

RECORD REVIEWS

Mark Powell *Breaking Things* Independent Release

Mark Powell IS NOTED FOR two things – traditional country music with an edge and the Outlaws and Legends music festival near Abilene. And, he's just released his fifth CD, *Breaking Things*, filled with songwriting collaborations from heavy-hitters like **Dean Dillon** and **Jamie Richards**. *Breaking Things* features tunes that tell a story, teach a lesson, or issue a warning.

Setting the theme, "Keep it Country," kicks off the album. Co-written with **Jesse Raub Jr.**, the message is clear. "This Bar Needs a Town," written with **Randall Scott King** could be a scene straight out of an old West ghost town movie.

Co-written with **Ryan Stark**, the title track, "Breaking Things," is about screwing up and hard lessons learned. "I've got a long history of breaking things/I ruin things I love/It's getting so hard for me to say some things/When you break it you pay for it/Even when you're broken the same..."

"Walk Away" is the perfect cowboy love song with Dean Dillon as Powell's co-writer.

A collaboration with **Jeff Hyde**, "Over a Beer," expresses the sadness of a man with a broken heart looking for a remedy.

Jamie Richards, Dean Dillon and Mark Powell crafted "Project." It is humorous and delves deep into the psyche of a woman who needs someone to fix. "Honey, I need a home, and you need a project."

"I Hope I'm Holding You," written by Powell, Dean Dillon, and **Ryan Beaver** is pensive and filled with heart-wrenching memories.

Another tune penned with Dean Dillon, "You Look Like I Could Use A Drink" is a creative way of saying

"you've been rode hard and put up wet."

Phil Hamilton joins Powell to throw caution to the wind on "Ride with the Devil."

"If You Were a Beer" co-written with **Cody Scott** can only be classified as another cowboy love song.

"It Goes On," is the most traditional country tune on the album and is co-written with Jamie Richards. As long as you keep breathing, life goes on through the darkness and sunshine.

Sarah Hobbs and Mark Powell not only co-wrote "Good for Nothing," but also sing it as a duet.

The last tune on the album is another from Mark Powell and Dean Dillon and is a songwriter's anthem, "Song Rider."

From beginning to end, this CD is the perfect example of songwriting excellence and superb classic country. Mark Powell's smooth vocals compliment the songs and instruments and is undoubtedly his best so far.

For more visit markpowellandlariat.com/music
—JAN SIKES

Bonnie Montgomery *Forever* Independent Release

NAMED AMERIPOLITAN OUTLAW Female of the Year in 2016, singer-songwriter, **Bonnie Montgomery's** music career has taken off. The release of her new CD, *Forever*, is already getting critical acclaim.

Her voice flows like a pure, fresh country spring out of the side of a mountain and her classical guitar training emerges on this album. She takes us a step back in time to the days of **Patsy Cline** and **Tammy Wynette** with her traditional style. But, her songwriting is fresh, unique,

and relevant to today. Produced by **Chris Burns**, *Forever* was recorded in **Dale Watson's** Ameripolitan Studios in Austin.

The album starts with a version of the title track, "Forever, Intro." The Spanish tinged guitar work is phenomenal and follows through the entire album. Bonnie has her own versatile style of playing and is easily distinguishable from track to track. "Fairy Tales," features the twang of a steel guitar and fiddle and carries a positive message. "I can't help but believe everything is going to be all right."

"No More," is a putting your foot down song. With an upbeat tempo, she declares she "ain't gonna be your woman no more..."

Like an ebb and flow, Bonnie slows it down with "Thunder," filled with retrospect.

A traveling song, "Alleyways and Castles," can cause you to tap your toes.

My favorite on the album, "Comets" is a beautiful love song. Bonnie's vocal pours out like sweet nectar complementing the melody and lyrics.

"Goin' Out Tonight" is a stereotypical regret song featuring a duet with Dale Watson.

An instrumental of "Forever" along with three progressions, "Forever Intro," "Forever Interlude," and "Forever," are scattered throughout the CD. The album appropriately concludes with "Desert Flower." The lyrics come from deep inside the soul of Bonnie Montgomery.

With uncommon vocals and lyrics filled with relatable emotions and ideas, *Forever* is a great addition to anyone's music collection. Professional, tasteful and touching, you will listen repeatedly.

For more information visit: bonniemontgomerymusic.com.
—JAN SIKES

Josh Alan Cheryl Arena Ann
Armstrong & Steve Hughes
Robin Bank\$ Pete Barbeck
Oklin Bloodworth Blues Boy Bo
Zuzu Bollin Butch Bonner
Al "TNT" Broggs Doyle Bramhall
Christian Brooks Hash Brown
Sumter Bruton Aaron Burton
James Butler Paul Byrd Pops Carter
Cold Blue Steel Blind Dog Cooley Count
Blue Dempsey Crenshaw Nick Curran Josh Davis
Andrea Dawson www.knon.org Christian Dozzler Big Al Dupree Robert Ealey
Jason Elmore **Monday - Friday 6-8pm** Jimmie "Preacher" Ellis Joel Foy Denny Freeman
Anson Funderburgh Beth Garner Vernon Garrett
Memo Gonzalez R.L. Griffin Zac Harmon
Paul Harrington Hal Harris Kelly Hatcher Homer
Henderson Steve Hill Trio Tommy Hill James Hinkle
Edwin Holt Little Son Jackson Mr. Tip Jar Blind Lemon Jefferson Jerry Jines Blind Willie Johnson
Ernie Johnson Lady Pearl Johnson Stompin Bill Johnston Joe Jonas Andrew "Jr. Boy" Jones
Perry Jones Tutu Jones The Juke Jumpers Kirby Kelly Freddie King Wanda King
Bob Kirkpatrick Smokin Joe Kubek and Bnois King Larry Lampkin Lou Lazor Kerrie
LePai Betty Lewis Blue Lisa Edd Lively Jackie Don Loe Smokey Logg Lance Lopez Lady
Lotion Joey Love Mace Maben Johnny Mack Miss Marcy Randy McAllister Lee McBee Cookie McGee Curly Barefoot Miller
Dave Millsap Johnny Moeller Whistling Alex Moore Mike Morgan Sam
Myers Mitch Palmer Bobby Patterson Lucky Peterson Shawn Pittman
Mark Pollock Kathy Prather Santos Puertas Henry Qualls Johnnie Red
Ray Reed Chris Ruest Ruff Kutt Blues Band Pat Schram
Ray Sharpe The Silvertones Paul Size Texas Slim Holland K. Smith
Rollo Smith George Stancell **89.3 fm** Mike Stockton
Gregg A. Smith Tyrone Starks Jeff Stone Arvel Stricklin
Jim Suhler Robin Sylar Cricket Taylor Johnnie Taylor
Texas Johnny Boy Texas Topcats Chonita Turner
Trainreck Kenny Traylor Jimmie Vaughan
Stevie Ray Vaughan Harold Walker
T-Bone Walker Chris Watson
Drue Webber Big Jim Wells
Fuzzy Whitener Buddy
Whittington K.M.
Williams Willie Willis
U.P. Wilson J.B. Wynn
Big Charles Young
Chris Zalez



We are excited to announce the 2018 Young Guns! These are a group of top notch musicians for any age from all over the U.S.! Many of these young guns have performed with musicians such as The Allman Brothers, Eric Gales, Brad Whitford, Robert Randolph & at venues like Madison Square Garden! This is a Year you won't want to miss! We have Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, The Peterson Brothers, Brandon "Taz" Neiderauer, Reece Malone with Salvation From Sundown, Anthony "The Fallbrook Kid" Cullin's, Jake Kershaw & many many more super talents! There will be 3 days of nonstop entertainment!

We will also have the Texas 10 under 20 contest where participants from all of the US can submit a video audition for a chance to be included in the top 10 finalist! The 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners will have the opportunity to walk away with multiple prizes!
Our 1st place winner will take away a \$10,000.00 scholarship!
Submit your video at 10under20@guitarshow.com.
Top 10 finalists will be announced April 15th!

TEXAS NEXUS

BY MARY JANE FARMER

THERE ARE STAGES OF Texas music and there are stages for Texas music.

Maybe the earliest to remember is The Blue Yodeler

Jimmie Rodgers, also known as "The Father of Country Music," popular in the 1930s It was fun visiting his birth home in Meridian, Miss., and living around his last home in Kerrville.

A life cut too short, he died of tuberculosis at 35 years of age. But boy did he leave behind a legacy.

Ever heard of chili queens? We're talking 1950s now. I got to meet and hear the grand dame of them all, at The Border Folk Festival in El Paso. **Lydia Mendoza**, also known as the Lark of the Border.

She shown like the star she had been over the decades. 12-String guitar, typically beautiful dress, strong voice, crowd that wouldn't let her leave the stage.

And yes, Tejano is a stage — an on-going stage — of Texas music, emerging before—**Bob Wills & The Texas Playboys** changed country music into the classic and, yes, Texas western swing.

After that, a stage emerged known as Progressive Country or Redneck Rock, about the mid-'70s and carried nationwide by, in part, *Austin*

City Limits. We all know the emergence of the Red Dirt stage of Texas music.

This music lover wonders what the next stage of Texas music will bring. Will it, like Rodgers, combine blues and country, or have some other unique style, maybe Native American or Cajun influence?

Is there someone out there right now already bringing it to life? Who? More banjo? More harp? I want to hear it now!

And then, there's stages for music to be played on. At least three North Texas venues have built new stages, improved the stage lighting, and added other perks for the bands.

Hank's Texas Grill, in McKinney, is one that has rebuilt and now opened its new stage. About three times, or maybe even more, the size of its original stage, this one encompasses the entire east end of the building. It stands about five feet above the floor.

Musicians have two doors for load-in, and the backstage area is locked during performances. New stage lighting.

As of mid-February, there was still cosmetic work to be done to the stage and the lighting wasn't 100 percent up and running, but the sound system was. Great sound. Bring

earplugs. **David Reynolds**, Hank's manager, said they will be bringing in bigger names now on the weekends, even Nashville acts.

Love & War in Texas has doubled the size of its stage, and also simplified the load-in procedure for musicians. As many regulars can attest, there's a new concrete floor (better to boot-scoot on) and many new tables and chairs on the outdoor patio. More enclosure against the cold and better heating units. The table service is getting better, too.

And the last one to mention is a little Mom-and-Son venue up in Van Alstyne, The Cowboy Club — yep, the same one that **Robby White** sings about. After several years of hoping, The Cowboy Club now has an outdoor stage, just in time for spring weather.

There is also an area for washers-players, and an outdoor bar for quicker service. Son **Johnathan Kehler** said the stage is a repurposed trailer house, with one side cut open. It's a work-in-progress too, with hopes of being fully useable about mid-April, when the plan is to start having some Sunday afternoon live music, too. Rustic in the very early-Cheatham-Street-Warehouse manner.

'Nuf said.