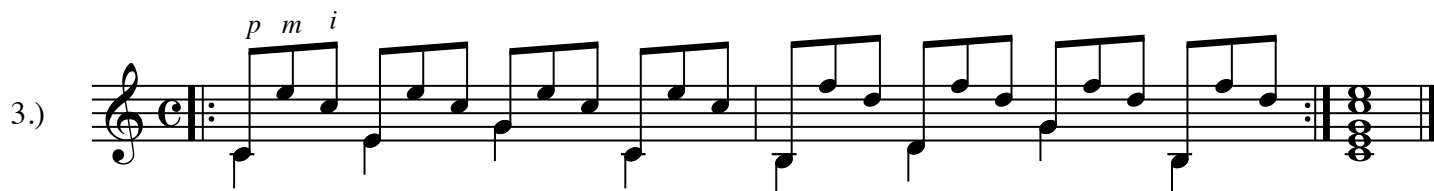
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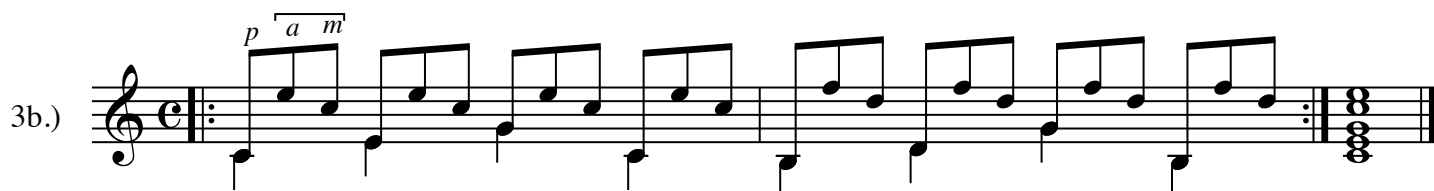
# Level I

1.) 

2.) 

2b.) 

3.) 

3b.) 

4.) 

5.) 

6.) *p m i*

### Additional Studies

*p i a*

*p i a*

*p a i*

*p a i*

# Level II

81.) *p i m i*

82.) *p m i m*

## Additional Studies

*p i m i*

*p m i m*

*p i a i*

*p a i a*

*p i a i*



*p a i a*

A musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth notes with lyrics 'p a i a' above it. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

*p m a m*

A musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth notes with lyrics 'p m a m' above it. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

*p a m a*

A musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth notes with lyrics 'p a m a' above it. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

*p m a m*

A musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth notes with lyrics 'p m a m' above it. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

*p a m a*

A musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth notes with lyrics 'p a m a' above it. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

# Level III

86.) *p a i m*

87.) *p i m a*

88.) *p a m i*

92.) *p i m a*

93.) *a m i p*

## Additional Studies

*p m i a*

*p m a i*

*p*  $\overline{i a m}$

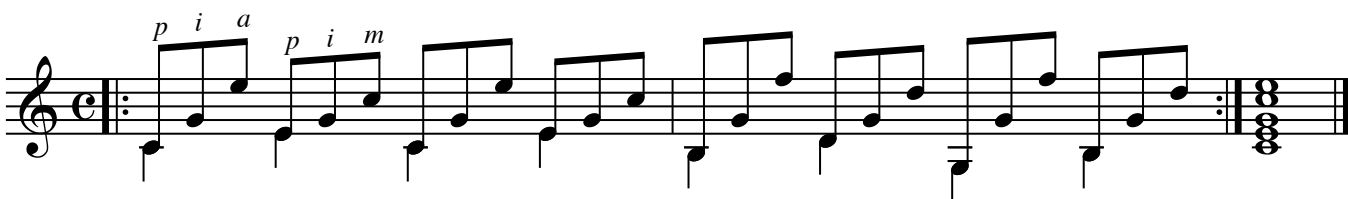
*p*  $\overline{a i m}$

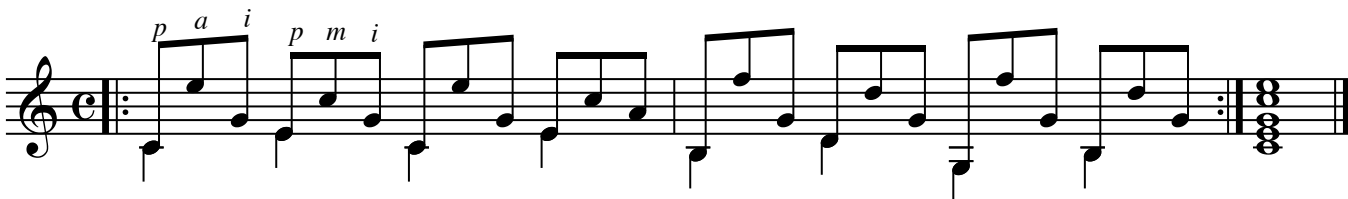
*p*  $\overline{m i a}$

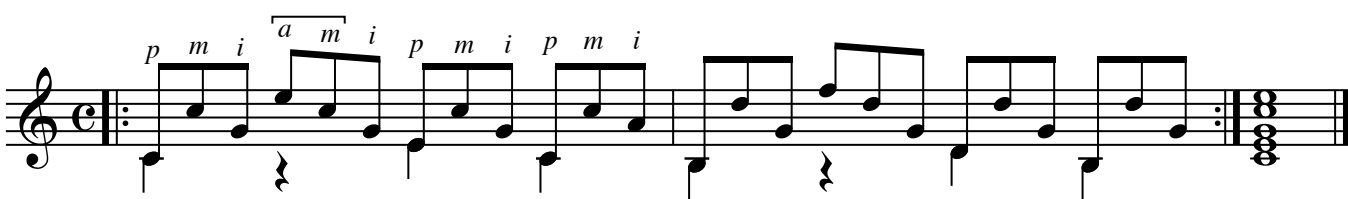
*p*  $\overline{m a i}$

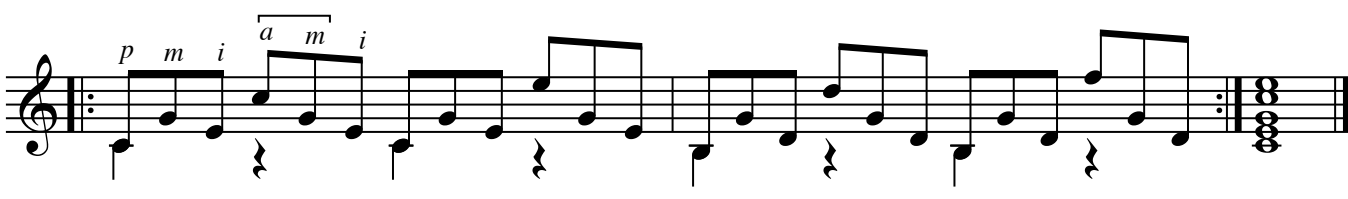
*p*  $\overline{i a m}$

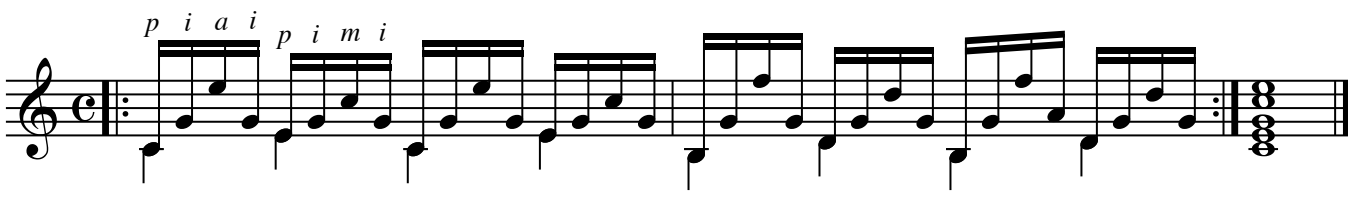
# Level IVa

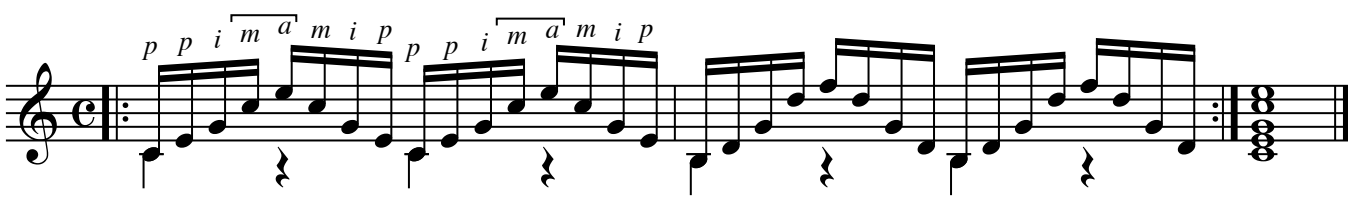
7.) 

8.) 

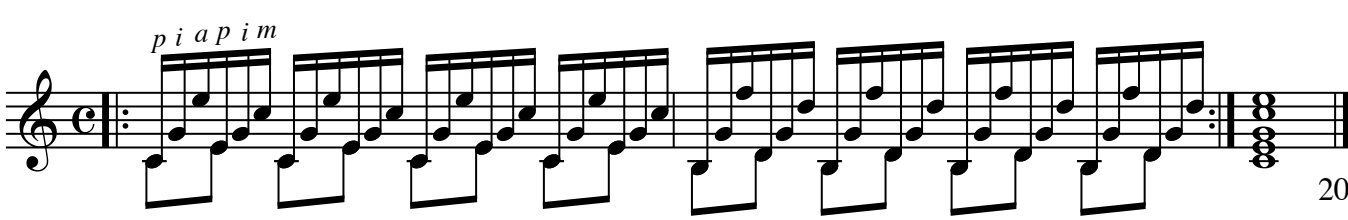
10.) 

16.) 

85.) 

89.) 

90.) 

33.) 

# Level IVb

11.)

12.)

13.)

14.)

15.)


83.)

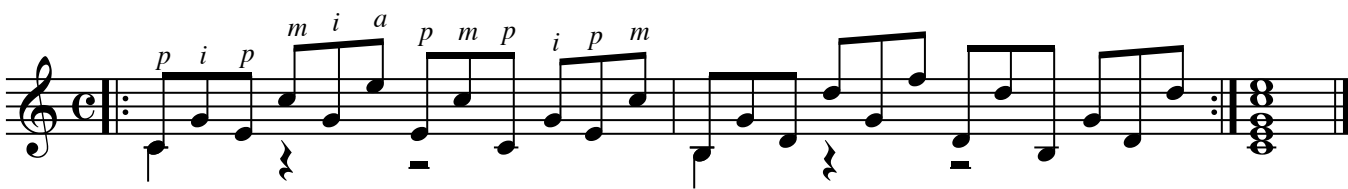
84.)

104.)

105.)


# Level Va

9.) 

17.) 

25.) 

26.) 

27.) 

28.) 

29.) 

30.) *p i p m i a p a i m p i*

31.) *p i m a m i*

32.) *p a m i m a*

34.) *p i p i m a p i p i m a*

35.) *p a m a m i*

# Level Vb

group 1

18.) *a*  
*m*  
*p* *p* *i*

19.) *a*  
*m*  
*p* *p* *i*

20.) *a*  
*m*  
*p* *p* *i*

21.) *a* *a*  
*m* *m*  
*p* *p* *i*

22.) *a* *a*  
*m* *m*  
*p* *p* *i*

23.) *a* *a*  
*m* *m*  
*p* *p* *i*

24.) *a* *a* *a*  
*m* *m* *m*  
*p* *p* *i*



111.)

112.)

# Level Vb

group 2

66.) *a m p p i p*

67.) *p a m p i p*

68.) *p p a m i p*

69.) *p p i a m p*

70.) *a m p a m p i p*

71.) *p a m p a m i p*

72.) *p p a m a m i p*

73.) *a m p p i a m p*

74.) *a m p* *p* *a m i* *p*

75.) *p* *a m p* *i* *a m p*

76.) *a m p* *a m p* *a m i* *p*

77.) *p* *a m p* *a m i* *a m p*

78.) *a m p* *p* *a m i* *a m p*

79.) *a m p* *a m p* *i* *a m p*

80.) *a m p* *a m p* *a m i* *a m p*

113.) *m i p* *p* *m i p* *p*

114.) *m i p* *p* *p* *m i p*

# Level Via

91.) *p* *m̄ a m* *i m p i* *p* *p i m̄ a m i p*

94.) *p m i p* *p m i p* *P*

95.) *p m i* *m i m i* *p i p i* *p i p i*

96.) *p i p m* *p a m i*

97.) *i a p m* *i p i p* *i a p m* *i p i p*

98.) *p i m i* *P i m i*

99.) *m i p i* *m i p i*

100.) *p* *a m i* *p* *a m i*

101.) *p* *i a i* *a i a i* *m i p i* *p i p i*

102.) *p* *i m i* *a i m i* *p i p i* *p i p i*

103.) *p* *i m i* *a i m i* *m i p i* *p i p i*

110.) *p* *a m i*

# Level VIb

group 1

36.) *a*  
*p* *i p i*

37.) *a*  
*p* *i p i*

38.) *a*  
*p* *i p i*

39.) *a*  
*p* *i p i*

40.) *m a*  
*p* *i p i*

41.) *a m*  
*p* *i p i*

42.) *m a*  
*p* *i p i*

43.) *m a*  
*p i p i*

44.) *a a*  
*p i p i*

45.) *a a*  
*p i p i*

46.) *m a m*  
*p i p i*

47.) *a m a*  
*p i p i*

50.) *m m a*  
*p i p i*

106.) *m m a*  
*p i p i*

107.)

49.) *m a a*  
*p i p i*

50.) *m a m a*  
*p i p i*

106.) *a*  
*p i p i* *m*  
*p i p i*

107.) *a* *m* *m*  
*p i p i p i p i*

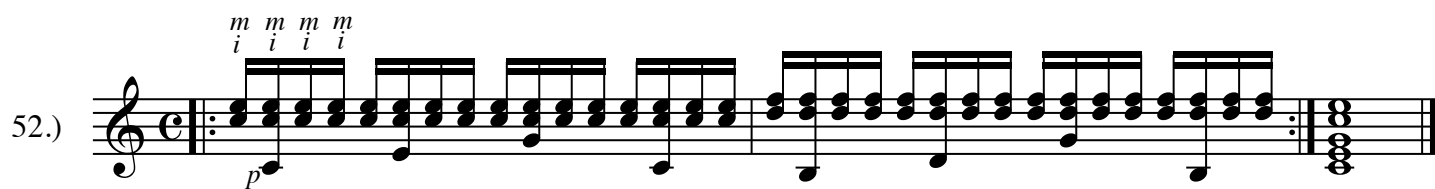
108.) *a* *m* *m* *m* *m* *m* *a*  
*p i p i p i p i p i p i p i p i*

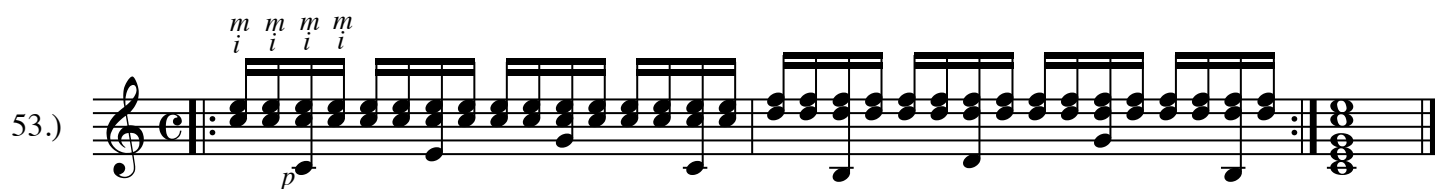


# Level VIb

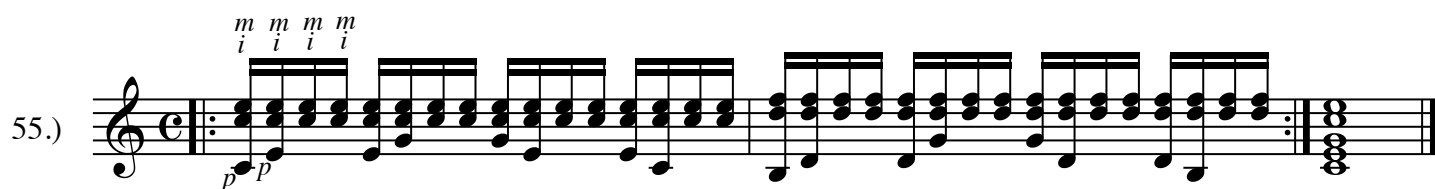
## group 2

51.) 

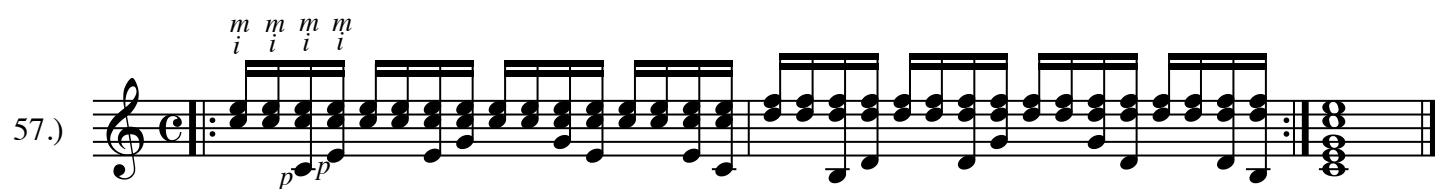
52.) 

53.) 

54.) 

55.) 

56.) 

57.) 

58.) 

59.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p*

60.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p*

61.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p p*

62.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p p*

63.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p p*

64.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p p*

65.) *m m m m*  
*i i i i*  
*p p p p*

109.) *i m i m i m i m*  
*p p p p* 2 3 2 3 2 3

# Level VII

115.) *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p*

116.) *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p*

117.) *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a* *p i m a*

118.) *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p*

119.) *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p*

120.) *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p* *a m i p*

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