

The Royal Paulownia Hornpipe

Sam Rizzetta © 1982

♩ = 75

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 75. The piece is divided into two main sections, A and B. Section A consists of two staves of music. The first staff of section A starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 2/4. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a repeat sign after the first measure. Chord symbols D, G, and Em are placed above the staff. Triplet markings are used for groups of three eighth notes. Section B also consists of two staves. The first staff of section B starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of 2/4. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a repeat sign after the first measure. Chord symbols G, Em, A, and A are placed above the staff. Triplet markings are used for groups of three eighth notes. The second staff of section B contains a first and second ending, indicated by '1.' and '2.' above the staff. The first ending leads back to the beginning of section B, while the second ending leads to the end of the piece.

The royal paulownia, also known as the princess tree or empress tree, is a deciduous tree native to China that has been introduced here in America. It is now somewhat common along rivers, roadsides, and fence rows in Virginia and eastern West Virginia, where I live. It has large, heart-shaped leaves and purple flowers on clusters that point upward. The showy blooms in May are a sure sign that winter is gone for good.

The trees can grow to moderate size but the wood is relatively light and weak. Paulownias are often broken or blown over in storms. In the Orient the wood is sometimes favored for the soundboards of stringed musical instruments. The soft wood is a uniform creamy color. I occasionally make dulcimer soundboards with paulownia and they sound very nice. “The Royal Paulownia Hornpipe” is played as part of a medley on the CD *Bucks And Does*.