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The best 16 Nashville albums of 2016 (so far)

Dave Paulson, Juli Thanki and Cindy Watts, ciwatts@tennessean.com 12:02 p.m. CDT July 15, 2016

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We're only halfway through 2016, and putting together a tidy list of Nashville's best music releases this year — so far — is already proving to be an impossible task.

Of course, this is a good problem to have.

Over the past six months, listeners have been blessed with a variety of stellar albums originating from Music City. Not only are we hearing all sorts of sounds (country, rock, jazz and bluegrass, for starters), but they're being made by artists at all points in their career: esteemed vets and modern superstars, as well as breakout sensations and hardworking songsmiths who've finally earned their due.

Dierks Bentley, 'Black' (May 27)

Dierks Bentley was vocal about his concerns following up his critically and commercially successful "Riser." He answered those questions with "Black," a collection of songs that follows the path of a relationship. The album kicks off with the sexy title track and includes an exquisite, yearning duet with Maren Morris, "I'll be the Moon," along with "It's Different for Girls," a duet with Elle King that sheds a sensitive light on how girls deal with broken hearts. As with "Riser," Bentley's latest offering takes listeners on a roller-coaster ride of the human experience. — C.W.