Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

Free Monthly Lesson, December 2015

"Julianne Johnson"

Arranged by Mickey Abraham

Hello and welcome once again to *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine's* free lesson portion of our monthly newsletter. I'd like to first say thank you to all those who emailed me about my "Sweet Georgia Brown" October 2015 e-lesson. I received more feedback about that arrangement than any other in almost ten years of arranging tunes for this newsletter. For those of you who might have missed it and would like to check out my most popular *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* newsletter arrangement to date just click here http://www.flatpick.com/category_s/2287.htm

This month I present a straight forward rendition of the old-time gem, "Julianne Johnson." I learned this tune from the great North Carolina fiddler Holly Riley. I really enjoy learning tunes from fiddle players. I have never heard "Julianne Johnson" played on the guitar so this allowed for complete creative freedom over arranging the tune. As much as I love trying to copy the flatpicking legends I feel it is equally important to seek out new fiddle tunes and find your own way of playing them on the flattop guitar. This is really copying the legends!

I like the way the tune's melody laid out in C position with a capo on the second fret. Capo II seems to be a stylistic choice for many guitarists when playing D fiddle tunes on the guitar. Once you learn my version you can challenge yourself by trying to learn the melody in open D position.

I must confess I did not learn Holly's fiddle version of "Julianne Johnson" note for note. To me, the flatpicking tradition involves adding your own twist to these awesome little tunes. It's more like jazz than classical. I feel I did retained the integrity of the tune's old-time melody while adding some traditional flatpicking language. In measure 14, for example, it seemed appropriate to throw in a C position Doc Watson lick reminiscent of "Black Mountain Rag." The addition of blue notes and blues licks in fiddle tunes has become in integral part of the flatpicking tradition.

I hope you enjoy working on this melodic version of "Juliane Johnson." I'd also like to thank my friend Holly Riley for sharing this great melody with me. Next time one of your friends calls an overplayed tune such as "Sally Goodin" or "Liza Jane" try introducing them to "Julianne Johnson." As always, should you have and questions or comments on this e-lesson just drop me a line at michabraham@comcast.net

Julianne Johnson

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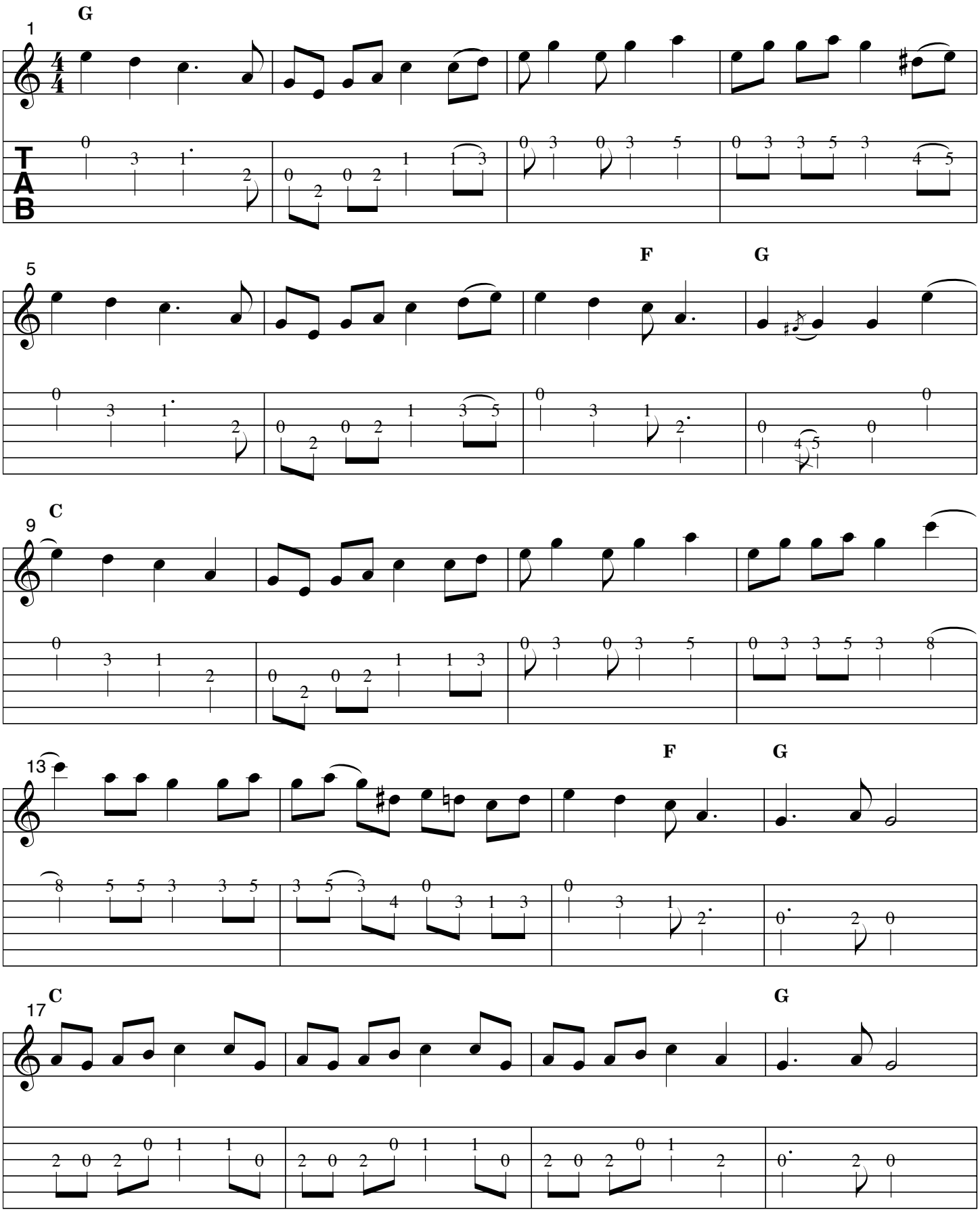
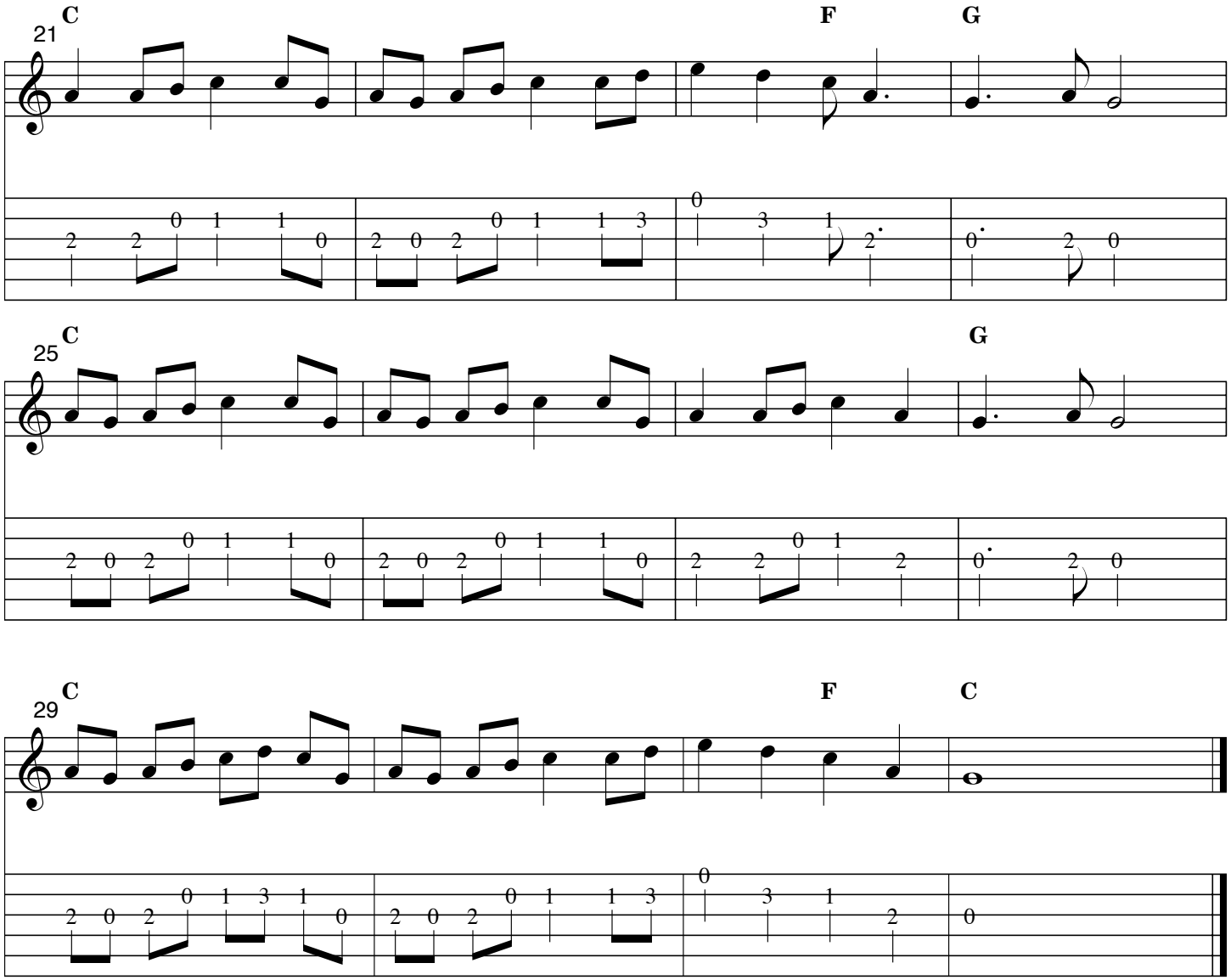
Julianne Johnson (con't)