

PRAISE FOR
*The Search For
Peter Hunt.*

A fictional biography of 20th Century
America's leading folk artist.



Equal parts mystery novel, ghost story, romance, and cultural history of the mid-20th century, *The Search for Peter Hunt* is unlike any book I've ever read. After years of sifting through hints, rumors, vague recollections, and unreliable witnesses, Lynn Van Dine has reconstructed and told the story of a real-life Jay Gatsby, a man who scrambled up the social ladder from a New Jersey tenement to the salons of Paris, charming the rich and famous, inventing a business and a life, and telling stupendous lies. Once featured in *Life* and *House Beautiful*, Hunt died impoverished and alone in a Provincetown cottage, but now his playful folk-art designs are selling for large sums. **The only way to describe *The Search for Peter Hunt* is the way his contemporaries described the man himself: outrageous, uproarious, unconventional, and irresistible.**

Tim Clark, Contributing Editor, Yankee Magazine



An adventurous fictionalized biography about a dynamic twentieth-century artist. A fresh and vibrantly told narrative story. . . very highly recommended and deftly written.

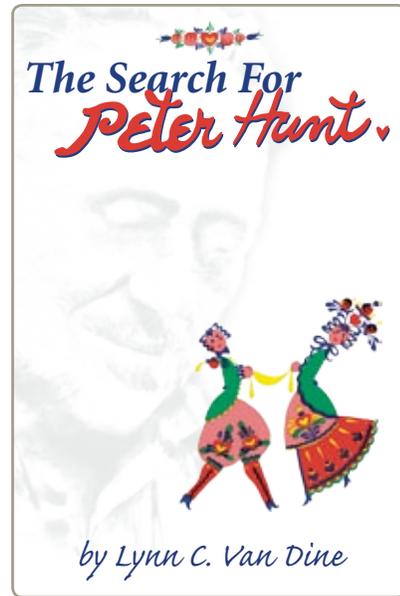
Midwest Book Review



P*eter Hunt was a terrible—and wonderful—liar.* In one sentence author Lynn C. Van Dine sums up the life of an extraordinary artist who raised himself from poverty to become one of the nation's leading folk artists. . . . a moving, often affectionate account of Peter Hunt's rise to fame during the cultural upheaval in America that spanned the two World Wars. **It reads like a novel. At once compelling and credible,** . . . brings much to light regarding this enigmatic artist whose life, work and influences are only now beginning to be understood and fully appreciated.

Eric Linder, Poet and Proprietor, Yellow Umbrella Books

AN UNCOMMON BOOK
ABOUT AN UNCOMMON MAN



ISBN 0-9711835-4-6 \$34.95.

Hardcover, 6x9 inch, 260 pages, 26 per carton..

Photos, illustrations, color insert, bibliography, and name plus subject index.

Subject categories include: history, local history, biography, fiction, folk art, decorative art, collectables, antiques, heritage, Cape Cod, MA, Greenwich Village, NY, Jersey City, NJ, Chicago, IL, 20th century artists, ghosts, and painting.



It's an unusual work, but then it has to be . . .
I found it quite brilliant.

Mike Connell, The Times Herald, Port Huron, MI



Despite its fictional trappings, "The Search for Peter Hunt" is meticulously researched and steeped in the actual people and events that shaped Hunt's life and career."

A-Plus Art Antiques Design



Just as Peter Hunt stood out as a character in a community rich in characters, *The Search for Peter Hunt* stands out as superb historical fiction, as informative as it is entertaining.

Tim Wood, Editor, Cape Cod Chronicle

Readers
who will enjoy this
book are:

- ♥ Searching for a great story.
- ♥ Searching for insight into mid-20th century art and society.
- ♥ Searching for Peter Hunt!



Lynn Van Dine explores the life of 20th century America's most entertaining, prolific, and all but forgotten, folk artist.

Hunt did what many young, impoverished yet ambitious men of his generation did to improve their lot in life—he re-invented himself. Born Frederick Lowe Schnitzer in Jersey City in 1896 to poor, immigrant parents, he leapt into the Bohemian life-style of Greenwich Village and Boston as a young adult, emerging as the artist Peter Hunt. After service in World War I, he added “Lord Templeton” to his name, initially for the benefit of Helena Rubenstein whom he successfully wooed as a client and friend.



From the start, Peter Hunt charmed his mostly female clientele as he moved among a fascinating group of individuals from the worlds of high society and the arts. Whether he painted on fabric

or furniture, as a nouveau Erté or faux European peasant, his art delighted clients if not critics and gallery owners. His design of the Cape Cod Room at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, done in 1935, remains to this day, as do many examples of his painted furniture, decorative pieces and fabrics, many of them now fetching prices Hunt could not have imagined.

Settling in Provincetown in the 1920s, Peter Hunt's Peasant Village became a fixture on the local arts scene, attracting artists, socialites and locals. Hunt moved his parents to the Cape, where his father became a famous primitive artist in his own right with shows there and in New York. In the 1950s, Hunt moved to Orleans, establishing Peacock Alley as his new base of operations, and remained there until his death in 1967.

A resurgence of interest has begun, in no small part due to Van Dine's search for the “real” Peter Hunt. The author tackled her elusive subject through a combination of extensive research, interviews with people who knew Hunt, and educated guesses resulting from careful tracking of his movements and those of people thought to be in his circle. Because Hunt mixed truth and lies so freely, the author uses the device of fictional conversations in turn poignant and hilarious between her and Hunt's ghost to elucidate the facts, contradictions, and fabrications in his life. In the end, as Robert Louis Stevenson said, “To tell the truth, rightly understood, is not to state the true facts, but to convey a true impression; truth in spirit, not truth to the letter, is the true veracity.”

Included with the 8-page color insert are how-to-do-it instructions, and examples of Peter Hunt's peasant designs!

Van Dine is, indeed, true to the spirit of Peter Hunt.



About the Author

Lynn C. Van Dine has been a writer and journalist for the past 25 years. Her work has appeared in a number of publications, including *USA TODAY*, *Metro Parent* magazine, the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News*. She's written feature articles on Peter Hunt for *Yankee* magazine, *Cape Cod Life* and *JoSonja's Artist's Journal*.

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