

Requiem for John Hurt

Music by John Fahey



John Fahey recorded many versions of "Requiem for John Hurt," which is essentially a two-note melody. On some recordings, Fahey starts by quoting Charley Patton's version of the old spiritual, "Jesus Is a Dying-Bed Maker." But I've always preferred the rendition on *Requiem and Other Compositions for Guitar Solo*. In that version, the Patton section comes later.

The guitar is tuned to open C (C G C G C E), and in the *Requiem* version, Fahey begins with all six strings barred on the fifth fret, producing an F chord. Fahey also depresses the third string on the seventh fret—using his pinky, although most of us would employ the third finger. (The pinky made the reach easier for Fahey's small hand.) The subtle move into pattern picking at the end of measure 1 can be tricky, so practice the pattern before learning the song. (The index finger upstrokes the

third string; the thumb downstrokes it; the middle finger upstrokes the first string; then the thumb hits the sixth string. Thus the second and fourth notes contain the bass line.) The simple two-note melody, played on the seventh and fifth frets of the third string, is picked within the pattern.

Upon repeating the A section at 0:58 and 2:45, Fahey adds his signature by delaying chord changes and sliding around on the third string while keeping the fingerpicking pattern going. On the last iteration of the A section (3:27), Fahey digs in harder, shifting his thumb to the more common alternation between sixth and fourth strings. Come up with your own variations here. It's unlikely that Fahey ever played these sections in exactly the same way twice.

—STEVE BOISSON

A (0:58, 1:34, 2:45, and 3:27)

$\text{♩} = 100$

F6 **F** **F6** **F** **F6** **F**

mf palm mute downstemmed notes throughout

F6 **F** **Cadd9** **C**

Cadd9 **C** 1. **C6** 2.

Cdim7

Cdim7

19

1.

Cdim7

D11

D.C.

25

rit.

2.

C

31

B

37

43

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49

54

60

D.C. al Coda

⊕ Coda (4:00)
Cdim7

66

69

⊖ C (4:06)

Cm(add4)

71

rit.

76

Cm11 F7/C Cm11

76

F7/C Fm7/C F7/C Fm7/C

82



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The one.

Cm(add4) **E^bsus2**

88

E^badd9

94



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