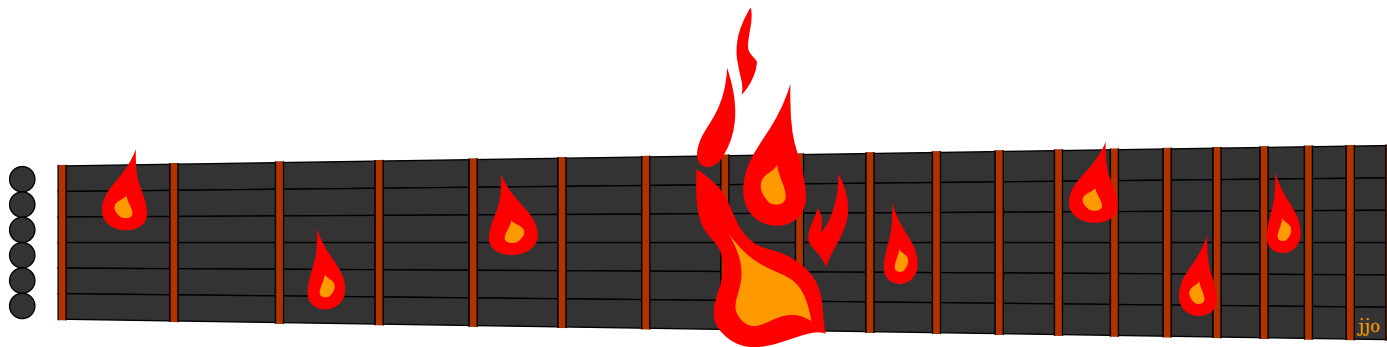


October Fretboard Exercises

An Exercise to Exercise by Fire



From a Spanish ballet about ghost busting . . .

Exercise 1: I 1 II 1 III 3 IV 3 V 2 ⑤

Exercise 1: Musical score in 2/4 time, tempo 100. The score consists of seven staves of music, each containing various rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and triplets. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 10, 17, 28, 40, 50, and 59 indicated at the start of their respective staves. The music features a mix of ascending and descending melodic lines, often with slurs and accents. The final measure of the seventh staff ends with a double bar line.

Exercise 1 Falla(1915): Danza Ritual del Fuego 1

Dancing around a fire is likely paleolithic; our ancestors were controlling fire as early as 1.7 million years ago, which was before there were Homo sapiens. Fire has long had a place in our religions and continues to attract us in mesmerizing performance art. Fire dancing is human.

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Control_of_fire_by_early_humans
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_worship
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_performance

Manuel de Falla was a Spanish composer contemporary with Isaac Albéniz, Francisco Tárrega, and Enrique Granados. He composed *Danza Ritual del Fuego* (Ritual Fire Dance) as part of his ballet *El Amor Brujo* (The Bewitched Love). It's the story of an Adalusian gypsy woman named Candela who was haunted by the ghost of dead, unfaithful husband from an arranged marriage. Every night the ghost would wake her and insist on dancing with her. The Ritual Fire Dance was suggested by her gypsy friends as a way to exorcise the ghost; she would entice it into the flames and then leap aside to survive. But it didn't get rid of the ghost; Candela finally freed herself in a later dance by getting the woman who had the affair with her husband to swap places with her, whereupon the ghost resumed the affair and forgot Candela. The fire dance, however, was the most popular part of the ballet.

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel_de_Falla
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_amor_brujo
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ritual_Fire_Dance

Instrumental performances of the Ritual Fire Dance took off six years later when Falla made an arrangement for **solo piano** (1921). It's a challenging piece, full of extended trills, ornaments and repeated glissandi which some musicologists liken to Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumblebee*. Listen to Arthur Rubenstein's famous performance for the full effect.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-XP_AIYPuc Arthur Rubenstein (1947)

For guitar performance you really need more than one to approximate all that's going on in the piano arrangement. Listen to how this guitar **quartet** handles it.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWIVAfqYTNs&t=6s> Austin Guitar Quartet (2021)

In this exercise the trills have been avoided and the ornaments written out and simplified. The triplets are best played as a slur, but you may find it helpful to move up into second position for some of them. And hit the accents hard. Enjoy!

This exercise is from the yet to be released book “Chromatic Fretboard Exercises”, which contains over a thousand such exercises and will be made available for free on IMSLP. It may be freely copied and modified, but with the condition that it be attributed to J. J. Olson (CC-BY license).

Interested? Contact Jeff Olson at jjocanoe@gmail.com

*P.S. It easiest to follow these links if you **get the pdf** as indicated on the first page.*