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Companion online audio is included with this book. Using the recordings will help make learning more enjoyable and the information more meaningful. Listening to the audio will help you correctly interpret the rhythms and feel of each example. The symbol to the left appears next to each song or example that is performed on the recording. The track number below each symbol corresponds directly to the example you want to hear. Track 1 will help you tune to the recording.



ANDANTINO VARIATO

Brief Musical Analysis

Paganini was not only one of the greatest violinists of all time, he was also an accomplished guitarist who composed several pieces for solo guitar, as well as guitar accompanied by other string instruments.

A great introduction to his virtuoso work is the *Grand Sonata in A Major* for solo guitar. We will look at the first variation of “Andantino Variato,” which is the third movement of the *Grand Sonata*.

The piece begins with two pickup notes leading into the first full measure. The basic *motif* of this variation (a motif is a short, recurring melodic or rhythmic figure) consists of two ascending *triads* (three-note chords) followed by a fast descending scale run. The measure to the right shows the basic idea behind this variation.

Measures 1–2

Left-hand fingers: 2 1 1 3 2 1 4 3 1 4 3 1

The technical challenge to playing this theme is the combination of *sweep picking* (on the triads) and *alternate picking* (on the scale runs). Sweep picking is a technique that utilizes the picking direction, either ascending or descending, to play notes that are located on adjacent strings in one “sweeping” motion. This technique is used mostly when playing arpeggios. Alternate picking consists of changing your picking direction (□ ▽ □ ▽ etc.) with each new note.

The idea is repeated in the next two measures outlining an E7 chord, an A Major chord, and an E Major chord. When playing these sections, strive for an even sound and only lightly mute the strings to avoid any unnecessary noise or ringing notes.

□ = Downstroke
▽ = Upstroke

Measure 7

The motif is picked up again in measures 5 and 6 (which are exactly the same as measures 1 and 2) but then leads into an A Major and an E Major arpeggio. Both of these arpeggios are performed with sweep picking.

“Variation 2”—Analysis

The second variation is the complete opposite of the previous idea. Based solely on scalar movements and patterns, it should be played with strict alternate picking.

This is a great chops builder; try to practice it with and without heavy string muting.



VARIATION 2

etc.

T
A
B

7 6 7 6 7 4 5 7 | 5 4 5 4 5 7 5 4 | 7 6 7 6 7 4 5 7 | 5 4 5 4 5

4 3 4 3 4 1 2 4 | 2 1 2 1 2 4 2 1 | 4 3 4 3 4 1 2 4 | 2 1 2 1 2 4

5 etc.

T
A
B

10 9 10 9 10 12 10 9 | 12 11 12 11 12 9 10 12 | 8 7 8 7 8 10 9 7 | 10 9 10 9 10 7 9 10

2 1 2 1 2 4 2 1 | 4 3 4 3 4 1 2 4 | 2 1 2 1 2 4 3 1 | 4 3 4 3 4 1 3 4

9

T
A
B

6 5 6 5 6 7 5 4 | 5 4 5 4 5 5 4 2 | 4 3 4 3 4 6 5 1 | 2 1 2 1 2

3 2 3 2 3 4 2 1 | 4 3 4 3 4 4 3 1 | 1 2 1 2 1 4 3 1 | 2 1 2 1 2