

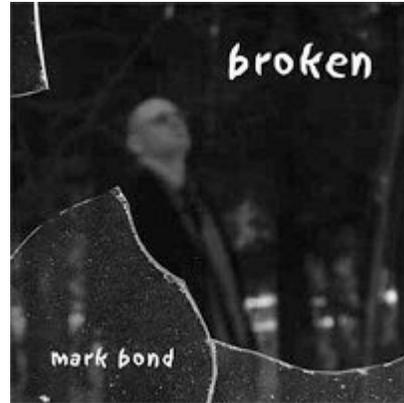
CD Review

A Message Exclusive Look At New Music

By: Joe Milliken

If you have followed, or even been around the local music scene for say the last 20 years or so, you might know the name Mark Bond.

Originally from Keene, NH and now residing in nearby Charlestown, you may have even seen Mark perform live without realizing it, the bands High Noon in the late 80's; Wild Heart in the early 90's; Vehicle in the mid-90's; and of course Last Kid Picked through 2003. They all included Mark Bond. Now that's a lot of local jamming!



Mark Bond's "Broken"

Currently Bond enjoys a less strenuous musical road schedule, preferring to gig with his own Everafter band, featuring wife Debbie on keyboards, Chris Sears on vocals and brother Rick on guitar, and Walpole, NH-native Jim Peterson with a guest appearance on drums for three tracks.

All of which has led to the release of Bond's debut solo disc titled Broken, which features eleven tracks written, arranged, and produced by Bond over several years time. Bond is also credited with vocals, guitars, bass, and drums on the disc.

"The CD took several years to complete, with some songs being written as many as six or seven years ago," Bond said in a recent interview. "The recording was done on a MAC computer using ProTools software.

"Some of the songs do come from personal experiences. For instance, "Gone Too Soon" was written shortly after 9-11, and "Broken" was written for a friend who had just gone through a terrible break up."

His Everafter band mates also contribute considerably, along with New York City guitarist extraordinaire Larry Mitchell whose Larry Mitchell Band, Bond had toured with across America opening up for national acts such as Nazareth and The Steve Morse Band.

Mitchell has also recorded and toured with Ric Ocasek of The Cars, Billy Squire and Tracy Chapman.

Mitchell takes credit for mixing the tracks at Insatiable Studios in Santa Fe, NM, co-producing two songs, and also contributes guitar, keyboards and drum programming on two tracks.

Other guest appearances include guitarist Mike Hickey, who currently plays with the metal band Venom, guitarist Kevin Boyeau from Last Kid Picked, and drummer Shawn Progen.

The CD as a whole displays strong melodic structures, ranging from acoustic guitar-based tracks such as the haunting opener "Hot Day", "What Do You Know" and "Give Me Back My Life", to the harder-edged rockers "All Along", "Fade" and "One", to the deep-bluesy atmosphere of "Midas Touch" and the title track.

Bond's talents and influences are clearly wide-ranging, with guitar-oriented rock being at the core, but also included are other acoustic sensibilities and subtle nuances that add texture and diversity throughout. His vocal style and phrasing has an alternative feel of sorts, at times to this reviewer, reminiscent of Stone Temple Pilot's Scott Weiland.

Also of note is some interesting cover art as well as a disturbing yet solemn black and white photo (inside the CD booklet) taken of the destroyed bridge after the Cold River floods in Alstead.