

## **2014 Catalog**

### **Introduction**

The initial plan for the 2014 Catalog was for a 12 album 144 song catalog to be completed entirely during calendar year 2014. For some reason that I can no longer recall, I didn't get started recording until sometime in early February. Because of the later start, and because I decided I wanted to devote more time and attention to the 2 albums of Christmas music that were part of the original plan, I decided around late spring to remove them from the Catalog, thus redefining the goal as 10 albums and 120 songs in a year. Way led on to way, however, and I got involved with other worthwhile pursuits like gardening and working toward bringing this website into being. So the timeline has changed a bit, and the goal has been pushed back some, but the basic idea of producing a large number of albums in about a year's time (a twelvemonth, if you will) remains the same.

This catalog differs from the D.L. Stieg Catalog in a number of important respects. To begin with, even though the recording for every song includes at least one guitar track, there is a much greater emphasis on keyboard music in the 2014 Catalog, with keyboard tracks included on the recordings for 60 of the 120 songs (the recordings for only about a dozen songs in the 180 song D.L. Stieg Catalog include keyboard tracks). This greater emphasis on keyboard music was made possible and inspired by my having purchased, in late fall of 2013, a keyboard at a garage sale for \$20 (I'm not making this up). The first album in the 2014 Catalog (Keyboard Songs I) is a collection of 12 songs that I had been playing for many years, with the 6 original songs all dating back at least 30 years. But apart from about a half dozen cover songs, the other 9 albums of music in the 2014 Catalog were all written and/or arranged as well

as recorded in 2014. By comparison, most of the songs in the D.L. Stieg Catalog, like the songs on the Keyboard Songs I album, are songs that I had been singing and playing for many years.

In the making of the 2014 Catalog, the song charts were an invaluable aid in producing such a large output of music in a relatively short period of time. The process of creating the 60 keyboard/ guitar duets was greatly facilitated by the charting methodology. This was especially true for the Keyboard Songs I album, for which most of the keyboard arrangements are played in difficult keys for the guitar, and had to be transposed, and for which most of the guitar arrangements are played much more easily in Eb standard tuning (all 6 strings tuned a half-step lower). This is reasonably easy to accomplish with the charts, as is the process of devising duet guitar arrangements, which likewise often depends on transposing a chord progression. The charts also proved very useful in the process of writing songs, because they facilitated deciding on the song form early on in the process, and they greatly reduced the need for memorization. Most importantly, the charts proved invaluable in recording the music for the 2014 Catalog, because I didn't really have time to memorize much of anything, so I was pretty much reading charts all the while I was playing.

In effect, then, I was reading music all the while I was playing. It's a little ironic really, because I've said many times that one of the most important features of the song charts is that you don't have to know how to read music (staff notation) to use them. It's true that the charts are considerably less complicated and easier to learn to read than staff notation, but it's no less true that when playing with the song charts, you are in effect reading music. An experienced rhythm musician (guitarist, keyboardist, etc.) seldom plays a song exactly the same way every time anyway, instead using slight variations in

chord voicings or patterns of play to make the music more spontaneous. In effect, then, especially for more accomplished musicians, all you really need to know is what are the chords, and when do you change from each chord to the next. That is exactly what the charts show, so when you are reading a chart while playing, you **are** reading music. Proving the usefulness and viability of the song charts was one of my three main goals in creating the 2014 Catalog. Another was to continue developing the concept of rhythm arrangement duets, which I have accomplished with 60 keyboard/ guitar duets and 37 guitar duets out of 120 songs. The third and last goal was to prove that I am capable of writing, arranging, and recording a considerable number of albums of decent and worthwhile music in a relatively short period of time. It is not for me to say about the decent and worthwhile music, though of course I consider it to be so, but at the least I will have completed the 10 albums in about a twelvemonth.