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ETUDE 1

“Nice Tuxedo” by Mike Block

3:2 Polyrhythm • Aeolian Mode • Improvisation

[BEGINNER]

“Nice Tuxedo” is the first and simplest of six polyrhythmic etudes that were all written from a shared template. Always practice these with a metronome to work on maintaining a strong pulse, unaffected by the subdivisions and accents being performed.

Each of these etudes focuses on a different polyrhythm, and features a different Greek mode, based on the major scale. These are the modes of D major (Ionian).

D Ionian (Major)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1

D Dorian

1 2 b3 4 5 6 b7 1

D Phrygian

1 b2 b3 4 5 b6 b7 1

D Lydian

1 2 3 #4 5 6 7 1



Nice Tuxedo

A 3-against-2 Polyrhythm Etude in D Aeolian

Mike Block

Smoothly $\text{♩} = 60$

1

5

9

13

17 "Nice Tux - e - do!"

21

26 Improvise in D Aeolian using the indicated rhythms.



Cradle Song

Caprice for Right-Hand Pizzicato

Stephan Braun

Lento ♩ = 60

2

Emi Dsus4 D Emi Dsus4 D

pizz. *p*

5

G Cmi/G D7/G G/B CMa7(#11) G/B FMa7(#11) Emi Dsus4 D

mp

9

CMa7(#11) Bmi E7 Ami D7 G D7/A Bb°7 G/B

mf

13

CMa7(#11) Bmi7 E(b9,b13) Ami7 F7 CMa7 Dsus4

p

17

G Cmi/G D7/G G/B CMa7(#11) G/B FMa7(#11) Emi CMa7 D

mp

21

Emi Dsus4 D Emi Dsus4 D G

p *rit.*

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FIG. 2.2. "Cradle Song"

CELLO: ETUDES

Learn the contemporary techniques and practices of the modern cello. These etudes were composed by a dozen of today's most noteworthy and pioneering cellists, from a variety of styles. The collection is a vital exploration of 21st-century cello techniques that every contemporary cellist should know when playing music outside of the standard classical repertoire.

By exploring techniques such as chopping, pizzicato, improvisation, chords, ornaments, modes, polyrhythmic playing, and more, you will be prepared to play in a variety of contexts, including folk (bluegrass, Celtic, old-time), rock, funk, jazz (traditional and modern), world music, and accompanying yourself while singing. Each etude is introduced by its composer, with advice on the techniques/style covered, and an audio performance of the composition is available online. The collection is introduced with a foreword by Yo-Yo Ma.

You will learn:

- 28 cello etudes, from beginner to advanced difficulty levels, suitable for both study and performance
- techniques for rhythmic and chordal playing, including the percussive chop
- stylistic ornaments, phrasing, and vocabulary emblematic of folk, rock, funk, and jazz styles
- pizzicato techniques such as strumming, fingerstyle, walking bass, tremolo, and tapping
- contemporary rhythm techniques, such as polyrhythms (2:3, 3:2, 4:3, 3:4, 4:5, 5:4), and stylistic grooves
- strategies for melodic improvisation
- techniques for using electronic looping

Etudes in this volume were compiled and edited by Mike Block, and composed by Ashley Bathgate, Mike Block, Stephan Braun, Rufus Cappadocia, Rushad Eggleston, Erik Friedlander, Eugene Friesen, Natalie Haas, Giovanni Sollima, Mark Summer, Jacob Szekeley, Matt Turner, and Jeffrey Zeigler.



Mike Block is a pioneering multi-style cellist, singer, composer, and educator who tours internationally in the Grammy Award-winning Silk Road Ensemble, as well as his own projects. He graduated from the Juilliard School, founded the Mike Block String Camp, and is an associate professor at Berklee College of Music.

"The broad reach of skills included in these etudes can equip a cellist to participate in making music in any part of the world. I urge all cellists interested in contemporary styles to take a look, and to experience and enjoy the world of twenty-first century cello."

—**Yo-Yo Ma, Multi-GRAMMY® Award-Winning Cellist,
Founding Artistic Director of Silkroad**

"Block assembled an extraordinary group of cellists who are giving out their 'inner secrets' to practicing modern cello techniques. Any cellists who want to expand their vocabulary beyond western classical music and into the twenty-first century must get this fantastic book!"

—**Maya Beiser, Founding Cellist of the
New Music Group Bang on a Can All-Stars**

"We need more 'outside the orchestra' material like this that explores the versatility of the coolest instrument in the world."

—**Steven Sharp Nelson, Cellist (the Piano Guys)**

"This new contemporary etude book is a wonderful addition to our cello teaching materials. Each etude has its own unique qualities. Teaching polyrhythms, as well as different types of position exercises, help all cellists to further understand the endless possibilities of cello technique. I wish to thank all the collaborators of this book; they truly have enriched our cello repertory."

—**Richard Aaron, Professor of Cello at The Juilliard School
and University of Michigan**

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HL00159292

ISBN 978-0-87639-187-7



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