



That Nashville Sound

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2011

That Nashville Sound's Top 100 Songs Of 2011

2011 was a fabulous year of country music. Traditional country, bluegrass, modern country and Americana were all represented well and this list proves that out.

Here are the rules by which this list was selected. It had to be released off an album that was released in 2011 or is an already-released single off a to-be-released album. If the album came out in 2010 or before, it couldn't be included- even if it wasn't released as a single until 2011.



Let us hear what you think. Anything we missed? Without further ado, here is That Nashville Sound's Top 100 Songs of 2011.

1 Ronnie Dunn - Cost of Livin'

A masterpiece that is as timely as it is well written and sung. Stripped down acoustically and emotionally, this song about struggling through this economic malaise just could be the anthem of our times. It's head and shoulders above everything else.

2 Chris Young - Neon

"Neon" is a one word stud in song- a terrifically written track that is perfect for his voice and targeted genre. Young's vocals are rich, distinctive and powerful and impart just enough emotion to rope in the listener and not let go.

3 Pistol Annies - Takin' Pills

While a number of songs off the Pistol Annies' debut album could have been here in the top ten, this one embodies the album the best. It is told from fascinatingly flawed characters. They've taken subjects that are typically associated with backwoods mentality and told stories with wit and grit that are smart as hell.

4 Stoney LaRue - Velvet

"Velvet" closes the curtain on his album with a lush, warm, and sensual slow number that is not overly sexual, but one of those songs that is just perfect to hold your girl to. Sarah Buxton chiming in on background vocals just adds to the heat.

5 Joey+Rory - "Headache"

I'm pretty sure that Joey, the female piece to this wife/husband duo, could sing the phone book and it would sound gorgeous. However, when she gets sassy and utilizes Rory's deft touch at humor in song, something magical happens. That this wasn't a giant hit on radio is the crime of 2011.

6 Vince Gill - The Old Lucky Diamond Motel

From my review over at Engine 145: "Old Lucky Diamond Hotel," a delicious slice of Americana, was inspired by the razing of several classic Route 66 landmarks. It's wrapped up in great, gritty 70s country themes like losing your virginity to a sweet Spanish stripper, filtered Pall Malls, pool shooting, and raising hell as a teenager. Gill gives the hotel more admiring description in four minutes than do most newspaper stories. At the end of the song, it's hard not to lament that they're

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demolishing a fictional location with such character.

7 Matraca Berg - Your Husband's Cheating On Us

My pal CM Wilcox over at *Country California* called this the "Best Slithering, Sassy Story Song in Which a Cheater Is Brought to Justice by Unlikely Accomplices."

8 Jason Eady - AM Country Heaven

For anyone who believes that the takeover of pop-oriented country music across the FM radio leaves something missing, this could be your new anthem. Eady performs a terrifically written tale of how AM country radio is still keeping the genre honest.

9 Emmylou Harris - The Story of Emmett Till

Using the true story of a gruesome killing of a southern black boy as the base, the song is at once sorrowful, historical and powerful. It caused me to spend another hour looking into the back-story of the song- not because it didn't provide enough details, but it wove a story so incredibly well, I had to know more.

10 Miranda Lambert - Dear Diamond

My music critic friend Sam Gazdziak of Engine 145 says, "The self-penned "Dear Diamond" should be required listening for any singer out there who believes that vocal gymnastics trump emotional delivery."

11 Emily West - I Hate You, I Love You Again

Haunting lyrics. Impeccable vocals. Throwback stylings. Damn near perfection in song.

12 Justin Haigh - All My Best Friends (Are Behind Bars)

13 Dirt Drifters - Name On My Shirt

14 Connie Smith - Ain't You Even Gonna Cry

15 Holly Williams - Blue Is My Heart

16 Jimmy Rankin - The Hurtin' Part

17 Randy Houser - In God's Time

18 Pistol Annies - Hell on Heels

19 Donna Ulisse - Hand Me Down Home

20 Eddie Bush - We Shared Time

21 Sawyer Brown - Travlin' Band

22 Chris Young - Flashlight

23 Michael Martin Murphey - Trusty Lariat

24 David Serby - I Just Stole Back What Was Mine

25 George Strait - Drinkin' Man

26 Pistol Annies - Lemon Drop

27 Jonathan Byrd - Father's Day

28 David Nail - Songs For Sale

29 Dierks Bentley - Home

30 Donna Ulisse - Shady Glen

31 Big Kenny & Jaron and the Long Road To Love - Beautiful Lies

32 Sarah Darling (with Vince Gill) - Bad Habit

33 Brett Eldridge - Raymond

34 Foster and Lloyd - Picasso's Mandolin

35 Mark Wills - Crazy Being Home

36 Miranda Lambert - All Kinds of Kinds

37 Toby Keith - Clancy's Tavern

38 Alison Krauss & Union Station - Dimming of the Day

39 George Strait - Poison

40 Bradley Gaskin- Mr. Bartender

41 Blake Shelton - Red River Blue

42 Sonia Leigh - 1978 December

43 Vince Gill - Bread and Water

44 David Nail - Sound of a Million Dreams

45 Steve Earle - The City

46 Erin Enderlin - You Don't Know Jack

47 Martina McBride - Marry Me

48 Sara Evans - What That Drink Cost Me

49 Dirt Drifters - Married Men and Hotel Rooms

50 Brad Paisley - One Of Those Lives

51 Jimmy Rankin - Maybe Nothing

52 Joe Nichols - She's Just Like That

53 Nell Robinson - Don't Light My Fire

54 Chris Young - Tomorrow

55 Alison Krauss & Union Station - Dustbowl Children



RECENT COMMENTS

[Anonymous wrote...](#)

Trigger-finger syndrome or just plain nasty? Get your facts straight before you post. If you have been reading/listening to so many of her interviews, she does school online, and this is about her duet...

[Continue >>](#)

[Anonymous wrote...](#)

Love this duet and have played it many times! Lauren is a great role model and a very smart and talented girl. She is actually a straight-A student who has said she would be a pediatrician if she...

[Continue >>](#)

[Anonymous wrote...](#)

She is a straight "A" student, doing her class work online through her hometown school. She just happens to be a very good singer, song writer, church going, pretty, funny, and...

[Continue >>](#)

[Anonymous wrote...](#)

That is correct! She is doing her school online! Please get the facts before you start judging others! Lauren is the perfect role model for people of all ages! We love you Lala! Way to rock out...

[Continue >>](#)

[Anonymous wrote...](#)

You obviously don't know anything about her :) She didn't drop out of school, she's doing her schooling online. She's pretty smart too.

[Kim Grant wrote...](#)

Thanks for recognizing some of the great independent releases that are out there!

[Anonymous wrote...](#)

Love this. Michael Grimm is amazing.

[rc136561 wrote...](#)

Good thing she can sing because dropping out of school won't get her a college degree.

[jovanb77 wrote...](#)

Simply amazing. I love it.

[Nashville Carpet Cleaners wrote...](#)

We lost so many great musicians this year. But their music still lives on.

ABOUT ME

- 56 Tommy Shaw - Sawmill
- 57 Coy Bowles - This Ole Town
- 58 Glen Campbell - A Better Place
- 59 Sierra Hull - Tell Me Tomorrow
- 60 Steve Earle - Heaven or Hell
- 61 Ronnie Dunn - How Far To Waco
- 62 Steve and Ryan Wariner - Sting Ray
- 63 Shooter Jennings - Outlaw You
- 64 Edens Edge - Amen
- 65 Eli Young Band - My Old Man's Son
- 66 Randy Travis (with Don Henley) - More Life
- 67 Trent Tomlinson - A Man Without A Woman
- 68 Alison Krauss & Union Station - Paper Airplane
- 69 The Trishas - Drive
- 70 George Strait - A Showman's Life
- 71 David Adam Byrnes - When I Get There
- 72 David Nail - Half Mile Hill
- 73 David Serby - Sugar Creek
- 74 The Henningsens - Thirst
- 75 Dirt Drifters - Something Better
- 76 Dolly Parton - Better Day
- 77 Sunny Sweeney and Jessi Colter - Good Hearted Woman
- 78 Terri Clark - Northern Girl
- 79 The Civil Wars - Barton Hallow
- 80 The Harters - If I Run
- 81 Gord Bamford - Hank Williams Lonesome
- 82 Gwendolyn - Sing This Song
- 83 Lauren Alaina - The Locket
- 84 Tommy Shaw - Give Em' Hell Harry
- 85 Wood Brothers - Shoofly Pie
- 86 Matraca Berg - The Dreaming Fields
- 87 Matt Kennon - I Can't Get Back
- 88 Miss Willie Brown - Freeland
- 89 Scotty McCreery - Dirty Dishes
- 90 Brad Paisley - New Favorite Memory
- 91 Alabama - Are You Sure Hank Done It This Way?
- 92 Sara Evans - A Little Bit Stronger
- 93 Stoney LaRue - Dresses
- 94 Blake Shelton - I'm Sorry
- 95 Thompson Square - Glass
- 96 Sierra Hull - All Because of You
- 97 Trace Adkins - Just Fishin'
- 98 Brad Paisley - A Man Don't Have To Die
- 99 Tiffany - Just That Girl
- 100 Michael Martin Murphey - The James Gang Song Trilogy

Posted by That Nashville Sound at 4:51 AM 

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Labels: Chris Young, Emily West, Emmylou Harris, Jason Eady, Joey+Rory, Justin Haigh, Miranda Lambert, Pistol Annies, Ronnie Dunn, The Dirt Drifters, The Top Tens, Vince Gill, Year End List

27 comments:

SamB said...

Nice to see the Emmylou Harris song getting a mention, it's indeed a wonderful piece of storytelling. On the other hand, I've never 'got' that Matraca Berg song in your Top 10. I love the album it's from, but 'Your Husband's Cheating On Us' is one of my least favourites from it.

And I hadn't realised Emily West had had new material - must check her out!

December 19, 2011 5:34 AM

Anonymous said...

Interesting list. No argument about #1. Really like that Thompson Square song "Glass".

December 19, 2011 6:24 AM



That Nashville Sound

My name is Ken Morton, Jr and a passion about country music and its culture

is what this site is all about. Artists and PR agencies interested in providing music to be reviewed can send press releases and CD's to:

That Nashville Sound
2727 Genesee Drive
Rocklin, CA 95765
or thatnashvillesound @
hotmail.com. A friend once told me that "country music is an entire novel written in three minutes. It's a Broadway show in three minutes. It's an entire lifetime in three minutes. A great country song can be a guiding post for someone's life." Thus, it has been for me.

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