



Zac Brown Band

BRIEF:

Zac Brown Band were recently named GRAMMY's "Best New Artist" and are nominated for four Academy of Country Music Awards including "Entertainer of the Year." The band's platinum-certified, major label debut 'The Foundation' - one of Billboard's Top 20 albums of 2009 - is out now (Atlantic Records) and features the band's first four No.1 hit singles including "Chicken Fried" and "Highway 20 Ride." Currently on the road with their "Breaking Southern Ground" national tour, Zac Brown Band will also join the Dave Matthews Band to perform at select shows across the U.S. this summer including New York's Citi Field. Additional information can be found at <http://www.zacbrowband.com/>.

Zac Brown Band

Bio, February 2010

After an eventful year on the charts and on the road, GRAMMY-Award winning Zac Brown Band has proven that "overnight success" can be years in the making. New fans drawn by the irresistible hit singles, the awe-inspiring musicianship and dynamic live shows might have thought the Zac Brown Band emerged from nowhere. In fact, the band has paid its dues for years and put in its time for just this moment, it may have happened quickly, but it's definitely built to last. Now, fueled by numerous honors and accolades - including their GRAMMY win for "Best New Artist," "Top New Vocal Group" from the Academy of Country Music Awards and "Breakthrough Video of the Year" from CMT and USA Weekend - the Zac Brown Band is poised to move front-and-center in 2010.

No question, the past year has been dizzying for the hardworking act. The Foundation was released on November 18, 2008 on Atlantic Records and debuted at #17 on the Billboard Top 200 Chart and #3 on the Top Country Albums Chart, it is now certified platinum by the RIAA. The first single "Chicken Fried" peaked at #1 on the Billboard Hot Country Chart, maintaining that position for two weeks, and also debuted as the second-most downloaded country single on iTunes. "Whatever It Is" and "Toes" both reached # 1 and the fourth single "Highway 20 Ride" is climbing the charts, which, Brown says, meant that he'd finally achieved what had been more than a decade in the making.

"There's no way to predict how fast everything is going to come together," adds the down-to-earth Georgian. "Or that it took 13 years to get to the beginning of it."

In the fall of 2009 Zac Brown Band successfully headlined the Breaking Ground Tour "For us to come into our own, we had to make it happen as a headliner" notes the Dahlonega, Ga.-raised Brown. There's no

question that the road-tested band had the chops to pull it off. In addition to bassist John Hopkins, fiddler Jimmy De Martini, guitarist/organist Coy Bowles and drummer Chris Fryar, this year the band has added multi-instrumentalist and songwriter Clay Cook, long known as a musician's musician and an MVP-caliber performer on the Georgia music scene. Cook, perhaps best known for his co-writes with Grammy-winner (and former Lo-Fi Masters bandmate) John Mayer, rounds out the ZBB sound on guitar, vocals, organ, mandolin and pedal steel.

"We've got a great following" Brown affirms. And while the band strongly identifies with country music and country radio and, of course, continues to have great success there, it's not an easily pigeonholed crowd; while loyal country fans show up in droves, the band also appeals to lovers of bluegrass, jam bands, reggae and seemingly everyone in between. It's no wonder that another famous genre-hopper, Michigan's Kid Rock, has performed with the band and given them his strong endorsement.

In fact, the Zac Brown Band's rehearsal space provides strong clues that the unit puts no artificial limits on itself. While one wall sports a whiteboard chock full of upcoming coast-to-coast tour dates, the other is graffitied with hundreds of song titles—sharing space on a wall that also includes a Bob Marley banner and a framed portrait of Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings. "Everything has to do with the song," Brown observes. "Every song is born and wants to go its own direction. When audiences hear a new song for the first time, if at the end of it they're going crazy and cheering, you know you've pulled it off."

Brown launched his Southern Ground record label in 2009 and signed Atlanta based artists Sonia Leigh, Levi Lowrey and Nic Cowan. In addition to the music, Brown also is launching a line of steak rubs and barbecue sauces under the Southern Ground label, and—in partnership with photographer Jeffrey Skillings and writer/bandmate Coy Bowles—is preparing the release of his first cookbook. As Brown notes, these projects have their roots in Zac's Place, a lakeside restaurant he used to co-own and run. "For me it's about creating something that's really excellent," he says. "People are going to be blown away by how good the products are."

As if all this weren't enough, Brown is developing a charitable foundation to run a children's camp (lending even more resonance to the title, The Foundation), which recently began clearing land for its planned site. Despite all the irons in the fire, Brown nonetheless calls his foundation and camp plans his "life's work." "Having the camp and giving back is important for me," he says. "I'm very blessed to have what I have, and I know a lot of that's on credit for what I do down the road. It's very important for me to keep that in mind. I want to leave something behind that does some good after I'm gone."

While Brown focuses on doing good, his audiences will continue to focus on feeling good, as the band builds upon its grassroots following with media exposure and gigs in larger venues, such as the recent high-profile gig at the Bonnaroo festival that Brown calls "electric" in both the performance and the response. (A recent swing through the late-night television circuit—David Letterman, Conan O'Brien, Craig Ferguson and Jimmy Kimmel—has only accelerated the momentum.)

And while audiences party, they'll be doing well to keep up with the musicians onstage. "We laugh all

the time,” Brown notes. “You’re either sleeping or up laughing and having a good time. Or we’re playing music. It’s better than I could have dreamed of.”

Zac Brown Band is:

Zac Brown / Lead Vocals & Guitar

Jimmy De Martini / Violin, Vocals

John Driskell Hopkins / Bass, Vocals

Coy Bowles / Guitar, Organ

Clay Cook / Guitar, Organ, Mandolin, Pedal Steel, Vocals

Chris Fryar / Drums