

October 7, 2014

Billboard

Jason Aldean's 'Old Boots, New Dirt': Track-by-Track Review



Jason Aldean's *Old Boots, New Dirt*, the singer's sixth studio album (out Tuesday on Broken Bow Records) is a mixture of the party songs he has become known for -- but also shows a little bit more of an emotional and sensual side than listeners might be accustomed to. As much havoc as he will cause in concert with the uptempo-flavored tracks, on this disc the ballads take center stage. Read on for Billboard's track-by-track review of *Old Boots, New Dirt*.

"Just Gettin' Started" - Aldean gets the album started on a song that serves two purposes. It should kick off his 2015 concert dates with an exclamation point, and it's quite the sensual track -- one of many that explore that realm on the album.

"Show You Off" - Again, the romantic side of Aldean comes into full view on this song. It's got a catchy melody, and a sing-along chorus that might very well be one of his biggest.

"Burnin' It Down" - The most musically adventurous track that Aldean has ever recorded, this song peaked at No. 12 on the Hot 100 and quickly became a favorite of his female fan following.

"Tryin' To Love Me" – After the unbridled heat and passion of the first three tracks, Aldean goes a more emotional route on this very melodious track, where he expresses remorse and regret for not allowing someone in. It's quite possibly his best vocal performance to date.

"Sweet Little Somethin'" - No major musical ground plowed on this uptempo cut, but it should be a crowd favorite.

"Laid Back" – The cut is kicked off with some ultra-cool guitar riffs all throughout the album, which allows the singer a chance to get his groove on.

"Tonight Looks Good On You" – One of the more restrained productions on the record, the song is sensual yet also dramatic, as the singer admits to knowing exactly where the night is going. The only thing that could keep this from being a radio hit is if Broken Bow decides not to release it.

"Too Fast" – For all of Aldean's success with tempo and influences from other formats, *Old Boots, New Dirt* shows just how far he has come as a vocalist. He has truly mastered the art of the power ballad, as he does on this track.

"If My Truck Could Talk" – In a sense, Jason Aldean is somewhat of a modern-day version of The Statler Brothers. With songs like "Tattoos On This Town" and this single, there are few singers that feature a nostalgic lean in their music any more than Aldean -- just like the Statlers did in the 1970s and 1980s. Stylistically, there are differences, but the memories some of his songs evoke are certainly a little bit similar.

"Old Boots, New Dirt" – Looking for a new start? In this song, Aldean sings about making a new beginning in one's story. True to life? It's all up to the listener.

"I Took It With Me" – One can never outrun their past, and once again, Aldean mines the nostalgic lyric -- balanced by the rocking arrangement about being proud of your origins.

"Don't Change Gone" – One of the strongest lyrics on the album, the singer waxes a melancholy note about how changing your surroundings and your life doesn't mean the pain over a broken relationship also vanishes. In some cases, it's as strong as ever.

"Miss That Girl" – Maybe one can move on and put a broken heart behind them. Possibly. But, all it takes is one memory to bring back another...and another...as this song vividly illustrates.

"Gonna Know We Were Here" – A song about leaving your mark, it mirrors some of his past material -- but not in a way that is a complete copy.

"Two Night Town" – The set closes with the most “country” song on the album – which finds Aldean in very much a Merle Haggard-esque mood with his frustration showing. It’s a modern-day translation, but the song has that same lonesome feel.