

BRAD PAISLEY

AMERICAN SATURDAY NIGHT

Brad Paisley is a walking testament to modern-day country's possibilities. His albums are cornucopias of words and music that provide alternately poignant and hilarious journeys across the human landscape. A triple threat recognized as one of the finest singers, songwriters, and guitar slingers of his generation, he brings a wide spectrum of subjects and styles to records as diverse and accomplished as anything being done today, and he manages it all with true wit and distinctive style.

Now, with the release of his eighth album, *American Saturday Night*, Brad proves once again that he remains a master of his craft – or, more accurately, his crafts. The album's first single, "Then," became the 14th #1 of his career – and his 10th consecutive chart-topper – extending a streak unmatched by any other country artist in nearly 20 years. The fastest rising single of his career, the song spent three weeks at #1 and has become a couples favorite, with fans adopting the ballad of love growing better over time as an "our song" unlike anything Brad has ever recorded. Indeed, his singing has never been more nuanced than in "Then," or in "No," an observation of life and prayer penned with "Whiskey Lullaby" writers Jon Randall and Country Music Hall-of-Famer Bill Anderson.

Instrumentally, Brad again displays the skills that made his celebration of the guitar on his last album, *Play*, such a welcome part of the Paisley canon, on songs like "Catch All the Fish," a flat-out picking extravaganza that Brad says lyrically bookends his girlfriend-versus-fish favorite, "I'm Gonna Miss Her." Other guitar highlights include such tracks as "Oh Yeah, You're Gone," a songwriting and guitar-playing partnership with blues great Robben Ford, and "She's Her Own Woman," a bluesy celebration of a strong partner.

As for his songwriting, Brad co-wrote everything on the album and admits he's never drawn more deeply on his own life than he has in songs like "I Hope That's Me" ("This song is me," he says) and "Anything Like Me," a sweet, toe-tapping musing on fatherhood that features a vocal cameo from two-year-old William Huckleberry Paisley. Huck, incidentally, is the elder of two boys and big brother to Jasper Warren, who was born in early 2009 to proud papa Brad and wife Kimberly Williams-Paisley. While fatherhood has certainly informed his enduring gift for blending heart and humor in his music, Brad's way with a

catchy melody and lyrics that are clever yet profound are also evident in tracks like “American Saturday Night” and “Water.”

If there is a song of which he is particularly proud, though, it is “Welcome to the Future,” which is as deep as it is wide in scope.

“This is my favorite thing I’ve ever written,” he says simply. A song detailing the twists and turns of life on the smallest and largest human scales, it is Brad’s take on a world where change and fear can lead to change and progress, a world he urges all of us to embrace and celebrate. It’s a song that touches on painful moments from our past, but acknowledges them with a genuinely real spirit of hope in the recognition of how we’ve overcome, “and with an eye on the future even though we’re talking about how we’re already there.”

The album’s title is Brad’s nod to “the one night of the week everybody is willing to be entertained, to let loose and forget about what’s going on during the rest of the week. I want every night of this year’s tour to feel like Saturday night for people, and this album is filled with that feeling of weekend camaraderie – even in the more serious ones. It’s about all of us celebrating life in 2009.”

Brad is a man whose connection with fans and sense of history were both earned in front of the microphone. His teen years on the WWVA Jamboree USA were a veritable master’s degree in country music.

“That sort of on-the-job training when you’re really young is a good thing,” he says. “I mean, I was 13 the first time I played on the Jamboree and I was 20 when I left. I opened for Jimmy Dickens and Steve Wariner and Roy Clark and Charley Pride – they all came through there. I met them and watched them all play and learned as much as I could possibly learn. I’m not the same guy I would have been if I’d started playing at 20, and wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing right now. That kind of experience entertaining an audience even goes into making an album, because I’m not one of these guys that wants my record to be background music for somebody. I don’t make dinner music.”

His lifelong musical journey began at age 8 in Glen Dale, West Virginia, when his grandfather, a fan of Chet Atkins, Les Paul, and Merle Travis, gave him a guitar and taught him to play. He was accompanying himself at local events at 10, and he was in his first band, the C-Notes (“You could get us for a hundred bucks”), at 12 with his guitar teacher and mentor Hank Goddard. He followed his father’s advice to strive for excellence and began his long apprenticeship at

the Jamboree, playing for six years at the annual Jamboree in the Hills in Wheeling, as well. He cites the community's support for his early career as invaluable in his development.

After two years at West Virginia's West Liberty State College, he transferred to Nashville's Belmont University, meeting many of those who would go on to work with him both on the stage and behind the scenes. Hard work and a growing circle of contacts led ultimately to a publishing deal and then a recording contract with Arista Nashville, whose artist roster, which includes Alan Jackson and Brooks & Dunn, he had always admired.

Brad was quickly acknowledged as one of country music's most original and multi-talented artists, and his work has attracted collaborators both on record (Alison Krauss, Dolly Parton, George Jones, Bill Anderson) and in his videos, many graced by an extraordinary cast of characters, including Little Jimmy Dickens, Jason Alexander, William Shatner, Jerry Springer, Kellie Pickler, Taylor Swift, Jim Belushi, and Andy Griffith, as well as Brad's wife, Kim.

The awards and accolades naturally followed. Brad has won three GRAMMYs and been named best Male Vocalist for the last two years by the Country Music Association and the last three by the Academy of Country Music. At the 2009 ACM Awards, he also took home Video of the Year for "Waitin' on a Woman," which featured special guest Andy Griffith, and Vocal Event of the Year for his duet with Keith Urban on "Start a Band." Among his many other awards, he has also received Album of the Year honors from both the CMA and the ACM.

His singles have provided a soundtrack to many of life's big and small, profound and less-than-profound moments. He has made us cry, think, and, perhaps most importantly in a world in dire need of perspective and humor, laugh. He has been topical with songs like "Online" and "Celebrity," and poignant with "Letter to Me" and "When I Get Where I'm Going." He has been rowdy with "Mud on the Tires" and "Alcohol," and tender with "Little Moments" and "We Danced." He has brought us a host of such songs and moments, resulting in 23 Top 40 records and 14 that have hit the #1 spot, in turn leading to sales of more than 10 million albums and year after year of sold-out arena shows.

As much as Brad is the guy next door, a funny, fishing, easygoing sort, his prodigious talent, likeable personality, and strong work ethic have conspired to make him one of the genre's brightest lights. He is known for bridging the gap

between young audiences and country's roots, uniting generations with the sheer joyful exuberance of his music, stage presence, and videos. With the release of *American Saturday Night*, he offers what he says is "a record about our times. This is a record about my life and the times I'm living in and the times that my children are living in, and the love and loss and heartbreak and triumphs and everything in between."