

Hello banjo friends,

Well--we made it through two tunes in one class, and we somehow survived! I appreciate and admire everyone's endurance in real time, and I also hope that nobody stresses out TOO much over details not-quite-fully-integrated in real time, given that the video can be paused, rewound, and replayed ad nauseam after the fact. Take your time absorbing whatever you can while we are together, and know that the music and the maneuvers will make more and more sense the longer you spend listening and looping.

Don't forget to try all three fretting-hand options for dealing with the Galax lick that opens Fire on the Mountain, even though the tab only shows the most complex one. Also, both tunes contain several similar-but-not-identical motifs, for instance, the various spots that orient around the second fret of the third string. When feasible, consider using consistent fingering across these similar motifs--for me, the index is a good finger to assign to the second fret of the third string--so that the ONLY variable is the specific sequence of notes without the fingering also having to be worked out and memorized a bunch of different ways.

Here are some nice renditions of tonight's setting of Fire on the Mountain:

-fiddler Isham Monday, from Monroe County, Kentucky, recorded in 1959: <https://www.slippery-hill.com/content/fire-mountain-4>

-fiddler Matt Brown, with Paul Brown on fingerstyle banjo and Beverly Smith on high-capoed guitar, from Matt's lovely 2006 album "Lone Prairie." This seems to be the recording that brought the tune into wider circulation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oh9g24KRlwA>

-fiddler Roger Netherton, with Hunter Walker on banjo, Rachel Eddy on guitar, and Alex Lacquement on bass, from Roger's eponymous album from 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZM2kDJcC60>

...and here are a few takes on Cookhouse Joe that you might find interesting:

-fiddler Estill Bingham, from Bell County, Kentucky, recorded in 1989: <https://soundarchives.berea.edu/items/show/1315>

-Brittany Haas, not on her usual fiddle but on banjo (!), playing here in the "Old G" tuning with bassists Paul Kowert and Mike Gaisbacher, from their brand-new "Impromptu Sessions" album of banjo-bass trios: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4blpZMjpTs>

-fiddler Clare Milliner, with Walt Koken on banjo, in a recent video; this tune also appears on their wonderful "Just Tunes" album from the early 2000s: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRr6M3p3xBM>

Please let me know how I can be helpful outside of class, as well as what I can do differently during class to make the sessions better for you. Thanks so much for going on this wild ride with me!

Cheers,  
Adam