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After 15 years of touring, seven studio albums and an endless parade of touring success, Philadelphia-based hip-hop blues band G. Love and



the Special Sauce was recently forced to cancel three shows on its current tour.

“Vocal chords are like a muscle,” Garrett Dutton III, lead vocalist for G. Love and the Special Sauce, said. Dutton communicated in an e-

mail because he was on a vocal restriction and unable to conduct a phone interview. “I hurt them pushing and not canceling when I was sick. Then I had to cancel more! Sucks! It’s just like an athlete spraining his ankle.”

Dutton was placed on vocal rest and spent four days unable to say a word. Louisiana fans, however, can rest assured the band is on schedule to perform at The House of Blues in New Orleans on Tuesday, Feb. 26.

“It just goes to show you how important our health is,” Dutton wrote in a blog on the band’s MySpace page. “One day you're riding around having the time of your life, in good shape and just living it up, and the next minute you're on the sideline with some stupid injury or illness. Just like that, everything changes. So stay up and stay positive, and treat your body like the temple it is!”

The path to this revelation began on the streets of Dutton’s hometown, Philadelphia.

Dutton said that he first realized he could make a living off music “the night a couple friends and I played on the street in Philly and actually made 20 bucks.”

Street performance days are a distant memory now. G. Love and the Special Sauce in 1994 released its self-titled debut album. The single “Cold Beverages” propelled the band into the mainstream, where they have remained ever since.

Dutton said he envisioned the band a little differently than what it became.

“I imagined the band that my friend Jasper has, actually. Bass, percussion, horns, drums, steel pan and me on guitar and vocals. I ended up with a more traditional trio that is now a four piece. We’ve been together for 15 years, so I guess it worked out,” he said.

Including Dutton, G. Love and the Special Sauce consists of members Jammie “Jimi Jazz” Prescott (string bass), Jeffrey “Houseman” Clemens (drums, vocals) and Mark Boyce (keyboard).

“It's funny, because I was completely unhappy and embarrassed by that record [the debut album] at first, but now, looking back, I really

love it,” Dutton said. “It’s so pure, and it just reflects a beautiful time of my life. I’m still riding the energy of that record 15 years later.”

Of all the albums G. Love has released, Dutton said “The Hustle,” released in 2004, holds the most significance.

“‘The Hustle’ was important because that was like a comeback record after getting dropped,” Dutton said.

Following the 2001 release of their album “Electric Mile,” Sony decided not to continue its relationship with G. Love and the Special Sauce. The band then signed with the independent label Bushfire Records. Still with that label, G. Love released its latest album, “Lemonade,” in 2006.

“Music is like a river, and I’m just floating down it, going where it takes me,” Dutton said, describing how G. Love’s music has changed over the years. “I would say everything has changed, and nothing’s changed.”

That statement held even more weight after Dutton explained the first song he’d ever written.

“I wrote a song about my girlfriend and my best friend,” Dutton said. “I loved my girl, and my best friend was moving away to boarding school. It was called ‘The 2 of Us.’ I don’t really see the girl any more, but my best friend is now my manager.”

Dutton said G. Love will never stray from writing, recording and touring.

“I love writing, and it’s my natural high,” Dutton said. “Creation is the best! As long as I write, I will be out here with something new to say. I

can't see ever stopping. I don't like to force it though. You gotta put the work in, and then the songs just come.”

You can learn more about G. Love and the Special Sauce on their Web site, [www.philadelphonic.com](http://www.philadelphonic.com).