

## Mp3 Steve Mednick - Dark Ages Reprise



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A 21st century political journey founded in the '60s folk rock movement. 7 MP3 Songs POP: 60's Pop, FOLK: Political Details: Mednick Rocks, W Flops New Haven Independent E-Paper by Paul Bass | October 5, 2006 09:28 AM | Permalink Paul Bass Photo This local lawyer doesn't like George Bush. He does like to play guitar and piano, and write songs. And he's good at it. Mednick has two new CDs out that mark the latest entry in the New Haven Professional Mid-Life Rock Adventure series. His name is Steve Mednick. People around here know him for his past life in politics; Mednick was a prominent former alderman and a city corporation counsel. He has been active in many state and federal campaigns as a fund-raiser and adviser. He makes his living at a private law practice. Those who knew him best always knew Mednick led another life: He was more likely to be found at Toad's Place or the Meadows or some music club than in the political clubhouse. He has an insurable collection of vintage rock ts album art. Now, at 54, he has laid down tracks of his own. His first CD, Dark Ages, has just been released. (You can find it at Cutler's, and probably later this week or early next week on the web site CDBaby, by searching Mednick's name.) Once he went into the studio, Mednick had so much material that he has another full set ready for release in a few weeks, called Buckets of Steam. These aren't throw-away, copycat songs. These are serious compositions; Mednick reaches high here, in the images and subjects of the lyrics, in the chord patterns, in the professional arrangements, in the production work by Eddie Seville. And Mednick arrives at his destination. Mednick is the latest of a string of well-known New Haven professional guys, lifelong music-lovers and amateur songwriters, to form bands and/or release recordings in middle age. (Click here to read about another such effort.) Why do it now? "Because it was there," Mednick responded. And he had the time; the second of his children entered college this fall. "The kids are finished with soccer. They're finished with school," he said. "You can either play golf or you can play rock 'n' roll."

Mednick chose the latter. And while he's pulled back from his on-the-ground political work, Dark Ages is a political foray of its own. From the opening blast of Sidestepping Into the Dark -- "Are you as dumb as you look?/ Or are you playing a game?" -- Mednick, a lifelong Democrat, has a certain Republican in his sights. His CD reflects influences from Tom Petty to the Beatles to Jackson Browne, but from that opening shot it evokes most of all Bob Dylan. And not just any Dylan, but the Dylan of Slow Train Coming, the apocalyptic, troubled, but soul-searching and spirit-reaching debut offering of the singer's born-again Christian period. No, Mednick's not a born-again Christian. But like Dylan in that period (one of Dylan's most fertile and least appreciated detours), Mednick haunts us, on piano and in his lyrics, by wrestling with his troubled soul and the realities of present-day corruption on both earthly and etheral spheres. (Sample: "Obscure the truth/ Play to our fears/ You masquerade as a harmless fool... / But we're the fools/ If we don't see there's no room for us in you heaven.") And, like that late '70s, early '80s version of Dylan, he looks beyond despair. He hopes to "hear the angels singing freedom songs of hope again." They call it the prophetic tradition: Warnings of doom coupled with calls to redemption. The vibe shifts on Bucket of Steam; the Dylan influence feels more like Planet Waves, with John Hiatt and the Fab Four thrown in, the latter most recognizably on the Sgt. Pepper-ish "Things Ensure (While the Living Pass)." That's one of several loving and introspective tributes to/ reflections on Mednick's late father. These kinds of sentiments have been known to creep up on people in their middle age, when parents die -- and, in some cases, their sons sometimes turn to the recording studio.

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