

Listening Guide

Gottschalk: *The Banjo* (*Le banjo: Fantaisie grotesque*)

DATE OF WORK: 1854–55

GENRE: Fantasy

FORM: Five-part form (**A-B-A-B-A**) and coda

MEDIUM: Solo piano

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Highly syncopated rhythms; regular 4-measure phrases.
Imitation of banjo strumming and picking.
Bass-line melodies, alternating with high-range, embellished tunes.
Alternation of two sections, (**a** + **b**), plus coda.
Suggestion of *Camptown Races* tune in coda.

Brief, syncopated introduction, in octaves in both hands (8 measures).

A section

Rhythmic idea, in bass range of piano; repeated in 4-measure phrases; decorated with flourishes:



Simple, rocking-bass melody heard, and repeated.

B section

Fast-paced, high-range melody, marked brilliant; syncopated against regular bass:



4-note descending pattern repeated, then glissando.

A section

Return to A section.

Slow, rocking-bass melody.

B section

Fast, high-range melody returns.

4-note descending idea, followed by glissando.

A section

Opening rhythmic idea.

Rocking-bass melody.

Coda

Camptown Races tune heard, in simplified rhythm.

Tune heard an octave higher and faster.

Speed increases to closing high flourish, then final *fortissimo* chord.

Comparison of tune heard in coda with *Camptown Races* by Stephen Foster:

Coda of *The Banjo*

Stephen Foster tune

De Camp-town la - dies sing dis song Doo-dah! doo-dah! De

Camp-town race track five miles long. Oh! doo - dah day!

Gwine to run all night, Gwine to run all day, I'll _

bet my mon-ey on de bob - tail nag, Some-bo-dy bet on de bay.