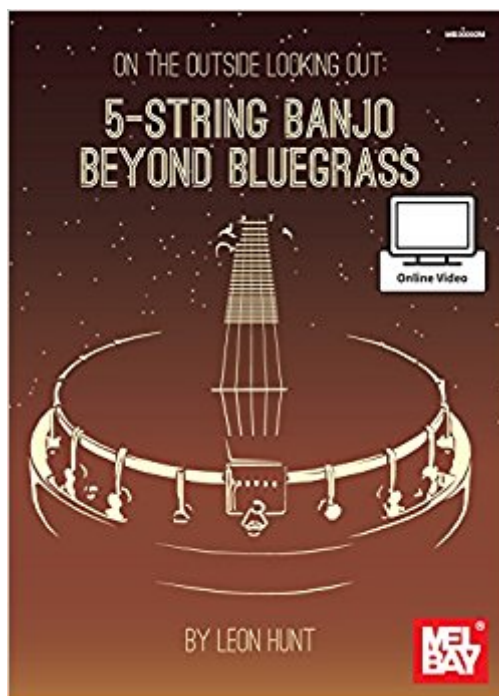


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On The Outside Looking Out: 5-String Banjo Beyond Bluegrass



Synopsis

There's no getting away from it, the 5-string banjo is about as American as apple pie. This poses something of a conundrum for those who love the instrument, but don't wish to be confined to bluegrass music. My own motives for straying musically were born out of necessity, but now the enjoyment and exploration of new musical styles are what guides me. This book and accompanying online video are intended to help anyone who also wants to take their banjo playing to new exciting places.

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Customer Reviews

Hunt was born in Bristol, England on February 21st 1968 to jazz trumpeter, Nigel Hunt and singer, Pat Purchase. Leon was exposed to Jazz and other types of improvisational music from the very beginning. Despite his parent's best efforts to encourage him musically he didn't begin playing 5-string banjo until his late teens. Although Hunt is primarily a self-taught musician, he was coached throughout his early career. Initially by the best the UK had to offer, Charlie Gaisford (The Man Who Fell to Earth, The Benny Hill Show) and then, whilst staying in Nashville, he took a handful of lessons with American banjo virtuoso, Bela Fleck. Hunt's first notable band was Southern Exposure (1988-1992), co-formed by Hunt and North Carolinian Singer / songwriter, Randy Gambill. During its four years, the band performed extensively throughout Europe and produced two albums. The second of which, Small Town was nominated for the best international album category by American association SPGMA and is still cited today as a milestone in the development of Bluegrass music.

within the UK. After Southern Exposure's singer and guitarist, Randy Gambill returned to live in the US. Hunt went on to form the groundbreaking band, Daily Planet. The band existed for over 10 years, produced three albums and played at some of the world's most prestigious festivals. Daily Planet are still recognised as the most progressive Bluegrass / Newgrass band Britain has produced and gained a solid fan base both in the UK and in the US. Hunt's third band, The Scoville Units (2009-?) Was formed initially at the request of Celtic Connections Artistic Director, Donald Shaw. The Brief was to put something special together for a concert with banjo legend, Bela Fleck. Since that first show the band has gone on to produce a studio album and continues to perform at festivals and clubs throughout the UK. Hunt also currently holds the banjo chair in the Anglo / American band Growling Old Men who's Debut recording Shuttle Diplomacy was received by favourable reviews on both sides of the Atlantic. Leon has also performed alongside some of the world's most celebrated musicians from several disciplines, most notably was on his 2006 solo release, Miles Apart. This album was a true transatlantic session, bringing together Nashville's finest with the best Irish traditional music has to offer. The Irish music connection continues to strengthen with ongoing recordings, TV appearances and concerts alongside Flook, Michael McGoldrick, Enda Scahill, Brian Finnegan, Aidan O'Rourke to name a few. Other musical accomplishments Hunt continues to supply compositions and recordings to publishing houses, Warner Bros and Carlin. These have gone on to be used worldwide (Hunt is most proud of his music appearing in an episode of Spongebob Squarepants) In 1997 Hunt made a brief return to full-time education and completed a three-year Music and Music Technology degree at Bath Spa University. During 2000 / 2001 Hunt was an onstage musician with The Royal Shakespeare Company. This has led to several more theatrical engagements, including writing the music for a major adaptation of To Kill a Mockingbird at The New Vic, and an extensive 7-month tour of the classic comedy She Stoops to Conquer for The Birmingham Repertory Company. Hunt has also taught at many workshops, most notably is the world-famous Sore Fingers Summer Schools, where he has been a banjo tutor no less than 10 times alongside some of the world's best-known bluegrass musicians. As well as his current musical endeavours Hunt now regularly writes for Acoustic magazine and has also co-founded The Fairfield Banjo Company with Luthier, Phil Davidson, producing a line of exclusive, high quality banjos.

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