

## Rod Picott – Bio

Rod Picott [pronounced *Pie Cot*] was born on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1964 in Dover, New Hampshire and was raised in the mill town of South Berwick, Maine. Rod's father had served in the Marines, a period during which he had amassed a musically diverse record collection. In his early years Rod listened to Ray Charles, The Beatles and Bob Dylan, while later Bruce Springsteen became a personal favourite. One of Rod's closest buddies in South Berwick was singer/songwriter Slaid Cleaves and, inspired by the music of The Clash, Tom Petty, Bob Seger, Springsteen, during their high school years they formed a roots rock band called The Majic Rats [#]. In addition to The Majic Rats, Rod played in a series of garage and bar bands during his teenage years. While playing in a band called Big Rain, Rod cut and self-released a seven song EP titled **"7 Stories."**

In the early nineteen-nineties, Picott spent three years in Boulder, Colorado where he performed on the streets and in local coffeehouses. In addition, in Colorado, Rod studied songwriting with former Nashville based hit writer, Steven Allen Davis. In 1994, Rod relocated to Nashville. He soon became a regular at venues such as the Bluebird Cafe, Radio Café and Guidos. At the latter venue he compered a weekly showcase for up and coming writers called "Rod Picott's Fireside Whiskey Hour." The gig also afforded Picott regular public exposure.

Slaid Cleaves' 1997 album and Rounder/Philo debut **"No Angel Know"** recording featured four songs co-written with Picott. One of that quartet, "Wrecking Ball," first appeared on Cleaves' debut solo album **"The Promise"** [1990], a track that also featured Rod on vocals. In Y2K Cleaves follow up album featured a pair of co-writes including the title track "Broke Down." The latter song charted Picott's, at that time, recent divorce. Soon after its release, the album reached the # 1 position on the now defunct, Gavin Americana Chart.

In 1998 Rod signed with DS Management and was soon teamed with another of the organisation's acts, Alison Krauss and Union Station, on the west coast leg of the bluegrass bands national tour. The following year "Getting' To Me" co-written with Fred Eaglesmith, appeared on the latter's breakthrough album **"50 Odd Dollars"** which was released by New York based imprint, Razor & Tie.

Rod Picott's self-released debut, **"Tiger Tom Dixon's Blues,"** on his appropriately named [and solidly blue-collar sounding] Welding Rod label, surfaced in 2001. Commenting in Nashville's Music Row Magazine, writer Robert Oermann noted that the collection marked *"the birth of a major, major artist."* Tiger Tom Dixon was a pre World War II boxer and, according to Rod's grandmother, her brother's real name was Elmer Wormell. The album featured the Picott/Gurf Morlix co-write "Torn in Two," which also surfaced later that year on Gurf's album **"Fishin' In The Muddy"** [2001]. The pair had met when Morlix produced Slaid's two Rounder/Philo releases. Rod's disc included half a dozen cuts that he penned on his own [including the album title track], the Slaid Cleaves co-writes "Bring It On" and "Broke Down," plus "Not That Strong" a collaboration with Jeff Dernlan.

Picott's sophomore solo release, **"Stray Dogs,"** found David Henry retained as producer [the pair had co-produced **"Tiger Tom"**], and the featured players included Henry on a raft of instruments, plus Craig Krampf [drums], Paul Slivka [bass] with guest vocals by Slaid Cleaves and Alison Krauss. The twelve-song collection included two Cleaves co-writes, "Up All Night" co-written with Alicia Bequette, and was released in late 2002. Slaid Cleaves 2004 CD **"Wishbones,"** his first recording in the time that it has taken Rod to record and release three discs, included Picott's "Tiger Tim Dixon's Blues" and the Picott/Cleaves co-write "Sinner's Prayer." Picott's third solo album **"Girl From Arkansas"** was released in the Fall of 2004.

Supported by Matt Mauch [dobro, lap steel, harmony vocals], **"Travel Log Live 2005"** was a seventeen song live album that Picott recorded at The Evening Muse in Charlotte, North Carolina on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Picott and Henry co-produced the Slaid Cleaves album **"Unsung"** [2006], a collection of cover songs, and it was released by the Rounder/Philo label. At the 2006 SXSW annual music industry junket in Austin, Texas, Rod met Lubbock bred fiddle player Amanda Shires, and the pair began working and touring together soon afterwards. In late August 2007 to coincide with his latest U.K. tour, Picott released the studio album **"Summerbirds."** Co-produced once again by Rod and David Henry, it was released in the States the following month.

**“Sew Your Heart With Wires”** a ten-song duo collection of co-writes by Amanda Shires and Rod Picott, and recorded and engineered by the latter, was released during the Fall of 2008. During September/October that year Rod and Amanda toured Europe, undertaking dates in Italy, England, Ireland and Holland.

**Note.**

[#] The band took its name from a character in the Bruce Springsteen song "Jungleland," a track on the **“Born To Run”** album [1975].

Discography :

solo - **“Tiger Tom Dixon’s Blues”** [2001] ; **“Stray Dogs”** [2002] ; **“Girl From Arkansas”** [2004] ; **“Travel Log Live 2005”** [2005] ; **“Summerbirds”** [2007] :  
with Amanda Shires – **“Sew Your Heart With Wires”** [2008] :

**Arthur Wood**

Kerrville Kronikles 12/02, 10/04, 07/07 & 10/08.

[805 words]