



BIO

“Running the whitewater on a raft, the fall of rain on a parched landscape, a child playing at being a bee ... Don Charles and Deb Gessner craft some memorable images by drawing on their Southwestern experiences.” (Dirty Linen)

Arizona harp and guitar duo, D-Squared, weaves a tonal fabric of poignant lyrics, earth-rooted melodies and stark, hypnotic rhythms. Combining guitar, mandola, banjo and a low, resonant voice with folk harp, concertina, accordion and beguiling vocals, Charles and Gessner lead listeners through a landscape that is both arid and lush, pristine and desecrated, innocent and arrogant.

Attending a show is like joining a gathering of friends around the kitchen table. Natural storytellers with a sly wit, D-Squared enchant audiences with tales of their beloved Southwest and the rocks, stars, plants and critters that share it.

Deb Gessner’s *“faux reverent aura framed by her folk harp will trick you if you don’t pay close attention - her wondrous playing emits a gleam of humor and hope”* (Acoustic Scene), and Don Charles has been called *“one of the best folk songwriters in a long time.”* (Victory Review)

“Unusual, unclassifiable tunes keep the music haunting - familiar and avant-garde at the same time.” (Folk Harp Journal) *“They play and sing like Richard and Linda Thompson used to.”* (Phoenix New Times)

Honed on a remote cattle ranch where they met, married and developed their music, D-Squared’s spacious sound reflects a life lived outdoors under high western skies. Their music is like a drink of cool water after a long walk through the desert.

They released their first CD - *matter of life & death* - in 1993 as Don Charles & Deb Gessner, and became known as D-Squared in 1997 upon release of their second CD – *Big Sky Full O’Dumb Stars*. A third album – *Accidentally Live* – came out in 2006.

Charles’ song “Row” was included on *Songs and Stories from Grand Canyon*, produced by Smithsonian Folkways, while many other D-Squared compositions have been featured in films, PBS documentaries, theater, compilation CDs, and other audio projects. Their song and video, “*Little Iraq*”, produced by filmmaker Cheryl Colan, recently found a spot on Neil Young’s *Living With War Today* website (www.neilyoung.com/lwwtoday).

Charles acknowledges debts to many songwriters and bands that have influenced him, among them Leonard Cohen, Van Morrison, Pentangle, Trapezoid, Metamora and Public Domain. Gessner’s influences include Eric Satie, French dance music, Irish airs and traditional Jewish melodies.

D-Squared regularly tours the country playing concerts, coffee houses, festivals and private venues. Over the years they have shared the stage with Greg Brown, Robin and Linda Williams, Bryan Bowers, Bill Morrissey, Peter Yarrow, John Denver, Chuck Pyle and Don Edwards. They have performed for thousands of K-12 students through school assembly and artist residency programs as well as conducted classes on songwriting, arranging and performance.