

The Darkest Hour

Music: Herin / Lyrics: Herin

Drums & percussion: Doane Perry
Bass: Kevin Chown
Electric & acoustic guitars: Chris Herin
Lead guitar, mandolin, flute: Martin Barre
Lead vocals: Mark Mikel
Backing vocals: Matthew Parmenter & Mark Mikel
Keyboards: Hugh Syme

The Story

One notable highlight (among so many) are *Jethro Tull* alumni guitarist *Martin Barre* and drummer *Doane Perry* together again on "*The Darkest Hour*" – and for the first time since 2011 – with Toledo's award-winning favorite son *Mark Mikel* on vocals.

(Herin): "I'm thrilled have three tenured members from the continuing Tull legacy guest on the album – and this is after the coup de gras of the maestro himself Ian Anderson guesting on "Pretending 2 Run!" Responsible for this continuing run of good fortune is the wonderful publicist Anne Leighton with whom we became acquainted in 1999 when she was working on behalf of Magna Carta (the label which released our "Presents of Mind" album in North America). Included in her roster of clients (and to this day) was working publicity for Tull/Anderson projects. We had many an interesting conversation over the years and worked on several specialty live events. Anne was (and is) always willing to consider my humble requests for favors and approached the Tull camp with impeccable timing and results.

Doane and I had several conversations about Alzheimer's since his father also suffered from the disease and he is quite versed in many of the medical complexities. He liked the song (even in its embryonic form), so I sent him a chart to outline the structure and identify a few meter twists and turns. He enthusiastically experimented and developed a great groove for the drum track with meticulously layered percussion – all which propel the song with muscular polyrhythms. Likewise, Martin enthused about playing with Doane again and contributed mandolin, flute, rhythm guitar enhancements, and of course his trademark soloing. If you listen closely I'm sure you'll get a chuckle out of the playful reference to that well-known JT tune from 1969. Martin and Doane definitely bring a powerful and identifiable energy to the track."

Mark Mikel

(Herin): Mark Mikel is a well-known Toledo musician who has been releasing albums for the past 30+ years to great critical and popular acclaim – including being one of Mike Portnoy's (Dream Theater) top 10 favorite artists of all time with his Beatles-influenced band The Pillbugs! Thanks to Kevin Chown, Tiles began opening shows around the northern Ohio / southeast Michigan area for Edwin Dare and Mark and the Pillbugs were always second on the bill. We became instant fans but drifted apart until rekindling friendships to collaborate on "Pretending 2 Run" – for which Mark worked his magic in myriad ways including string arrangements, backing vocals, and recording at his studio. I had to carve out a lead vocal spot on my solo album and "The Darkest Hour" was perfect for him – and an extra special treat playing on a track with Tull alumni!"

The Darkest Hour

I'm not sure how I got here
I'm not sure where I am
I awoke to surroundings strange
As everything has changed

Now I wander through this new and barren place
I feel the shadows overtake in a haunting déjà vu
Voices speaking only when spoken to
I crave silence in solitude

*In the darkest hour
Sideways drives the rain
Tearing all the leaves from limbs
Before the clouds give way*

Now I look for a place to hide
From dark memories
I can't change what's already done
Trees must bend and sway not to break

*In the darkest hour
Sideways drives the rain
Tearing all the leaves from limbs
Before the clouds give way
To bare the sun*

*In the darkest hour
Sideways drives the rain
Tearing all the leaves from limbs
Before the clouds give way
As darkest hours fade*