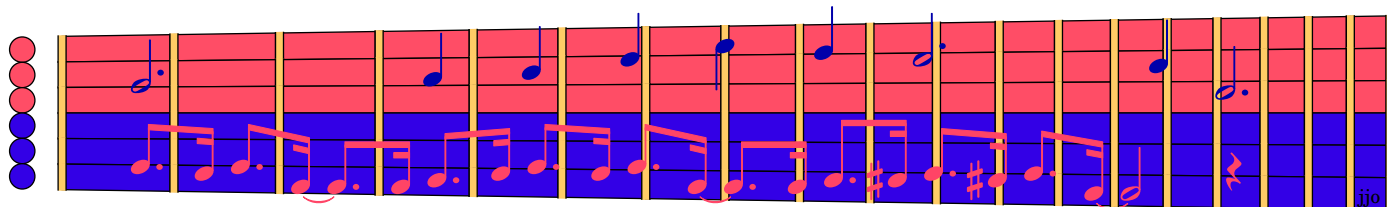


March Fretboard Exercise

Sightread Both Point and Counterpoint!



The musical debate of 1914: “A Simple Melody vs. Ragtime” sung as a Counterpoint Duet

Exercise 1: I 1 II 1 III 4 IV 4 V 4 VI 5 VII 1 ⑤

A
♩ = 120

10
18
24
30
37
43

Exercise 1 Berlin(1914): Play A Simple Melody 1

“Counterpoint” You know it in music. Bennett explains with lots of good examples:

- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counterpoint>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGaRq5vi-gA> (Bennett, 2023)

“Point/Counterpoint” You know it in politics from *60 Minutes* and *SNL* in the 70s:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWX5SGNJx38> (Kilpatrick & von Hoffman, 1973)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c91XUyg9iWM> (Curtain & Aykroyd, 1979)

“Counterpoint Duet” is what you get when two counter-melodies carry opposing points of view at the same time. Sort of musical politics? Exercise 1 is a clever example by Irving Berlin in which the debate is between (a) simple classical melodies and (b) the radical rhythms of ragtime in 1914. The lyrics below, and especially the youtubes, show the Point/Counterpoint.

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Play_a_Simple_Melody

Point **A**: She sings ...

*Won't you play a simple melody,
Like my mother sang to me?
One with good old fashioned harmony.
Play a simple melody.*

Counterpoint **B**: He sings ...

*Musical Demon, set your honey a dreamin', won't you play me some rag?
Just change that classical nag, to some sweet beautiful drag.
If you will play from a copy of a tune that is choppy, you'll get all my applause,
And that is simply because, I want to listen to Rag.*

Resolved **C**: They both sing parts A and B together as a counterpoint duet, but Exercise 1 (being restricted to just one voice) alternates between them as though these were the lyrics:

*Won't you play a simple / play me some rag / ody,
Just change that classical nag / my mother sang to / beautiful drag.
If you will play from a / One with good old fashioned / all my applause / mony,
And that is simply because / a sim / I want to / melody.*

Recordings let you hear how different artists over the years have handled singing both counter-melodies at once. The older ones include some setup verses that explain more about each side of the argument, while the newest one is much easier on the ears. Different eras indeed!

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xblOtxZWXZI> (Brown & Murray, 1916)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HW1i5Yz1-1U> (Merman & Dailey, 1954)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzzuGIzMiwU> (Sadowska and Savage, 2019)

*P.S. It easiest to follow these links if you **get the pdf** as indicated on the first page.*