**LEE RITENOUR**

**Biography**

**Lee Ritenour** (born Lee Mack Ritenour on January 11, 1952 in Los Angeles, CA) has maintained a delicate balance between the individual creative vision and the group dynamic, since the beginning of his career. He did his first session work in the late ’60s with the Mamas and the Papas, who dubbed him Captain Fingers for demonstrating incredible dexterity while still in his teens. Since his early recordings in the 1970s, he has earned a GRAMMY Award and 19 GRAMMY nominations, numerous #1 spots on guitar polls, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian SJ Awards, and a prestigious “Alumnus of the Year” Award from the University of Southern California. He has recorded more than 40 albums that have yielded 35 chart songs. As a young guitarist, he put his combination of diverse musical styles and brilliant technical chops to work on more than 3,000 sessions with a broad spectrum of artists, and was a founding member of Fourplay, which is considered the most successful group in contemporary jazz.

Lee celebrated five decades as a guitarist in 2010 with the release of *6 String Theory*, which features Steve Lukather, Neal Schon, John Scofield, Slash, Mike Stern, George Benson and B.B. King. The album also introduced Andy McKee, Joe Robinson and Guthrie Govan. The record was in conjunction with his first multi-national 6 String Theory Competition, sponsored by Yamaha, Berklee College of Music, Montreux Jazz Festival, Blue Note Tokyo, Crown of the Continents Guitar Workshop and Festival, Monster, Premier Guitar, Jazz Monthly, Music Connection, Concord Records and D’Addario.

The Six String Theory competition continues to grow, and has now expanded to include a Rhythm Section competition for Piano, Bass and Drums. In 2012, the Grand Prize winners were honored to appear with Lee on *Rhythm Sessions*, which also features luminaries such as Chick Corea, George Duke, Stanley Clarke, Dave Grusin, Marcus Miller and many others. The 2014 winners will also perform with Ritenour during his concert at the Montreux Jazz Festival, which will also be filmed in HD. Additional prizes awarded include four Berklee College of Music scholarships. The guitar finalist will record on Ritenour’s forthcoming 2015 Concord release, ***A Twist of Rit***, and will also compete for a deal with Concord Records, plus Yamaha instruments and endorsements will be awarded as well as Crown of the Continent Guitar Workshop & Festival Scholarships and more. The competition which debuted in 2010 with the release of Ritenour’s all-star guitar recording *6 String Theory*, has become a highly anticipated staple for aspiring musicians of the guitar, bass drums and piano/keyboard, providing them with professional and recording opportunities, educational scholarships, mentoring and prizes.

“When I first started this competition it was my hope it would grow to become a valuable entity that would have the support of so many established musicians in mentoring aspiring ones,” says Ritenour. “In four short years we have reached incredible goals and I couldn’t be more thrilled and grateful to have so many artists be part of this extraordinary musical process and journey.”

Video (filmed by Yamaha Guitars):

[Lee Ritenour describing Six String Theory Competition and playing new Yamaha “L” series guitar](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqpmBT27-5k)

[Lee Ritenour on Six String Theory Competition 2014](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igJMjp8M_jY)

Links:

[www.leeritenour.com](http://www.leeritenour.com)

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