

LOCAL CUT

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Lander, "Babysitting the Cowboy," Orange Chrome Sky (Self-released)

Posted by: [CASEY JARMAN](#) | [1 COMMENT](#)

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Tyler Stenson is the man behind Lander, and the back-to-back winner of the Portland Songwriters Association's "Songwriter of the Year" award. The PSA's annual competition draws dozens of local songsmiths, narrowed down to ten for the final round. Stenson won this year's competition (on Feb. 13) with the songs "Whistle Stop" and "Cellophane."

Stenson says that "Babysitting the Cowboy" is his current favorite of his tunes. It's a wide-eyed look back at a Wyoming childhood (the songwriter hails from Lander, Wyoming) and a busted tractor that seemed to have magical properties. But by the end of the track, there's some vagueness as to what happens to the little cowboy. We either flash forward into the grown-up version of the song's protagonist, working too hard to be moved by busted tractors and other children's games, or we get a glimpse into one of Stenson's daydreams. I'm leaning towards the latter.

It's a well-written song, to be sure. A little country twang without that new country—have you turned on a country station lately, it's unbearable!—faux-hipness. A little misty-eyed remembrance without being overly sappy. I dig it. And, though we could all suggest our own candidates for Songwriter of the Year, it's easy to see how Stenson could take an audience hostage. All you fledgling songwriters out there will have to try and steal his crown next year. Meanwhile, you can hear way more of Stenson at landerband.com.



[Download audio file \(babysitting the cowboy.mp3\)](#)

Links:

[Landerband.com](http://landerband.com)

[Portland Songwriter's Association](#)