



BIOGRAPHY

With a stunning batch of songs that push and pull at Country music's borders, Jerrod Niemann returned with the best album of his career in 2017. *THIS RIDE*, the singer-songwriter's fourth LP and his first for Curb Records, reminded fans and Country radio alike that Jerrod is one of the genre's most engaging vocalists and entertaining performers.

A singer of songs, he delivers a lyric with conviction and emotion, and is just as gifted in the studio, where he nods to history while reinventing the sound for today's audience. Onstage, he's a master communicator, and with his continuing support of the USO (United Service Organization), he lives with his patriotic heart on his sleeve. But nearly one year removed from *THIS RIDE*'s release, the relentless creator's travels are far from finished.

On *THIS RIDE*, produced by Jerrod with Jimmie Lee Sloas, he continued the outside-the-lines approach he began with 2010's *JUDGE JERROD & THE HUNG JURY* and its PLATINUM-certified Number One hit "Lover, Lover." But he did so with a maturity and experience that only comes from a nearly decade-long career on the charts, the road and the radio.

"This album is like Life 2.0 for me," says Jerrod of his creative rebirth. "If *THIS RIDE* were a movie, it'd be told from the point of view of the man in the story instead of the boy. Challenging yourself as a human being and as a man is what life is all about, and it's been rewarding to put that into my music."

Debut single "God Made a Woman" was a prime example of that hard-won personal growth. The ballad is a classy, gorgeous love song that rightfully returns the object of affection to a pedestal. After a deluge of colloquial "hey girl" shout-outs on the radio in recent years, "God Made a Woman" restored dignity to Country lyricism.

It was also indicative of Jerrod's willingness to help Country grow up. "There are a little less songs from the liver on this album, and more songs from the heart," he quips.

Recently, that new philosophy has been in full view through the star's support of American service members. In 2017, he saluted the USO with an appearance on *Celebrity Family Feud*, donating proceeds to the charity. Later that year, he embarked on a whirlwind USO Holiday Tour, entertaining troops in two continents and onboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt. And with 300,000 looking on at the 2018 National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C., Jerrod unveiled "Old Glory," a stirring anthem he describes without hesitation as his "favorite song he's ever written."

"It's 100 percent heart, zero percent politics," says the proud patriot of "Old Glory," a passion project written after watching a report on an ambush in Niger and debuted to troops overseas while on the 2017 USO Holiday Tour.

Meanwhile, the moody breakup saga "But I Do" digs just as deep as "God Made a Woman," showing off Jerrod's well-thought vocal delivery. The dark "Comeback" is similarly fraught with relationship turmoil, and in "Whiskey Waitin' on Ice," which he co-wrote, Jerrod paints a picture of the ideal date night. It's the hand-in-hand partner to "God Made a Woman."

"It's a tough love song. Guys are always tough in front of their friends, but when they get home, they're big softies," he says. "This is about a guy realizing that, because of life's rat race, he has accidentally put his wife on the back burner. And he says, 'Let's fix this.' It's good for everyone to realize that in life you have to make time to live and love too."

Like the remarkable *FREE THE MUSIC* in 2012 and 2014's *HIGH NOON*, with its PLATINUM-certified multi-week Number One smash "Drink to That All Night," *THIS RIDE* also boasted its share of fastballs, anthems meant to blare out of arena speakers and barroom jukeboxes alike. Opening track "Zero to Crazy" is a furious rocker with hints of R&B, and "Out of My Heart" opens with a lead banjo lick before exploding into a thumping wall of sound – both perfect additions to Jerrod's already high-energy concerts. And "I Ain't All There," a harmony-heavy slice of honky-tonk with guest vocals by Nineties giants Diamond Rio, keeps the album firmly rooted in classic Country.

That track highlighted the fact that Jerrod is one of the genre's most educated historians – he can discuss artists from Lefty Frizzell, whose name he has tattooed on his forearm, to Garth Brooks, for whom he wrote "Good Ride Cowboy," with equal knowledge – but in truth, he actually looked to today's string-based indie-rock while crafting *THIS RIDE*.

"What I really enjoy about indie-rock right now is that those artists are recording with a lo-fi sound and using more instruments than even mainstream Country music. Some would argue it's more organic and sounds more traditional than contemporary Country," he says. "Everything today is oversaturated with tracks and compression and all the other bells and whistles of the studio. But I want every single note in a song to count."

Jerrod hit that mark on *THIS RIDE*'s third single "I Got This," a breezy, easygoing jam which found a home on summertime playlists around the nation. Written by Rodney Clawson, Josh Osborne and Luke Dick, "I Got This" drops the listener right inside the song, thanks to visual lyrics and the air that exists between them. Even the artist himself isn't immune to its imagery. "It puts me in the driver's seat of that car in your mind," Jerrod says, "looking for someone to join me on the ride."

Or, as the case may be, on *this* ride. Putting the pedal to the metal since he started way back in his native Kansas, Jerrod's journey has been a trek with twists, turns and the occasional glance in the rearview at what he's learned along the way.

"I love and respect the entire history of Country music, but if you're ever going to leave your own mark, you have to have your own voice and vision," he says, knowing that *THIS RIDE* is far from over. "And while it's easy for people to sum you up from what you've done in the past, it's our job as artists to show behind the curtain and reveal what else we have to offer."

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