

Tipsy Gypsy

Modern Flatpicking and the David Grisman Influence

Arranged by Mickey Abraham

In this month's lesson I offer my flatpicking arrangement of the Grisman classic, "Tipsy Gypsy." I first heard "Tipsy Gypsy" on the *DGQ 20 Year Retrospective* which had Tony Rice on guitar and Stephane Grappelli on violin. The call and response nature of the melody caught my ear right away and I knew then that I would have to learn to play this tune. Tony Rice plays a killer solo on that recording, but he never plays the head of the tune. I find it challenging to express fiddle/mandolin melodies on the guitar and often it is easier to improvise a solo than to play a complex melody.

Years later I came across this song again on a recording called *Valla, Turner, Williamson*. They recorded this Grisman jam with Aubrey Haney on fiddle. Their version is much faster than the original Grisman version and Gabe Valla plays an incredible guitar melody. My arrangement presented here is a combination of what Gabe is doing on the VTW recording mixed with the original Grisman head. I have included Gabe's version in the audio portion of this lesson.

To me, this arrangement avoids overused licks and patterns and uses the guitar in a way that is very unique to modern flatpicking guitar. Once you get these phrases under your fingers you will find that this tune is not as hard as it first appears. Practice slowly and with good timing. The "B" section is played almost exclusively out of 2nd position and sounds much more difficult than what the ear hears. Perhaps it's the gypsy harmonies?

The Dm position I use for the opening phrase begins with the middle finger on the 'A' note on the D string. Even experienced flatpickers may find this Dm shape very interesting. It does not seem to fit the classic Dm barre shape; rather it exists in between some of the more conventional Dm shapes. When I arrange a melody I try to ignore the conventional chord shapes and scale pattern and focus on how the guitar can express the melody the best.

Much of this arrangement uses what flatpickers call "floating" notes. When the sixth fret of the B string is struck against the high E string it creates this floating type of feel. This melody would have been impossible for me to make smooth if I did not incorporate the floating licks.

This song is clearly more advanced than my last few online lessons. My goal is to cover all aspects of flatpicking from proper pick direction to more modern tunes and approaches. Don't forget to email me at michabraham@comcast.net with any question or comments on this lesson or any ideas you may have for future online lessons. Don't forget to call this tune at the next jam.

Tipsy Gypsy (con't)

21 **Gm** **E7**

0 3/5 0 5 | 0 4 | 0 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 | 0 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 | 2 3 2 3 3 2 3

25 **A7** **Gm** **Dm**

5 5 | 0 4 | 0 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 | 0 3 2 3 2 3 2 | P 0 3 0 3 0 3

29 **Gm** **Gm** **E7**

0 3/5 0 5 | 0 4 | 0 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 | 3 3 2 3 | 0 1 0 1 | 3 1 0 1 4 1 0 1

33 **A7** **Dm**

5 5 5 5 | 7 6 | 7 6 9 6 7 6 9 6 | 7 7 7 7 | 6 | 4 5 4 5 4 0 3

37 **A7** **Dm**

6 3 0 7 0 5 | 6 3 0 3 0 3 0 | 6 8 9 8 | 6 8 9 7 6 7 6 | 7 8 0