

The Gaslight Café

Sometime in 2009, when I was organizing my original songs into albums, it occurred to me that I should write a sequel to the story in New Orleans, and associate this fictional work with an album of songs. You can [click here](#) to review a brief synopsis of “The Gaslight Café”, or for a free download of the first 6 pages, or to purchase the entire story (18 pages) for \$1. All but two of the 12 songs on The Gaslight Café album were written during the 1970’s (“Goin’ Crazy” was written in 1981, and “Which Way We Go” was written in 2009). The recordings for 9 of the 12 songs were made in 1989 along with all but 2 of the recordings for the Chronology album. On the Gaslight Café album, the recordings for 5 songs include simple keyboard tracks, and there are 5 rhythm guitar duets. The guitar music for The Gaslight Cafe is more or less evenly divided between flatpick and fingerstyle/fingerpick arrangements, and 6 of the 12 songs are played in alternate tunings. As with the New Orleans album, none of the songs from The Gaslight Café is played on the 12-string guitar (Noel III is the only other album in the D.L.Stieg catalog that does not include any 12-string songs).

In selecting the songs for The Gaslight Café album, I tried to develop two musical themes that would complement the basic outline of the story I had yet to write (and in fact didn’t write until more than two years after the album was finished). The first of these consisted of the vocal duets on 6 of the 12 songs, which allowed me to bring pairs of characters together musically in interesting ways. An even more important musical theme consisted of the development, in the story as well as in the music, of a new guitar/Dixieland style based on simple meter rather than the usual compound meter. There are 4 songs that can be arranged in this style (“Few Of Us Stand”, “Goin’ Crazy”, “Love Is The Only Thing”, and “Pretty Women”), which I amusingly named “horizontal jazz”

or “falling forward blues” in the story, but I have not yet written horn arrangements for any of them, and quite possibly never will. I did, however, write and include on the recording for The Gaslight Café a compound meter Dixieland combo arrangement for “Which Way We Go”. This song and “All Alone All Along” (with synthesized string orchestra) are the only 2 songs that were not recorded in 1989 (except for “Your Love”, for which a 1974 recording was used for the album).