

# Tony Furtado

## The Bell

YousayFurtado Records

Very few musicians of any stripe so personify a musical genre as completely as Tony Furtado embodies Americana roots music. Tony is an evocative and soulful singer, a wide-ranging songwriter and a virtuoso multi-instrumentalist adept on banjo, cello-banjo, slide guitar, and baritone ukulele who mixes and matches sounds and styles with the flair of a master chef (he's also an accomplished sculptor, but that's another story). All the music of America is in Tony's music. *Relix* hit the nail on the head when writing of Tony Furtado: "True talent doesn't need categories."

***The Bell***, Tony's brand new album, is a special CD for a number of reasons. After 25 years of recording for such record companies as Rounder, Dualtone, What Are Records and Funzalo, Tony is finally completely independent, with his own label, YousayFurtado Records, and only one set of ears to answer to: his own. This is the first album in a long time on which Tony had complete artistic control. It's his music, done his way.

Tony proudly describes ***The Bell*** as "the most personal album of my career," and that begins with the songs. A songwriter of increasing breadth and sophistication, Tony addresses the weighty themes of life and death here with a hard-won sense of peace and acceptance. Several of the songs on ***The Bell*** (including "Tired Lion" and "Ashes of Man") deal in one way or another with the death of Tony's father, to whom the album is dedicated. Balancing those songs are compositions celebrating the birth of his son ("Star") and his own creative re-birth ("Broken Bell," "Low Road" and "Give Me Your Soul") that accompanied his recent regaining of control of his music and career with a move to a new record label and management team.

***The Bell*** is also special to Tony as it represents a return to his banjo-playing roots, with the banjo and cello-banjo far more prominent than in recent years. Long-time fans will certainly applaud this back-to-the-future move—and groove to the swampy vibe of the instrumentals "Astoria" and "Jo Jo." Tony says that playing more banjo "feels like home," and that he especially likes the "moody and menacing" feel of the lower-voiced cello-banjo, a relatively new instrument for him.

Because Tony is so happy about the new CD—and just because he can—***The Bell*** is being simultaneously released with ***Copper and Tin***, a mostly instrumental EP containing six cuts including the tunes "8th of January" and a traditional Irish medley of "The Blackhaired Lass/Rakish Paddy/The Ladies' Pantalettes." Now *that's* the way to run a record company.

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