

★ ZBB BIOGRAPHY ★

Playing upwards of 200 dates a year, more than 3,000 shows in their career and selling more than 30,000 CDs independently, Zac Brown Band has only begun its ascent. The band's aggressive touring has helped it develop a fanatical grassroots following by winning over believers one person at a time. Driven by awe-inspiring musicianship, skillful songwriting and a dynamic live show that inspires word-of-mouth buzz, Zac Brown Band is already embraced by audiences who sing along with every word.

The Foundation was released on November 18th, 2008 on Atlantic Records and debuted at #17 on the Billboard Top 200 Chart and #3 on the Top Country Albums Chart. The first single "Chicken Fried" peaked at #1 on the Billboard Hot Country Chart and maintained that position for two weeks and also debuted as the second most downloaded country single on iTunes.

"It's kind of crazy how we can go to a place where no one's heard of us before and by the time we leave people are singing the songs," bandleader Zac Brown says. "We've got a great following." It's not an easily pigeonholed crowd either; loyal country music fans, jam lovers and seemingly everyone in between are enjoying the shows. The Zac Brown Band has already landed support slots with artists such as Sugarland, ZZ Top, Travis Tritt, Etta James, Lynyrd Skynyrd, The Allman Brothers Band, Willie Nelson and BB King.

Zac Brown gigged as a solo artist for several years with jaw-dropping flat-picking skills and an extensive catalog of originals, as well as an encyclopedic knowledge of popular songs. He formed the current incarnation of the Zac Brown Band four years ago. Members of the band include bassist John Hopkins, fiddler Jimmy De Martini and more recent additions of guitarist/organist Coy Bowles and drummer Chris Fryar. In January of 2009 multi-instrumentalist and songwriter Clay Cook joined the band; perhaps best known for his co-writes with Grammy-winner John Mayer, Cook rounds out the ZBB sound on guitar, vocals, organ, mandolin and pedal steel.

While one wall of the band's rehearsal space 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."

As important as the songs are, the band is equally serious about its ability to perform, holding the virtuosity of a bluegrass outfit like Alison Krauss & Union Station as the standard for musicianship. "Everybody in my band is able to burn his instrument down to the ground," Brown notes, matter-of-factly. "I'm blessed because the people I play with are just fantastic."

Brown's love for musical diversity is apparent from the first single, "Chicken Fried," an utterly authentic take on his Georgia-bred existence during which audiences routinely are pressed into service to sing the choruses; "Toes," which calls Jimmy Buffett to mind in its ode to beach life; and "Free," which has turned into an audience anthem during recent tour stops.

And music only scratches the surface of what Zac Brown is all about. The Dahlonega, Ga.-raised husband and father is a chef and former restaurant owner renowned for his homemade special sauces and savory Southern cooking. Additionally, he's developing a charitable foundation to run a children's camp (lending even more resonance to the album's title). 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."

But the Zac Brown Band is far from gone. And no one will be having a better time along the way. "We laugh all the time," he observes. "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." There are probably a few thousand--or hundred thousand--shows between now and the end of the line. And Brown is confident more will want to join the party.