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Dierks Bentley, "Somewhere On A Beach" Writers Share The Stage

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Craig Shelburne • July 21, 2016



Pictured (L-R): Michael Tyler, Alexander Palmer, Dierks Bentley, Josh Mirenda, Dave Kuncio, Jaron Boyer. Photo: Ed Rode

With Dierks Bentley and all five songwriters in attendance at the No. 1 party for "Somewhere on a Beach," the venue South got a little crowded on Wednesday afternoon (July 20).

However, that didn't stop the stage from hosting a rotating cast of characters — all familiar faces on the Row.

ASCAP's Beth Brinker spoke on behalf of songwriters Dave Kuncio and Josh Mirenda. BMI's Bradley Collins introduced Alexander Palmer, primarily a pop songwriter who has roots in Germany but lives in Los Angeles. SESAC's Shannan Hatch praised Jaron Boyer and Michael Tyler.

Moving onto the publishers, Michael Knox and Kim Wiggins raved about peermusic's Boyer and Tyler. Cornman Music's Brett James and Warner/Chappell's Ryan Beuschel testified for Mirenda. and BMG Nashville's Kos Weaver spoke on Palmer's behalf.

Ron Cox of Avenue Bank, Mike Harris of UMG Nashville, Bill Mayne of Country Radio Broadcasters and Sherod Robertson of MusicRow all made remarks from the stage celebrating Bentley and the songwriters.

About 30 minutes into the party, producers Ross Copperman and Arturo Buenahora Jr. addressed the audience with good-natured comments. Copperman explained how excited he was for the songwriters to have the experience and Buenahora name-checked Shea Fowler of Cornman Music for submitting the song, and talked about how grateful he is for Bentley's support of the Nashville songwriting community.

Boyer and Tyler have been roommates over the last few years, sharing rent and insults along the way. Boyer spoke about sharing the moment with his closest friends, while Tyler remembered two years ago when they were putting their money together just to eat at Firehouse Subs.

Palmer said he was proud to share his first country cut with these particular songwriters, while Kuncio gave a shoutout to Bentley and Copperman for knocking the performance out of the park. Kuncio is based in Los Angeles and thanked Nashville for making him feel appreciated.

Mirenda joked that the preceding No. 1 speeches were the shortest ones he's ever heard. "I used to crash No. 1 parties," he admitted, "and I'd be in the back going, 'Come on....'" After the laughter, he thanked God, his wife, his parents and family and many others. He pointed out Dan Keen, a music business staple who discovered Mirenda as a fledgling songwriter at Belmont University. During his comments, he dryly stated that songwriting was a far better option than going to medical school, which was his backup plan.

At long last, Bentley stepped to the front of the stage for a few comments.

He listed friends and colleagues like Buenahora for actively finding the right songs to record. "I'm not just looking for hits. I'm trying to find songs that are hits for me," Bentley said. "So, there's a lot of songs that I'm a fan of, but I pass on them because they're not right for me, but I really loved that song." He said he

knew the song was a good fit when his manager Mary Hilliard Harrington, his publicists at The GreenRoom PR and his wife Cassidy Black all liked it.

Bentley acknowledged UMG Nashville Chairman/CEO Mike Dungan and the support from Capitol Records Nashville. “They let me put out any song I want to as a single. I have such a great relationship with them and I have from the very beginning. That’s probably why my career has taken 15 years on the slow road because I have put out some songs that probably weren’t the right choices for singles at times. But, you know, it’s a real community, and a real process of talking things back and forth, and they’re willing to let me try it.”

Bentley thanked the label’s radio promotion staff, ASCAP, Copperman (who is also a frequent co-writer), the guys in his band, and particularly the songwriters.

“Since I’ve started working with Arturo and Ross again, I’ve had less songs as a songwriter than I did before,” Bentley said with a laugh. “Going backwards! No, it’s only because we’re looking for the best songs that exist and I don’t care who’s name is on it. But what I will say is that what’s so unique about this song is these five guys. It’s tapping into the new generation of songwriters and the up-and-comers and the great stories and a lot of first singles in country. Just to be part of this and hear the stories, it’s so inspiring for me.”