

# *Diabelli Moderato for Classic Guitar*

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTS

by Mary Jo Disler

This piece can be studied after the note-reading chapters of *Guitar QuickStart™* are completed. It introduces several new elements of note-reading and technique that are explained in these comments, and illustrated in the diagram on page 2.

### ► Note Reading

#### 1. Sharps and key signature. A sharp is this sign: #

A letter that is sharped is fingered one fret higher than the natural letter. For example: F natural is fret 1 on string ①. F-sharp is fingered at fret 2 instead of fret 1.

**Accidentals:** When sharps are placed in front of each note they affect, they are called “accidentals.” (The same term applies to flats in front of notes. This piece does not have any flats.) In *Moderato*, the G’s in measures 3, 7, 11, 12, and 15 are sharped. Since G-natural is the open third string, the G-sharp is fingered one fret higher, at fret 1 of string ③.

**Key signatures:** When one or more letters are always sharped, they are indicated by a key signature at the beginning of each line of music. It is up to the performer to know where to apply the sharps. In the *Moderato* the two sharps of the key signature represent the letters F and C, anywhere they appear on the staff. Every F should automatically be fingered one fret higher than “plain” F (here at fret 2, string ①). Every C should automatically be fingered one fret higher than “plain” C (here at fret 2, string ②).

#### 2. Voices and counting.

The pieces in *Guitar QuickStart™* all have one line of single notes, or one “voice” in musical terms. The *Moderato* by Diabelli has two voices: a higher one with stems pointing up, and a lower one with stems pointing down. Each voice separately has the full three beats in each measure. Therefore they “count” simultaneously. To play the piece, figure out which notes play on which beat. If you are a beginner at reading music, it is a good idea to write the counting numbers above each note. (See *Guitar QuickStart™* for counting rules.) In some measures, where the upper voice has an eighth rest, the low voice plays alone on the first beat. (Measures 1, 3, 5, 7, etc.) In other measures both voices play at the same time on the first beat. (Measures 2, 4, 6, etc.) In measures 8 and 16, the upper voice plays alone on beat one, and the lower voice follows on beat 2, after the quarter rest.

The higher voice (notes with stems upwards) should be played with a light rest stroke, alternating the i and m fingers. The lower voice (notes with stems downwards) should be played with the thumb (p).

### ► Technique

#### 3. Slurs

Slurs are small curved lines connecting two notes. The first note is played normally. If the second note is higher, it is “hammered” with the fretting hand at the correct fret for the note. (See measures 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 15).

If the second note is lower, the string is “pulled off” with the fretting hand, which fingers the correct fret if the second note is not an open string. A “pulled” slur feels almost like playing a backwards “rest stroke” with the fretting hand. (See measures 1, 5, 12, and 14.)

#### 4. Second position for the fretting hand.

The finger numbers for the fretting hand should be followed carefully. When the first finger is placed at fret 2 - with the fingers lined up at frets 2, 3, 4, and 5 - the hand is in “second position.” There are both first and second position hand placements in the *Moderato*. It is common for the key of D major (two sharps) to use second position. The letters F and C are both sharped, and therefore fingered one fret higher than the natural note. The first fret F’s (strings ① and ⑥) and C (string ②) are replaced by their sharps at fret 2. Therefore the key of D major does not require any first fret notes. This piece, however, includes a G-sharp, string ③, fret 1. The passages with this G-sharp are fingered in first position to access this note. The eighth-note rests make the position changes convenient.

# MODERATO IN D MAJOR

Classic Guitar

ANTONIO DIABELLI, 1751-1858

Edited by Mary Jo Disler

*m i m i m m i m (etc.)*

This diagram illustrates the Performance Comments on page 1.

Key signature  
All F's & C's anywhere  
on the staff sharped  
(fingered 1 fret higher)

Upper voice (stems upward)  
Play with *i* and *m* fingers alternating.

Lower voice (stems downward)  
Play with *p* (thumb)

Slur

Accidental sharp  
G-sharp at fret 1, string ③

1 & 2 & 3 & 1 & 2 & 3 (&)  
Counting sample

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