



## *Gary Paul Hermus: Biography*

Author, essayist, three-time New Mexico music award winner and 8-time nominee, winner of the Xtreme Folk Scene award for his songwriting, Gary Paul Hermus is a compelling storyteller, an intelligent, insightful writer and a seasoned performer. His novels and essays reflect the wit and wisdom of a life well lived, with complex and interesting characters, courtesy of his years of training and experience as an actor. Through his songwriting, he has developed an ear for poetry and rhythm that he brings to bear in all his work. His songs combine his experiences of life on the road with the traditions of his years in the Northeast, filtered through a New Mexican lens to present a travelogue of the American landscape.

Growing up in the slums of Brooklyn, NY did not mean a lack of exposure to music, theater & poetry; his mother was an avid reader and his father had a love of music that encompassed a wide range of genres. Piano lessons taught him a love for melody and summers working on his grandparent's farm taught him to love bucolic settings, but it was around Boy Scout council fires that he grew to love storytelling. His first successful foray into writing came in June, 1965, when he won 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.

Music and theater were parallel tracks for Gary Paul. It was drama by day & music by night, as he performed with his band at well-known New York hot spots of the day, while studying drama at New York City's High School of Performing Arts. After high school he studied acting at HB Studios, appearing Off-Off Broadway, while playing the Greenwich Village folk scene.

But to make ends meet, he played fender bass with many New York-based bands in styles ranging from society and contemporary folk to bluegrass, Brazilo-Cuban fusion, world music, country and classic rock, all while working by day with the developmentally disabled, completing a B.A. in Psychology, and Masters degrees in Public Administration & Computer Science.

But, in 2002, he changed his focus to performing original narrative story songs at small clubs, coffeehouses and folk festivals, earning him first place in the 2006 Xtreme Folk Scene Song Contest. His debut CD, "Sid's Gaseteria," was released in 2007 on the Big Moose Music label. His Sophomore CD, "American Road," was released on the Storm Canyon Music label, debuting 38 on the Folk DJ Charts.

When the pandemic struck, curtailing performances, he began experimenting with long-form writing, including his first novel, **The Port Edgerton Chronicles**, published by Luminare Press in February, 2023. He amused his fans with online performances and readings from his novel, as well as a monthly series of essays called "Road Warrior: A Memoir of a Life in Music," revealing the behind-the-scenes world of the music industry in New York in the 1960s and 1970s as seen through the eyes of a young aspiring musician.

Now a resident of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Gary Paul Hermus performs both as a solo artist, and as an accompanist on bass for others. He continues writing his Road Warrior essays, which has progressed into the 2000s. His second book of The Port Edgerton series, **FINDING HOME: The Port Edgerton Chronicles Volume II**, is slated to be published in the Spring of 2025, and a fantasy/magical realism novel is currently in developmental editing.