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CD Reviews: Dierks Bentley

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Home

Capitol Records Nashville

On his sixth studio album, "Home," Dierks Bentley turns back toward contemporary country music after diving headfirst into roots and bluegrass sounds on 2010's fantastic "Up on the Ridge."

Those traditional, red-dirt sounds long had a place in Bentley's music, and he employs them well across this album, too. The opening honky-tonk anthem "Am I the Only One" rides across a melody of banjo and swelling steel guitar. "Heart of a Lonely Girl" is a joyful acoustic picking and fiddling romp, while "Tip It on Back" is a resonating electric country stomp.

In crafting this album, Bentley looked to blend his songwriting with work from Nashville's tunesmith corps. The split works. The title track - his own - is a patriotic heart-warmer that bucks the expected flag-waving to embrace the strength of our country's differences. The guest-written "When You Gonna Come Around" seamlessly pairs the slight rasp of Bentley's voice with Little Big Town's Karen Fairchild's smoky vocals on a classic Southern duet.

- Erik Ernst, special to Journal Sentinel