



The Akonting: Banjo Ancestor: Illustrated Poem Story of an African Legacy (Paperback)

By Steve Levitt

Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, United States, 2013. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.This book tells a fascinating story, based on recently uncovered and seldom known history, about an African legacy that appears to have had a profound impact on a musical instrument that America holds dear, the banjo. This illustrated story, in rhyming narrative form, is based on the history of the present day American banjo beginning from a distant ancestor, the Akonting, which is the traditional folk lute of the Jola people of Senegambia, West Africa. The story unfolds as the Akonting, along with similar West African instruments, came to the Americas during the Transatlantic slave trade and led to the development of early slave gourd banjos which ultimately evolved over time to become the banjo we know today. The Akonting's unique combination of a key structural feature along with a specific playing style, today often called clawhammer or frailing, appears to have had a significant influence on how the present open back 5-string banjo is both constructed and often traditionally played. The Akonting is now viewed as an important predecessor of today's banjo and its music.



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