

# TASTE OF COUNTRY

## Hot Artists to Watch in 2016: Tucker Beathard [No. 5]

Tucker Beathard is an unapologetic troublemaker. When asked to guess why he got into so much trouble growing up in Nashville, he says that maybe it was some sort of rebellion against his father, famed songwriter Casey Beathard. Or maybe he was acting out to steal attention away from his brother, who the 20-year-old describes as a “perfect child.”

Or “Maybe I just like it,” he adds with a sheepish smile.



The middle of three Beathard boys is best friends with his older brother, University of Iowa starting quarterback C.J. Beathard. He also has nothing but respect for his father — especially the hard work he put in to raise the family. There’s a lot of pride in Tucker’s voice as he talks about watching the family move up and seeing Casey go from waiting tables to dining with superstars like Kenny Chesney and Eric Church.

“I was always kind of taught growing up that nothing comes easy,” Beathard — whose new *The Demos Vol. 1* EP was released in October — says. “You gotta work for it. So I understand that and it’s a process. I don’t want anything handed to me.”

Tucker Beathard is the inspiration behind Church’s hit song “Homeboy,” co-written by Casey Beathard. Do the math and you’ll figure out Tucker was barely a teenager when he started stirring up trouble and getting suspended from school.

“I think a better question would be what didn’t I do,” he says when pushed for specifics.

“I’ve always had a more rebellious side. I was just trying to find myself and going down some different paths to try things, and getting in trouble.”

Unfortunately, the “Rock On” singer isn’t generous with the details, only revealing he was somewhat lost back then. He has matured since. That said, there’s still wild in his eyes. You don’t need to hear him admit to embracing his rebellious, experimental side to know he’s prone to ... adventure.

You will need to hear his EP to know he’s much more than just the son of a country hitmaker. Blink 182 is the band that inspired Beathard to pick up a guitar, and he says there’s remnants of guitarist Tom DeLonge’s licks in every song he plays. From there you’ll find tributes to ‘70s rockers and Bob Seger.

“The only country I listened to was my dad’s demos,” Beathard admits, “So when it came to me songwriting, I always looked up to how he wrote songs.”

His lyrics are personal, but accessible. Love and love-lost songs make up a few of the songs on *The Demos Vol. 1*, but “Momma and Jesus” stands out from the rest. The bluesy biography is the best showcase of the gritty rock-country sound fans have started to love him for. His smoky voice is light on twang, but thick with defiance.

“So I’m gonna shoot this last light out / Get a little lost before I get found / I’m gonna burn this last one down / And then turn it around / Before momma and Jesus / Run out of reasons / For not giving up on me,” he sings at the chorus.

2016 should be a fun ride for Tucker Beathard. He’ll open the year on tour with Chase Rice before heading to Europe with Dierks Bentley in April. He’s also got a date with Blake Shelton on his calendar for August, and he hopes to release a full-length album. “Rock On” seems to be a likely debut single. There’s no official release date, but February or March is the perfect time to meet the head new class of rebels.