



### **THE GABE DIXON BAND SIGNS WITH FANTASY RECORDS; SELF-TITLED ALBUM DUE AUGUST 26**

***Piano-driven Nashville trio taps Neal Cappellino to co-produce, Mindy Smith as guest vocalist, Grammy winners Dan Wilson and Tia Sillers as co-writers, and legendary Henry Diltz as cover photographer***

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Gabe Dixon Band's new self-titled album, due out on Fantasy Records on August 26, is in fact the group's third release, following the 2002 album *On a Rolling Ball* and the 2005 EP *Live at World Café*. But there's good reason Dixon, the band's writer/singer/pianist, considers it the GDB's debut.

Formed nine years ago by Dixon — then a classical piano major — and his two college roommates, bassist Winston Harrison and drummer Jano Rix, the group added a sax player and spent several years specializing in jazz-inflected, heavily improvised excursions, showcasing the virtuosity of the players. Dixon's elevated piano chops subsequently led to performances with Alison Krauss, O.A.R. and no less than Paul McCartney who tapped Dixon to play keyboards on his *Driving Rain* album and back McCartney and others on the internationally broadcast 9/11 tribute "Concert For New York City."

Offered the keyboard slot for McCartney's world tour, Dixon respectfully declined to focus on his own band and its then-yet-to-be-released debut album. But after a bout of cutbacks and regime changes at Warner Bros., the band's original label, the band reinvented itself as a three-piece song-based unit. The band's rededicated attention to arrangement, classic song-craft, and performance can be heard on the band's eponymous new album, *The Gabe Dixon Band*.

The trio cut the album live off the floor during ten days at Nashville's renowned Blackbird Studios with co-producer/engineer mixer Neal Cappellino (Alison Krauss, Mindy Smith, Jonny Lang) and with bassist Harrison doubling on "mandotar," a modified guitar he created whose sound somewhat resembles that of an electric mandolin. The album embeds vividly detailed, intensely personal and universally relatable songs in elegant yet muscular settings that draw, unabashedly and expertly, on classic rock.

*The Tennessean*, the newspaper in the band's hometown of Nashville, called it early when it stated in 2005 that the young artist "deserves to join the ranks of Jackson Browne and early Elton John in the pop pantheon." The piano-driven band has also rated favorable comparisons with the Ben Folds 5 and Bruce Hornsby.

Both the material and the supple arrangements result from "the music we heard

growing up, listening to our parents' record collections," Dixon points out. "Mostly '70s LPs by Elton John, Jackson Browne, Paul Simon, Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Carole King and James Taylor. It was a magical era, the pinnacle of pop, rock and folk in terms of songwriting and musicianship." Dixon and his bandmates have not only assimilated those influences but brought them back into the present tense, resulting in music that is instantly familiar both musically and thematically, yet still provocative and in the moment.

Given the band's innate feel for rock's glory days, it was fitting that the legendary Henry Diltz, whose unforgettable photos of The Doors and Crosby, Stills & Nash have become an indelible part of rock history, shot the album cover images.

While Dixon wrote all the album's songs, three were co-written by onetime Trip Shakespeare and Semisonic frontman Dan Wilson, whose co-write of "Not Ready To Make Nice" with the Dixie Chicks earned him a Grammy. Two songs were co-written with gifted Nashville songsmith Tia Sellers, who won a Grammy of her own for Lee Ann Womack's "I Hope You Dance." For the ballad "Further the Sky," Dixon duets with Mindy Smith, herself a Grammy nominee, at her most inspired.

Of the newfound song focus of his onetime jam band, Dixon says, "We love great songs and real musicianship, and we take time as a band to come up with something that isn't typical, because the arrangement and performance can be just as impactful as the song itself. We've become more refined, and to the point, making the impact direct and immediate. The idea is pretty simple, really: We're dedicated to playing music people like that we like too."

From this immensely promising vantage point, it's been quite a journey for a guy who a decade ago was playing Tootsie's Orchid Lounge in downtown Nashville every afternoon from 1 to 5 for tips. The bridge of the song "All Will Be Well" could serve as the credo for Dixon and his bandmates: "You've got to keep it up and don't give up and chase your dreams," he sings, "and you will find, all in time."

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#### **Artists talk about The Gabe Dixon Band:**

*"Gabe's voice is flawless, and it delivers some of the most well-crafted, heart-felt, kick ass songs I've heard in a long time. He and the band are truly gifted, and we're lucky they decided to share those gifts with the world."* — **Sara Bareilles**

*"Seeing and hearing Gabe Dixon inspires me and upsets me. It inspires me because he plays superbly written songs, beautifully with a superb band. It upsets me because I fret that I may never be this good!"* — **Jamie Cullum**

*"I can't decide whether Gabe Dixon's secret weapon is his brilliance on the piano or his heart-melting voice. I guess I'll call it a tie. We fans have already witnessed this trio's blazing live performances - their self-titled album is the recorded proof. I'm guessing that Gabe won't be a secret for long after people hear these songs."* — **Dan Wilson** (Grammy® Song Of The Year winner, "Not Ready To Make Nice")

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