

HELIOTROPE BOUQUET

FIRST SECTION

Joplin/Chauvin
arr. John James

0 7 4 0 0 2 P 0 3 1 0 2 → 4 H 5 3 → 1 7 0 6 5 6

1 H 3 0 0 0 3 2 2 0 1 H 3 0 0 0 3 2 2 0
2 4 4 2 0 0 3 2 0 2 4 4 2 0 0 3 2 0 2 0
0 5 4 4 2 2 1 0 5 4 4 2 2 1

1 H 3 0 0 3 3 0 7 → 8 7 7 5 3 7 0
2 4 4 2 0 H 2 4 3 0 7 7 7 6 2 6 6 0
0 5 4 6 2 4 4 1 0 6 6 7 → 6 4 5 5 6

1 H 3 0 0 0 3 2 2 0 1 H 3 0 3 4 3 4 3
2 4 4 2 0 0 3 0 2 2 4 4 2 0 3 4 4 4
0 5 4 2 2 1 0 5 4 2 2 0 0 4 4 4

3 3 4 3 3 0 1 1 P 0 1 0 3 0 3 0 0 2 0
3 3 4 3 3 2 2 1 0 2 3 0 1 2 0 4 0
0 4 3 3 1 1 3 0 1 2 0 4 3 3

HELIOTROPE BOUQUET

SECOND SECTION

Joplin/Chauvin
arr. John James

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody features eighth and sixteenth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. Below the staff are three guitar strings with fret numbers: 7 6 7, 7 7 5, and 6 0 9.

The second system of musical notation continues the melody with a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. The guitar strings are: 8 11 10, 8 0 5, and 10 10 8.

The third system of musical notation features a complex chordal texture with double sharps (F# and C#) in the melody. The guitar strings are: 8 10 9, 12 11 10, and 9 10 8.

The fourth system of musical notation includes a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. The guitar strings are: 7 7 5, P5 7 10, and 0 9 9.

The fifth system of musical notation concludes the section with a double bar line. The guitar strings are: 0 7 12, 9 10 11, and 2 0 11.

to 1st section

RAGTIME GUITAR



by
JOHN JAMES

On February 28 1901 readers of a certain newspaper catering for the white community in St. Louis, Missouri, were confronted with the following item:

'Director Alfred Ernst of the St. Louis Choral Symphony believes that he has discovered in Scott Joplin of Sedalia, a negro, an extraordinary genius as a composer of ragtime music. So deeply is Mr. Ernst impressed with the ability of the Sedalian that he intends to take with him to Germany next summer copies of Joplin's work, with a view to educating the dignified disciples of Wagner, Liszt, Mendelssohn and other European masters of music into an appreciation of the real American ragtime melodies. "The work Joplin has done in ragtime", said Mr. Ernst, "is so original so distinctly individual, and so melodious withal that I am led to believe he can do something fine in compositions of a higher class when he shall have been instructed in theory and harmony . . . Joplin's work, as yet, has a certain crudeness, due to his lack of musical concatenation, but it shows that the soul of the composer is there and needs to be set free by knowledge and technique."

Well, there are those who would argue that Scott Joplin had all the technique — pianistic and compositional — that he needed. Alfred Ernst's viewpoint is of course purely academic, and his utterances predate Duke Ellington's maxim to ". . . Study in the conservatoire but keep one foot in the street . . ." Had Joplin made the trip to Europe with his teacher then the whole course of modern musical history both in the United States and over here would have taken a different turn . . . However, it was not to be.

When Joplin, in 1901, arrived in St. Louis, Louis Chauvin was just seventeen years old. Chauvin had a natural talent for music, but left school at the age of thirteen with no formal training. He, along with some friends, joined a touring company presenting musical variety shows and they formed a vocal group called — wait for it — the Mozart Comedy Four! They met with little success. Returning to St. Louis they gigged mostly in the red light district of the city where he taught himself piano by hanging around the older ragtimers and listening and learning. But the gifted young tearaway did not have the inclination to sit down at the keyboard and develop a technique to express his ideas fully. He lacked the dedication needed to finish his many melodic ideas into complete rags and have them published. Which was the only way then of securing any kind of survival for one's music. But he simply was not interested and preferred the night life of the red light district where he could, through his improvisatory skills on the piano, earn the money he needed.

Joplin at this time tended to stay away from performing. The reasons were twofold, firstly he was being out-played in the 'cutting contests' at the cafes by young 'hot-shots' who could play fast and loud, and present brash, flashy improvised rags, which the public at these night spots wanted to hear. Secondly he wanted to concentrate on composing and teaching, which would give him a more steady home life with his wife Belle.

Also, hopefully, present him with an improvement in health away from these dusk to dawn sessions, kept awake by drink and drugs. By this time he had an income from the sales of the nationwide hit *Maple Leaf Rag* which assisted his desire to elevate ragtime music to a level where it would be accepted as a serious musical form. This was furthered in 1903 when he wrote his first opera *The Guest of Honour* and went on tour with the newly formed Scott Joplin Ragtime Opera Company.

Louis Chauvin remained in St. Louis living the fast-life but playing better than ever, in fact better than anybody else. This won him the coveted 'Rosebud Cafe' piano competition in 1904. Chauvin was a genius, but as with many who have a natural gift, he abused his talent to the point of self destruction. He didn't study, he didn't practice, he didn't endeavour to publish his pieces — he didn't need to, it was all too easy. He lived the low-life, an almost degenerate existence frequenting the sporting houses and enjoying the many pleasures therein to excess. The inevitable fate awaited him.

Joplin, too, had been a victim of fate, his opera and drama company had folded, a subsequent minstrel show had failed, and finally his wife walked out. He eventually arrived in Chicago to hear that Chauvin was also in town, but in a bad way, Joplin immediately went round to see the ailing young genius. Louis Chauvin was now twenty two years old and in a very poor state of health. He was addicted to drugs and had contracted syphilis. His friend from school days, Sam Patterson, was with him but, thankfully, in a more robust state of health, and expressed his concern for his sick friend to Joplin.

The elder master was dismayed to see a person with such a talent for the art, that he himself had dedicated his life to, seemingly throw it away in such a fashion. It was almost a manifestation of the fears that Joplin, himself, had held regarding the life styles of the 'red-light' district, and which subsequently confirmed his commitment to composing.

Chauvin's syphilis was terminal and he was smoking large quantities of opium to alleviate the pain, however he was still composing, but failed to finish anything. He needed the help of someone who understood the music with the same genius, he needed Scott Joplin. So when Joplin found Chauvin in that dingy Chicago palour, the young man was at death's door. Joplin had seen people die of similar symptoms and recognised that his friend had not long to live. He spoke to Louis about his compositions and how he would like to help in getting them published, but Louis had nothing completed to give to the master save play two themes he had just composed. Joplin was delighted with what he heard and urged his friend to finish the piece, but Louis was in no fit state to attempt this, his mind kept wandering and it was too late to change his ways now. Scott Joplin sat down at the piano and began to play first one then another sixteen bar theme, thereby completing the four section rag, which became the *Heliotrope Bouquet — A Slow Drag Two Step*. The piece was published in 1907, the following year Louis Chauvin, boy genius, died.

RAGTIME GUITAR



by
JOHN JAMES

“America’s first music”, is the accolade that has been bestowed upon ragtime, but how ‘American’ is it, and how should we define American? Well, the second part of the question is a little too heavy for these columns, so let’s concentrate on the ‘Americana content’, i.e. the culture that is a product of that home of the brave, land of the free.

The music — ragtime — is actually a product of the culture of the emancipated black community in the Southern States of America. Emancipated in the literal meaning, since it was only from the end of the Civil War in 1865 that slavery came to an end. At the time of the American War of Independence (1775-1783) the Northern States declared slavery illegal, but the South did not, and when the slave trade was officially abolished in 1807 the Southern States virtually ignored this event, and the illicit trade continued.

The suppressed negro people expressed their frustrated emotions through a music that had, without doubt, African roots, but where did those melodies come from? Are the harmonies and dance rhythms found in ragtime derived totally from West African tribal music? I do not think so. For an “all-American-music” that is the pride of the black-culture movement in the States, there is one heck of a lot of European blood in it. Why, even in the days of the minstrel shows, W.C. Handy’s own outfit, the Nahara Minstrels, had trained bandmen who would perform a wide variety of classical pieces. They could rattle off selections from the *Mikado* or even the *William Tell Overture*, (which eventually found its way into Americana proper by heralding a masked man on a white horse, shouting . . . “Hi, Ho, Silver Away!”)

The slaves on the plantations, which are all ‘white-owned’, had absorbed many kinds of European music, from Wesleyan

hymn tunes to Scottish and Irish fiddle music, folk songs from all over the British Isles and, of course, a host of popular classics from the European school, e.g. Mozart, Vivaldi, Haydn, etc. Thus, mixed in with their own African traditions, this music, this European music, formed the basis of the minstrel show repertoire from whence came ragtime.

Once you had a media, be it only the concert stage, for communicating with a large audience, the inevitable was bound to happen. The folk music became concert music and the music of the concert went back to the people to be absorbed in the folk tradition. Thus an old folk song heard on the plantation finds its way, through an enterprising minstrel performer, on to the professional stage. The song is maybe changed slightly, and it becomes a popular hit tune with the audiences who, in time, forget about the original minstrel, and back the song goes into the tradition. In recent times, in this country, a prime example of this process is the utilisation of a folk melody as the theme music for a popular T.V. series. Originally a song used by children in a street game, but long forgotten, this same tune, passed to the children through the medium of television, is re-learned and used again and *Johnny Todd* becomes the *Z-Cars* theme.

Therefore, the slaves heard European music, that is to say, diatonic music with clearly defined rules of construction regarding harmony and rhythm. When they were freed and had to form a new lifestyle, they produced a new culture, and it can be called ‘black folk-music’. This process of cross fertilisation can, of course, be applied to all musics, and applying the argument here is not intended as a devaluation of the statement ‘Ragtime — the first American music’, but maybe puts it all into a clearer perspective.



YES We sell music
YES We sell instruments
YES We sell accessories
NO We are NOT a music shop or a GUITAR CENTRE

WE ARE THE CLASSICAL GUITAR STUDY CENTRE

Whether for concert hall, recording studio or living room the **Classical Guitar Study Centre** aims at giving unrivalled expertise in the choice of classical instruments.

We are compiling a list of specialist classical guitar teachers which will be widely circulated with our guitar and music lists. If you wish to be included please send details of qualifications and teaching experience to **John Arran at The Classical Guitar Study Centre, The Sheepwalks, London Rd., Waltherton, Nantwich, Cheshire. Tel: 0270 841647.**

SPANISH GUITAR CENTRE

36 Cranbourn Street, London WC2H 7AD 01-240-0754
Business hours 1pm—6pm, Sat 10am—5pm

Established for 32 years now, we offer an extensive range of instruments from £35 upwards, including both the famous and the less well-known makers, new and secondhand, classical and flamenco. Interesting new instruments include the **JOSE RAMIREZ CAMARA** guitar and the **LEONA** range of beautiful and unique instruments. All prices are very competitive and we rarely allow ourselves to be undercut by “special offers” available elsewhere. There are guitars for hire, music and accessories are stocked, and strings can be ordered by telephone. Valuations and repairs are undertaken. Professional individual tuition is available at £4 per lesson. Send 25p for price list and brochure.