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Friday, December 12, 2003



**Songwriters for the Brakemen have been collaborating since the 1970s.**

**Artist Of The Week: *The Brakemen***

## Band is ready for live shows

By Melody Baetens / *Special to The Detroit News*

**DETROIT**--Jon Milan and Rick Pinkerton have been writing songs together since their high school days; they don't know why. Band after band, they just write.

"We've had several bands together, but we just keep writing songs thinking, 'Why are we doing this?'" Pinkerton says. He believes there is some innate need that has been drawing them together since the 1970s when they wrote for their first group the Crowd. The two also have been the songwriters for the bands Imaginary Friend and Mabel's Dream.

There most recent collaboration is with year-old the Brakemen. Pianist and lead songwriter Milan is at the helm, and Pinkerton is the lyricist. The band started out with powerhouse bassist John Dunn and drummer Todd Glass. But since they formed the band last fall, they've recorded

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their "14 Songs by Milan and Pinkerton" album and revamped the lineup. The Brakemen now are ready to expand and play more live shows.

**Name:** The Brakemen

**Lineup:** Jon Milan, piano; Scott Clauser, guitar; Lou Simon, guitar; Darryl Lee, bass; Phillip J. Hale, keyboards; Brian Harris, drums. Milan sings on most of the record, along with fellow songwriter Pinkerton as well as guitarist Clauser and other special guests.

**Sound:** Most of the Brakemen's songs are in the vein of laid-back classic rock. Special guests such as Metro Detroit rockers Vinnie Dombrowski and Liz Larin, blues stars Thornetta Davis, Nikki James and Johnnie Bassett, and even poet John Sinclair, add an eclectic quality to the project.

**Releases:** "14 Songs by Milan and Pinkerton," CD ( Silver Swan Records, 2003).

**Next:** 5 p.m. Sunday, the Brakemen, including all the guest stars that appear on the album, celebrate the release with a performance at the Music Menu, 511 Monroe St. in Detroit. The \$5 cover goes toward recording the new album. Call the Music Menu at (313) 964-MENU.

*Melody Baetens is a Metro Detroit free-lance writer. She can be reached at melody.baetens@yahoo.com.*

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