

Political Rock III

In early 2015 I wrote and recorded Keyboard Songs III, the ninth and final album of my 2014 Catalog. Several years later I decided to delete the album from the catalog owing to my dissatisfaction with it, which explains why there is no R44 in the lengthy sequence of albums for which I have fashioned song charts and chord docs. Then in late 2019 I nearly did the same thing with Political Rock III, a 15-song album I had written and recorded earlier that year. But instead of discarding it altogether I decided to re-work the album, which I did by eliminating three songs, and by completely re-writing the vocal melody and lyrics for five songs, and by re-arranging and re-mixing three songs (adding vocal harmonies on two, and deleting an orchestral strings track on the other).

The instrumentation on the re-worked Political Rock III album is multi-layered throughout. Four songs feature guitar trios, while six others employ guitar duets, for one of which (“Banana Republic”) a keyboard track simulating the sound of an accordion was added. The two remaining songs also feature instrumental duets, one (“Seeking Freedom”) a guitar/dulcimer duet, and the other (“Political Square Dance”) a guitar/autoharp duet. Four of the twenty-six guitar arrangements are played on 12-string, and all but five (four in D pedal tuning, and one in D Standard tuning) are played in standard tuning. The vocal schemes used on this album are similarly multi-layered, with only one song (“Political Square Dance”) employing a solo vocal. Four songs are vocal duets, one of which (“It’s My Country Too”) employs a four-part vocal arrangement for the chorus consisting of a double vocal duet. Five songs employ two or three-part vocal schemes, and the other two songs employ three-part vocal schemes with a four-part vocal cadence (“The New Children”) or a six-part vocal cadence (“One Way Or The Other”).

Seven of the twelve songs on this album are in minor keys, and the lyrics are likewise expressive of the somber and somewhat hopelessness-inspiring current state of affairs in American politics. The meters are unusually varied, in that there are only four songs in common time (also known as 4/4 time). Two songs are in 2, and four songs are in 3, one of which (“One Way Or The Other”) alternates between 3 and 2. The other two songs are in 6, one of which (“The New Children”) alternates between 6 and 4. And finally, this is the only one of my Political Rock albums that includes songs that were not written entirely by me. “Banana Republic” is an adaptation of the Chiquita Banana song from 1940’s television commercials, and “The New Children” is an adaptation of a Tim Buckley/Larry Beckett song from the 1960’s. I included a cover version of Bob Dylan’s “The Times They Are a-Changin’”, because I admire the song and because the lyrics intersect with many of the themes I have addressed in my Political Rock albums, despite the fact that the recording could not be included on the Twelvemonth Music YouTube channel owing to copyright considerations. For the same reason the chart and chord doc for that song cannot be made available for sale, although the recording excerpt and the detailed catalog listing should prove helpful to anyone who is desirous of learning to play my arrangement for that song.