

HYP 8261 Nils Lofgren The Loner – Nils Sings Neil

1970 was a very magical year in my life. During the making of the “After The Gold Rush” album in Topanga Canyon, California with Neil Young and our producer and brother in arms David Briggs,

I did my first real acoustic guitar and piano session work. Neil lent me his cool Martin D-18 (which appears on the inside photo of the “Gold Rush” album leaning against the wall next to him) to play on the record. Near the end of the sessions, Neil gave me this now historic guitar as a gift for my contribution and commitment to this landmark recording. It remains a treasured guitar, which I continue to play and cherish to this day.

I knew that the soul and history of the D-18 would give me my best chance of doing Neil’s songs justice. Also, David Briggs, my dear friend, producer and mentor, although no longer with us, perched his spirit on my shoulder and kept the music real.

We were all surprised how quickly I was able to embrace the project, which is a testament to Neil’s magnificent songwriting. My precious wife Amy offered constructive and valuable advice and inspiration regarding song selection and encouraged truer versions of a number of songs.

These intimate performances were recorded in our home, along with 3 dogs, 2 cats, our teenager, family & friends visiting, and a world tour to get prepared for. It required a huge amount of love, support and quiet! Thanks Amy, you’re the best.

The piano songs were also recorded live on our old Hardman 5 ft. baby grand piano that belonged to Amy’s father, who she never knew. It was a wedding gift 10 years ago from her Aunt Emily and Uncle Mike, who she sought out and befriended to learn about her Dad who died tragically when she was 16; a long, rough story of loss, acceptance and forgiveness.

It’s been heartening to know he played and sang at this piano, and I feel a presence and spirit whenever I’m playing it. The first time I ever sat down to play the Hardman piano, a complete song called “Heaven’s Answer to Blue” literally burst out through me! It appears on the “Break Away Angel” album and I believe it is Amy’s father’s spirit expressing gratitude for her understanding and forgiveness while making amends through the song for the pain and damage he left behind.

Anyway! – There’s lots of history and character in these two old instruments I used to sing Neil’s beautiful songs. I hope I’ve done them justice in your ears and in your hearts.

Peace and Believe, Nils

Nils Lofgren–vocals, guitar, piano
All songs written by Neil Young