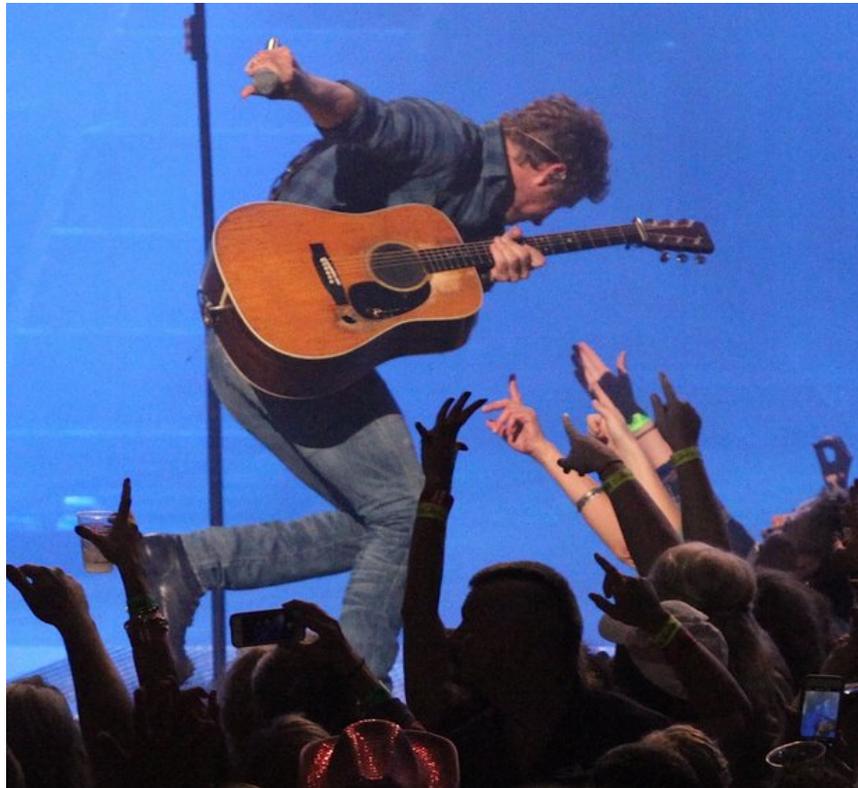


# Dierks Bentley scores with relationship concept album, 'Black' (CD review)



5/16/16

[http://www.cleveland.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2016/05/dierks\\_bentley\\_scores\\_with\\_rel.html](http://www.cleveland.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2016/05/dierks_bentley_scores_with_rel.html)

CLEVELAND, Ohio - The Bible verse says, "When I was young, I spoke as a child . . . but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

Really, there's no better way to explain the evolution of Dierks Bentley as a songwriter and as a singer. You'll find no better proof than his eighth studio album, "Black," due out on Friday, May 27.

It is a grownup album, with grownup themes, grownup lyrics and grownup performances, especially from Bentley with his pen and on the microphone.

Back in 2003, Bentley was a struggling road warrior, hell-bent on making it in music and riding songs like "What Was I Thinkin'?" and imagery of little white tank tops to the pinnacle of mainstream country. It was him, his dog Jake and nasty (but cheap) Busch Light beer.

But somewhere along the way, the man who plays Blossom Music Center on Friday, May 20, met and fell in love with Cassidy Black. They now have three kids, a home and a life far different from that party-boy persona - which may or may not have been real. Oh, and they do still have Jake, but probably not for much longer; now 15, he's undergoing chemo now.

The album before this one, "Riser," was nominated for a best country album Grammy. This one will be, as well. And unless something really good comes out between now and then, it will win.

"Black" is a concept album that is all about different relationships, from the brand-new ones, to just-for-kicks ones and more. I hesitate to call any song on the LP the best one, as there truly is not a weak cut. But "The Moon," which details a relationship built on infidelity, may have some of the most poignant lyrics.

And it's not just from one perspective. "Different For Girls" is a flat-out great tune that acknowledges the way the sexes handle breakups â and worse, the double standard applied to women if they drink and carouse.

I wish I could say I have never lived "What the Hell Did I Say?" but everyone who's ever had a shot (or 12) in one hand and a cell phone in the other knows the oops of looking at your messages the next day.

"Roses and a Time Machine" is the "Wow, now I realize just how much I blew it" moment, and "Can't Be Replaced" is the song you want to hear when you realize the grass is just fine right where you are. Grade: A.