

The Guitar Amp Handbook  
...Updated and expanded edition



Like many musicians I own more than one guitar amplifier, purely for backup purposes of course but in honesty I like to have a variety of amps for different sounds, various function bands - and they're just plain fun. When the original version of Dave Hunter's 'The Guitar Amp Handbook' came out in 2005 I bought a copy for my reference library and for friends. Not because I want to learn how to install a transformer or rewire capacitors in my tube amplifiers, I simply didn't want to put the wrong tubes in the sockets or zap myself with

electricity! This handbook isn't aimed at the Jim Marshall's and Leo Fenders of the world, it was written for regular musicians like you and me who play through these amplifiers and at least need a basic understanding of how they work and how to fix them.

Hunter's new publication 'Updated and Expanded Edition' adds to an already stellar and handy book that anyone owning an amplifier should have a copy. It includes chapters on how tube amps function, how to pick the right amp for you to get the tone you desire, the effect of

speakers and cabinets on your tone, components and circuitry and profiles of celebrity amps. The internal photos of the amps talked about and the diagrams are very helpful as you read along. I must admit that some of the schematics went over my head, but I still gained a working knowledge of how my amps work.

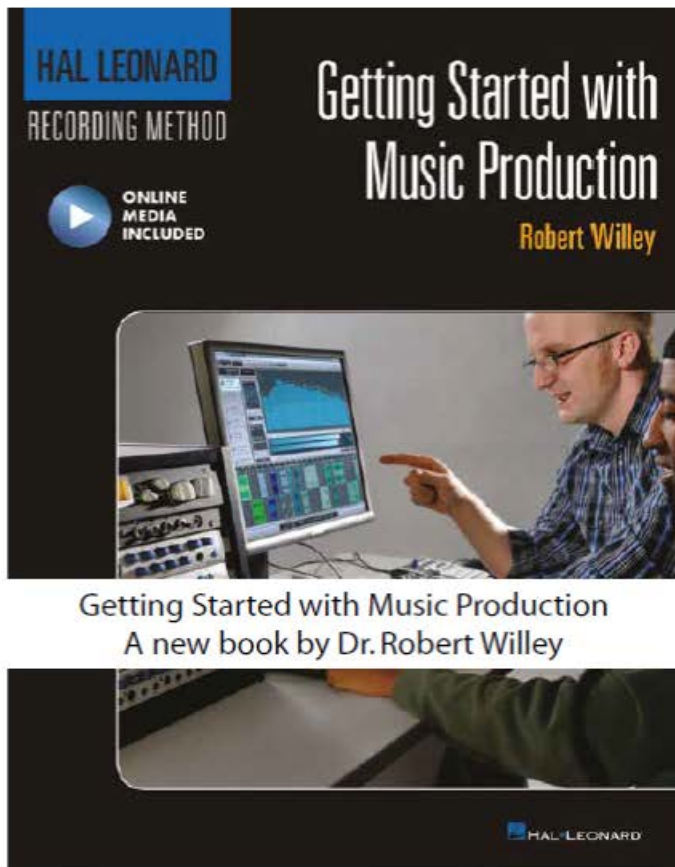
Hunter cuts through some of the mystery and mystique that tube builders and snobs have portrayed about amplifiers and how tone is achieved. Although I personally will never attempt it if you are technically inclined Dave does

include a step by step guide on building your very own Class A amplifier. My preference is to go to my local music store and walk out with a completely built amplifier that I can take home and play or use at a gig!

Another interesting section of the book is the one dedicated to interviewing world class amplifier builders such as Mark Bartel (Tone King), Reinhold Bogner (Bogner amps), and the famous Ken Fischer (Trainwreck amps). The featured tech talk is enlightening and it's not so technical that it will leave your head spinning after you read it. Dave also included a very nice glossary in the back of the book so we can look up terms that we don't fully understand.

Amplifiers aren't as exciting as our sleek beautiful guitars and they are frequently relegated to dusty closets or corners of our houses. But the fact remains you can't play electric guitar at the sounds levels that need to be produced so that others can hear without a good working amplifier. And even though solid state amplifiers have made huge progress in the last five years, the best one is still produced by an amplifier that is powered by tubes.

If you like this publication you may want to check out Hunter's other books that include: 'Tone Manual', 'Guitar Effects Pedals', 'Guitar Rigs' and 'The Guitar Pick-Up Handbook'. Dave is also the former editor for 'The Guitar Magazine' (UK). I'm not an amp wizard but it's nice to have an author like Dave Hunter who is and who doesn't mind explaining things in layman's terms for the rest of us. If you own a tube amplifier this book is a good investment in your amps future. **Eric Dahl**



## Getting Started with Music Production

A new book by Dr. Robert Willey

**D**r. Robert Willey's latest book 'Getting Started with Music Production' is part of the Hal Leonard publications Recording Method series. The book itself is a thorough learning tool for anyone involved in digital audio workstations (commonly referred to as DAW) but what makes it even more valuable is the online media that is included with the purchase of the book. The web elements are accessed through [www.halleonard.com/mylibrary](http://www.halleonard.com/mylibrary) and the code is provided on the first page of the book.

The goal of Willey's book is to provide the reader hands on practical knowledge that can readily be used to record and mix music with a DAW. For teaching purposes the book is based around Studio One by PreSonus, but most of the recording techniques shown can be accomplished with the free version. Also these methods aren't only useful for Studio One as they can be applied to any DAW situation.

In-depth explanations are given on microphones types, impedance, placement and patterns all of which are helpful

in a recording situation or live music production. Activities and quizzes are provided in between chapters as a way to test your knowledge and see what you learned from the chapters. Chapters are dedicated to Volume, Mixing with Volume, Editing and Ambience. The cool hands on approach is even more evident in Chapter 7 where you can pick a song of your choice, download it and mix it. Various genres of music are provided so you aren't limited to one style or type. The answers to all of quizzes within the book are provided in Appendix C of the

book and there is also a helpful Glossary provided.

Willey has done an excellent job of packing a lot of useful music production knowledge into a concise compartment that won't take a reader too long to navigate, but I'm certain that many of us will also refer back to the book for key information. If you have been recording, producing and mixing music for a good while, then I don't think this book will provide much that you didn't already learn in the early stage of your DAW experience. But on the other hand if you have always dreamed of recording and editing your own music but never had the education or skills then this publication can provide a fertile foundation of recording basics that can be applied to any musical recording project you might be involved with.

I have worked with fledgling music producers that could have gained some incredible techniques from a book like this. Dr. Robert Willey comes from a musician's perspective throughout the book since he is a keyboard player, composer and music technologist. His other publications have included 'Louisiana Creole Fiddle,' 'Brazilian Piano,' and the DVD 'From La La to Zydeco: Creole and Zydeco Music from Louisiana.' Obviously he has developed these methods from his own teachings that he has utilised at multiple Universities to teach with in the United States and Brazil.

If you've always wanted to jump in the driver's seat of a digital audio workstation (DAW) but didn't know where to start, 'Getting Started with Music Production' could be a great map to have you travelling down the road to the joys of music recording and mixing. **Eric Dahl**