

Bio

He was born and raised in San Antonio, TX, the fourth of four children of a physician who doubled as an Orthodox Jewish cantor and a piano-playing mother. "My earliest musical memories are of standing on the pulpit with my father and leading the congregation in ancient Hebrew melodies. It's a different kind of music, of course, than I do but it did have an influence."

His explorations into the realms of pop and rock were self-guided, as his parents didn't listen to popular music at all. One day he bought a well-used copy of Billy Joel's "Glass Houses" from a friend. There was no album jacket, just a paper sleeve. Young Gabe decided to type out all the lyrics, an exercise that, in a way, opened his eyes to the songwriting process. He avidly absorbed his sister's collection of records by The Cars, Eagles, Rolling Stones, Yes and Elton John furthering his explorations in the world of popular music.

After graduating from high school he spent the year in Israel during a period that coincided with the start of the first Gulf War. In between narrowly avoiding falling Scuds and gas mask drills, he played music, in public and, for the first time in his life, with others. "I had to interact with other musicians, especially a guitar player named Josh Ross who, by the way, claimed he was Elton John's guitar player's cousin." Besides that claim to fame, Ross was very good and the collaboration enabled Gabe to concentrate on his singing. "That experience gave me real respect for guitar players."

When he came back from Israel, he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania where he majored in music composition, focusing on melody and harmony. "Being a music major at Penn is really harrowing," he notes but he stayed the course. As a freshman, he joined Off the Beat, the campus a capella group for which he ultimately became musical director and then went on to join the university choir. Ultimately, he earned a living doing a cappella arrangements while still a student.

After graduation, Gabe moved to Los Angeles where he enrolled in USC's Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television program. Buddy Baker, who had done music for Disney film and TV, headed the course of study. To be accepted, Gabe was asked by Baker to write "charts" (arrangements) for big band, pop and orchestra. Though he'd never done anything like this before, he, dutifully, wrote them out, sent them in and was immediately accepted. He spent the next year learning the craft.

In June of 2004 he started to record his own album, going into the session with 20 songs that were whittled down to thirteen. The sound is direct, not forced; the artist encapsulates his basic approach thusly: "Sometimes I like to rock, to sing loud and play hard; sometimes we take it way back. The music dictates the approach not the other way around."

Gabe says that his songs reflect a wide range of feeling in various contexts, "I can go from the lowest lows to the highest highs. He's a writer and performer who, simply stated, has an ability to touch people and reflect his and their feeling. All of his songs are meaningful, some are poetic and, at their core, may be pop but never fluff.

Gabriel Mann is an artist whose focus and ability have all fallen brilliantly into place. The new album is, in a way, an update of that fateful Alamo Heights High talent show when his classmates discovered just who he was. Now, it's time for the rest of us to find out.



Booking Info:
Neon Entertainment
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Gabriel Mann