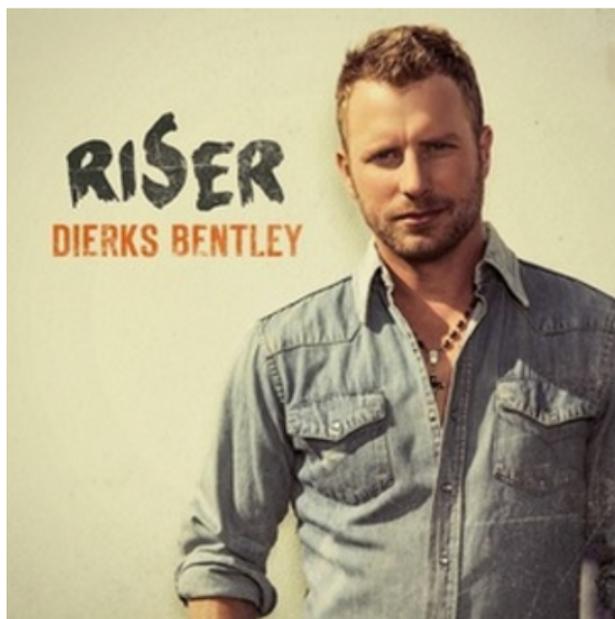


# COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE

## Review – Dierks Bentley's “Riser” Rises Above The Rest

🕒 September 2, 2015   👤 Josh Schott   📁 Reviews   🍷 Blackberry Smoke, Dierks Bentley, Jake Owen, Riser, Steve Moakler, Travis Meadows



<http://countryperspective.com/2015/09/02/review-dierks-bentleys-riser-rises-above-the-rest/>

I don't think it's a big secret to anyone that Dierks Bentley has been one of the very few in mainstream country music who consistently puts out quality music. Yet I feel like he's still overlooked and under-the-radar. His 2014 album *Riser* was a very solid album full of inspiring songs, including a Country Perspective 2014 Song of the Year candidate in "Here On Earth." It went on to be nominated for a Grammy for Best Country Album this past year. It was hands down the best of the nominations and should have won. Even some of the hokier and less serious songs ("Drunk On A Plane" comes to mind) Bentley releases aren't that bad. So it kind of baffles me that Bentley doesn't get a lot of praise. But I'm one to talk, as it was brought to my attention that Bentley had yet to be reviewed on here. Well that changes now, as today I review Bentley's album title track and current single "Riser."

This song to me is one of three gems off the album that are a must-listen (the others are "Here On Earth" and "I Hold On"). So when I saw Bentley released

“Riser” as a single I was elated. It’s a very well-written song about a man who isn’t afraid to back down from challenges the world throws at him or his woman. He takes every challenge head-on without fear or worry. The protagonist is a guy who never gives up, which makes him extremely likable and easy to cheer for. It’s an inspiring song that makes it easy to connect with from the very first listen. Speaking of the great lyrics, credit goes to Steve Moakler and Travis Meadows. That last name should ring a bell in listeners’ heads, as Meadows has written a lot of quality songs, such as Jake Owen’s “What We Ain’t Got” and Blackberry Smoke’s “Pretty Little Lie.” As Bentley said in an interview with Rolling Stone, it was important to him to release this song as a single:

“When I first heard that song, wow. It really hit me hard. Not only did we know we were going to record it, but we thought it’d be the cornerstone of the record,” says Bentley. “You hear a song like that and you have to meet the guy behind it. And Travis has been through a lot — he’s lived and breathed and died with that song. I feel honored to have it.”

While Bentley recently released “Say You Do” as his new single, he hopes that his album will have enough legs to warrant shipping “Riser” to radio. “I have a lot of respect for those guys who let me record their songs. I want the whole world to hear it and do the song justice, and give that song as big a platform as possible. Especially a song like ‘Riser,’” he says. “It has been and really could be so impactful on people’s lives.”

If you haven’t read that feature on Travis Meadows I linked above, it’s a must-read. For Bentley to show so much care for a song that clearly had a lot of thought behind it, it shows that he’s not only an artist of the people, but a good person too. I’m sure his label wasn’t that thrilled to get behind this song as a single, but Bentley’s passion pushed this to be a single. It should also be pointed out that the instrumentation on this song is fantastic too, with plenty of earthy steel guitar licks throughout it.

“Riser” is exactly what I want out of a country song: quality lyrics you can connect with and pure country instrumentation. I think I can speak on the behalf of disenfranchised traditional country music fans everywhere in saying, thank you Dierks Bentley for caring. Not a lot of mainstream country artists care about releasing quality music nowadays and are purely in it for the money and fame. Dierks at the end of the day still considers the roots of the genre. Currently this song hasn’t been rising up the airplay chart very fast, but I think Dierks and his label are content on riding with this song for a while. I think it can reach the top 30 of the chart by the end of September and I think it ultimately has a good run. Regardless of what happens, I have a great appreciation for Bentley and “Riser.” It’s one of the best singles released to country radio this year.

Grade: 10/10