

GIULIO REGONDI (1823 - 72)

Regondi was born in Switzerland, but lived in France and, mostly, the United Kingdom. He was a child prodigy of the guitar, with Fernando Sor dedicating a piece to him when he was just nine. He composed for the guitar and also the concertina. His works for solo guitar comprise etudes, a set of variations and some larger compositions.

The tremolo section of the Nocturne (op.19) - subtitled 'Reverie' – must be some of the most wonderful music written for tremolo guitar. In the Nocturne it is split between sections of different style and content, but its effectiveness as a piece is fully satisfied without these interspersed parts, nice as they are, and its persuasive theme quite naturally repeats to end with a superb coda (which also finishes the actual Nocturne).

The original score has no dynamics except for the end, and I have not added any. However, the piece is impossible to play without inferring some loudness, tempo and accentuation changes. There is that Romantic period element to it. I have added fingering. I like to settle into a barre position where possible – it often lets the bass accompaniment ring through (e.g. the D in the first few bars) and simplifies the playing. But it hardly needs saying that fingering, helpful if it is good, is a kind of curse if it is bad or just wrong, and it is never mandatory.

It is always instructive with tremolo pieces to first play some of the top line (e.g. of the first few bars) without tremolo to properly reveal its melody. The style needs plenty of practice to achieve fidelity to this musical meaning; that is always the aim. Then listen carefully as the lower part is added. The bass is very important, as mentioned, but the harmonies of the broken chords are vital too. The Nocturne is brilliant counterpoint.