

Gary Paul Hermus: Biography

Author, essayist, 8-time nominee, three-time winner of the New Mexico Music Award, and winner of the 2006 Xtreme Folk Scene Songwriting Award, Gary Paul is a compelling storyteller, an insightful songwriter, and a masterful performer. Accompanying himself with subtle guitar work, his songs meld his experiences of life on the road with the traditions of his Northeast roots and filter them through a New Mexican lens to present a travelogue of the American landscape.

Growing up in the slums of Brooklyn, NY, he still managed to experience music, theater & poetry. Piano lessons at age 5 gave him a love for melody. Summers on his grandparents' farm taught him to love bucolic settings & bluegrass, but around Boy Scout council fires he grew to love storytelling. This led to his first writing award in June 1965, the New York City Junior High School Narrative Writing Contest for his short story, "*A Day at The Beach*," about a family seaside outing gone wrong.

Gary Paul proceeded down parallel tracks, professionally playing rock guitar by night at well-known New York hot spots while studying acting at NYC's High School of Performing Arts. After high school, he continued acting studies at HB Studios and appeared Off-Off-Broadway while playing the Greenwich Village folk scene.

But to make ends meet, Gary Paul played Fender bass on club dates, where he learned the American songbook and the unique styles of Caribbean & South American music. He played bass with many New York bands in styles ranging from folk to bluegrass, Brazilo-Cuban fusion, world music, country, and classic rock.

He continued musical studies: bass with Latin bassist Victor Venegas, ragtime guitar and banjo with Jack Baker, and lap slide with Pat Wictor. He did all this while working with the developmentally disabled for New York State, completing a B.A. in Psychology, and Masters Degrees in Public Administration & Computer Science.

Turning to original songs in 2002, he earned the 2006 Xtreme Folk Scene Song Contest and released his debut CD, "Sid's Gaseteria," in 2007. His Sophomore CD, "American Road," was released in March 2018, debuting at 38 on the Folk DJ Charts.

When COVID canceled his performances, he turned to writing long-form. He began monthly posts of his project, "Road Warrior: A Memoir of a Life in Music," publishing his first novel, *The Port Edgerton Chronicles*, in February 2023. His second novel, *FINDING HOME: The Port Edgerton Chronicles Volume II*, is slated for release in the Spring of 2025. His fantasy/magical realism novel is in developmental editing.

Gary Paul currently resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico.