

Brandon Rhyder: Texas singer/songwriter to perform in Linden Saturday

Written by By TERRY MATHEWS, News-Telegram Arts Editor
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Between now and the second week in December, Texas singer/songwriter Brandon Rhyder is going to be on the road touring behind his summer record, "Brandon Rhyder: that's just me."

He was in Nashville a while back. He's been on a radio station-sponsored cruise with his fans. He's booked every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, including a gig at Music City Texas Nov. 2.

"I'm gone so much," he said during a recent telephone interview. "I absolutely hate missing anything with my kids. That's the hardest part."

A native of Carthage, Rhyder, 40, and his wife, Kelli, now live in Georgetown and have two children, Dusty, 7, and Mahala, 5.

"Dusty's playing football," he said. "And he'll start basketball soon. He loves sports, math and science and hates reading."

Mahala, he says, is the social butterfly of the family. He won't be surprised if she's the one who ends up in the music business, but he doesn't wish the heartaches and hardships of the business on his youngest.

"No wonder we musicians look like hell by the time we're 50," he said with a laugh. "It's not easy to live out of a suitcase, plus it's getting harder and harder for artists to make ends meet."

With the new record, Rhyder shows his commitment to the kind of music he wants to make, not the kind labels favor.

"It's unfortunate," he noted. "It's about the almighty dollar."

While selling records and having number one hits are still important to him, Rhyder admits he is committed to making music on his terms.

"The next record will be more acoustic," he explained. "This is something I'm going to continue to focus on more and more. I love the way it feels."

"That's Just Me" was recorded at The Zone in Dripping Springs. Matt Powell, a singer/songwriter/guitar player with Rhyder's band for the past three years, produced the project.

"To have Matt was huge," Rhyder admitted. "We might not have been able to come out with as great a product as we did. I'm so proud of this thing."

"Haggard," the first cut, is a clear tip of the hat to the influence Charlie Daniels and Riders in the Sky had on a young Rhyder. The single has charted at number one on the Texas Regional Radio Report.

One of the highlights of the new record is "Richest Poor People," a sweet waltz that celebrates family and appreciating the riches of simple things.

"Hell's Gate" is a powerful retelling of Central Texas wildfires.

□ *Hell's Gate's on fire*

□ □ *Two million acres gone*

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□ □ □ *But when the going gets tough*

□ □ □ *The tough keep moving on*

“Let Him” closes out the record with praise and faith – and is a reflection of Rhyder’s life at the moment.

“We’re very blessed,” he said. “We are in a great spot. If you had told me 12 years ago that we’d be able to do eight different projects and somehow carve out a niche, I would have said I couldn’t believe it.”

Rhyder’s enjoying the ride.

“I’m really, really proud of what I’m doing and where I’m at,” he said. “I’m very comfortable in my boots.”

Brandon Rhyder will be at Music City Texas in Linden Saturday, Nov. 2. Ticket are \$20. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Music begins at 8 p.m. Call 903-756-9934.

For more on Brandon Rhyder, visit <https://www.facebook.com/brandonrhydermusic>