

## Mp3 Gold Standard - Haircut



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Groovy and witty funk rock with a horn section and a focus on melody and structure. 11 MP3 Songs  
URBAN/R&B: Funk, ROCK: Jam-band Show all album songs: Haircut Songs Details: by Andrea Myers @  
Reveillemag.com When Gold Standard lead singer Dylan Nau invited me down to the basement of his  
house for our interview, I wasn't expecting to travel four decades back in time. As we descended the  
staircase, red shag carpeting seemed to roll on for miles, and I couldn't help but feel oddly comforted.  
Nau and fellow band members Aaron Stoehl and CJ VanDerpoll toured me around the expansive, rust  
and mahogany colored basement, beginning in a dimly-lit room with a wood panel bar and pool table,  
then leading me back to a rehearsal room that has carpet running all the way up the walls and a back den  
lined with wood paneling and filled with expensive recording equipment. Somehow, I had stumbled into a  
'60s lounge-era musician's haven, complete with instruments strewn about and tap beer flowing freely.  
For a second I wished we could just ditch the interview and jam for a while, but instead we poured  
ourselves pints of ale and sat down to business. "Beer helps a lot," laughs Nau during the interview, and  
he's partly joking and partly divulging a strategy for letting loose and tapping into his creative chi. With  
Gold Standard's smooth blend of funk, white boy R&B, pop and ska, it's no wonder that an essential part  
of their creative process is simply getting in the mood. "Aaron and I will get together, and I usually have a  
groove or a riff and he'll pound out some lyrics or he'll show up with some lyrics. Then we bring it to the  
band and they fill it in with their stuff," Nau explains. "It's collaborative." There are seven members in Gold  
Standard, but Nau says that getting the group to work together is "surprisingly easy," especially  
considering their size. Songs are built up and hashed out by practicing once a week in Nau's basement  
and then testing them in the live setting and gauging the crowd's reactions. "It starts out as a basic  
concept, a structure, and then over time it flows into something else," says drummer VanDerpoll. "We

love to get loose, especially during a show. It's always spontaneous, and that's what's so fun about the group, because everybody is really good at improv, so we can just kind of hash it out and then end up right back in the song, and say, 'ok, that was good.'" On Gold Standard's second album, Haircut, which will be released this Saturday at a show at the Cabooze, the band has done a remarkable job of capturing the energy and charisma of their live shows. In contrast to last year's Swap Meet, which was dominated by Nau's buttery-smooth vocals, the tracks on Haircut trade off between Nau, trombonist Aaron Stoehr and trumpet player Jason Marks, giving the album more versatility and vivacity. Horn parts build up and burst, fading into swirling sax solos and dizzying organ parts, while vocal harmonies are stacked to create a full, complex sound. Though the music could serve as a backdrop for serious songs about love and heartbreak, most of the lyrics tend toward silly and sarcastic, giving the disc a light, party-like ambiance. Though they can often be found working the "jam" circuit in town, Gold Standard isn't easy to pigeonhole. Especially on the newest album, GS follow an efficient pop format when constructing songs, leaving little time for mental meandering and psychedelic freakouts. But, on the other hand, they're flexible. "We're kind of in between [genres]," explains VanDerpoll, "because we have structured songs, but we could make them jam songs. We've had those moments where we are playing a show and it's a bunch of jam band hippies, and we're like, ok, Dylan, play a solo for 20 minutes. And they love it!" "We kind of float from scene to scene, depending on what bar we're playing at on a particular night," agrees Stoehr. As we wrap up the formal portion of our interview and grab another beer, the guys start talking animatedly about another album they are in the process of recording. "For Christmas time," laughs Nau. "It's called 'Gold Standard presents Gold Standard Family's Golden Christmas Family Standards,'" Stoehr says with a smirk, and they all stand up and lead me to their recording studio to sample tracks. As I stand pressed against a wood paneled wall etched with illustrations of geese and dig my toes into the rust colored shag beneath my feet, I feel oddly at home. And as the Nau grins fiendishly and starts up a rough mix of Stoehr singing "Santa Clause is Coming to Town" with a thick German accent (a whole other story entirely), I secretly wish that I could be part of this wondrous Gold Standard world, too.

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