

## Mike Molinar Promoted To President At Big Machine Music



Pictured (L-R): Big Machine Music's Vice President Grayson Stephens, President Mike Molinar and Senior Vice President of Publishing Alex Heddle.  
Photo: Alex Ferrari

Independent music publisher Big Machine Music (BMM) has announced a series of promotions, including the elevation of **Mike Molinar** to President. Effective immediately, Molinar will continue reporting to Big Machine Label Group (BMLG) CEO and Chairman **Scott Borchetta**.

BMM has also promoted **Alex Heddle** to Senior Vice President of Publishing and **Grayson Stephens** to Vice President overseeing royalties and finance. Both will continue to report to Molinar.

"I'm so proud to announce that Mike Molinar has been appointed President of Big Machine Music. His leadership, vision, artist relations and song sense are unmatched," says Borchetta. "We are also acknowledging the outstanding work and accomplishments of BMM's Alex Heddle and Grayson Stephens as they continue to power the Machine to new heights."

"I'm honored by Scott Borchetta's continued faith and partnership. Big Machine Music is my home; our incredible team and world-class songwriters are my family. I'm proud to continue our journey together," shares Molinar. "In that spirit, I can't understate how important Alex Heddle and Grayson Stephens have been through these past several years of transition and growth. I'm so happy to see their efforts recognized with such well-deserved promotions." **MR**

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## My Music Row Story: Visionary Media Group's Anastasia Brown



Anastasia Brown. Photo: Courtesy of Brown

*The "My Music Row Story" weekly column features notable members of the Nashville music industry selected by the MusicRow editorial team. These individuals serve in key roles that help advance and promote the success of our industry. This column spotlights the invaluable people that keep the wheels rolling and the music playing.*

This edition of "My Music Row Story" is sponsored by



**Anastasia Brown** is Chief Content Strategist at Visionary Media Group, where she heads up A&R for the label and directs the creation and allocation of all digital and physical content across all platforms for the company's music, film, television and scoring

projects.

Prior to joining VMG, Brown had carved out a path that encompasses music, film and television constructing a creative bridge between Nashville and Hollywood. With a career featuring milestones including DOVE and Emmy wins and Grammy and Oscar nominations, Brown's traversed a three-decade career honing expertise as a music supervisor, artist manager, music publisher, film/soundtrack/TV producer, author, TV personality, A&R/label executive and content creator.

While heading up **Miles Copeland's** Nashville division of Firststars Management and Ark 21 Records, Brown worked with **Keith Urban, Waylon Jennings, Peter Frampton, John Berry, Junior Brown** and **Leon Russell** in various capacities to both launch and propel their careers. Serving as distribution consultant and music supervisor for the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corporation, Brown coordinated the distribution of the documentary For the Love of Music: The Story of Nashville on ABC. As a TV music consultant for Warner Nashville, she made 27 sync placements in a six-month period, including songs by **Blake Shelton, Joanna Cotton, Zac Brown Band, Brett Eldredge** and **Hunter Hayes**.

In the production arena, Brown has developed four TV series and two films including the Sony Classics biopic on the life of **Hank Williams, Sr.**, I Saw the Light. On the other side of the camera, Brown starred as a judge for three seasons of the USA Network talent competition Nashville Star. Brown also led the charge to grow a self-sustaining film, TV, scoring and post-production industry with the goal to work with local content creators to ensure this becomes a reality.

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**MusicRow: Where did you grow up?**

Denver, Colorado. My dad was a Navy helicopter pilot. After saving seven gunned-down pilots and almost getting killed himself, he was drawn to ministry and became an Episcopal priest. So I sang in his choir all my life. I also sang in bands in high school and college. I loved everything about music but the singing in front of an audience part. That's the part that wasn't fun, but I loved finding the right musicians, selecting the songs and getting us gigs.

**Did you always know you wanted to pursue music or was it more of a hobby?**

With a priest as a father, I couldn't really join a family business. I knew about listening to God's purpose as a young age and I was so worried that God's calling for me was to become a nun. The problem with that is I liked boys so I kept hoping and praying that my purpose involved music, writing or journalism. [Laughs]

Without any connections in those industries, I just moved to Nashville in 1990 with an open mind. Then I just kept on showing up. I got a job with **Janice Wendell** at Eric Ericson & Associates. Eventually the Acuff and Opryland accounts became my account, so I started getting a little closer to meeting the right people and being in the right rooms and kept showing up.

**How did you get your first big break?**

In '93, I went to this ASCAP album release party with **Kennedy Rose** on **Sting's** label and Miles Copeland was there. I was 26. I met Miles and we had this 30 minute, high-level conversation. I was naive enough to think, "I'm going to do business with this man," not knowing what a legend he was yet. He had been looking for someone to start a Nashville office, which I didn't know. He was searching for someone that he could groom and he thought the same thing. I negotiated a 50-50 deal with him for the Nashville office [of Firststars Management and Ark 21 Records].

**What are some fond memories from that time?**

I had loved **The Police** growing up. I had a couple posters in my childhood bedroom and one of them was The Police. One of the jobs Miles gave me was to exploit Sting's catalog in Nashville. Early on, **Tammy Wynette** wanted to sing a song with Sting, so I had to pick him up at the airport within the first two months of working with Miles Copeland. I thought he might not be that cute in person, but he was. [Laughs]

I also got him a **Waylon Jennings** cut and the **Toby Keith** cut, "I'm So Happy I Can't Stop Crying," which went to No. 2. When his song went to the top of the charts with Toby, he came in for CMAs. He asked who should dress him and I said, "**Manuel**, of course." It was a great experience.

**Peter Frampton** had moved to Nashville [around that time], so I was his day-to-day with Miles. I also worked with **Junior Brown**.

**What was an impactful moment you had when working with Miles?**

One day, one of our songwriters told me I should go check out this guy at Bluebird that night, so I went. He was from Australia, he had long blonde hair and he was



*Miles Copeland and Anastasia Brown. Photo: Courtesy of Brown*



Randy Owen, Anastasia Brown and Blake Shelton as judges on Nashville Star. Photo: Courtesy of Brown

playing the electric guitar at the Bluebird. It was Keith Urban with his little baby amp just wailing. Then I went to see him in his band. I called Miles and said, "I think we found the next Police, and I think it's international." Miles flew in within days.

Keith eventually signed to Capitol and we began that journey. Miles does this songwriting retreat at his castle in France. That's how Keith got to know some of the The Go-Go's, with whom he wrote his first No. 1 hit, "But For The Grace Of God."

Those were some of the funnest times ever. It was less about the business and more about the music.

### What was next for you?

Eventually, Miles called me up and told me he was going to close up shop. Sting and him had parted ways after 25 years or so. I was engaged in building a home at the time. He asked if I wanted to take over without him.

While working with Miles, I would see the sync money Sting was getting, as well as the money from some films and documentaries Miles had produced. At that time in the music business, mechanicals royalties were getting really small. So we closed the company and I decided to reinvent myself do the biggest pivot of my life [into music supervision in film and TV].

I love songwriters, I'm really protective of them. I decided I was going to build this house with my husband (at the time) and give back to the city that I love. **Gary Haber** had this event called the Nashville Screenwriters Conference, so I joined the board. Screenwriter **Les Bohem** was also a founder—he and I added a music component to the Nashville Screenwriters Conference. We had **T Bone Burnett** come be our keynote speaker right during the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* explosion.

All the people I would meet volunteering through the Screenwriters Conference would ask me about great music out of Nashville that they should use in their projects. One day Les Bohem said, "Do you think you could get **Emmylou Harris** to record my end title for this **Steven Spielberg** mini series called Taken?" I paused and said, "If you hire me as your music supervisor, I will do everything I can to deliver it if the song is right for her." I didn't have one credit.

### What an opportunity!

It was the best way to learn music supervision, because the [movie's plot] started in 1944 and ended in current time. We used a **Doris Day** song in the first episode. In the '80s, it was **Jackson Browne**. The music told you what year you were in, which was awesome, but I had to get creative [about licensing].

I hired **Buddy Miller** to produce his first track for a film or TV show with the Emmylou song as the end title. We won an Emmy. That was the beginning and I was hooked. I loved seeing money go straight to songwriters.

### How did you continue to build your career as a music supervisor?

First, I had to learn the craft on the job. I didn't want to drop the ball. As a music supervisor in TV, you're not only creative, you also have to do the licenses. In film it's usually separate, unless it's an indie film. [While I was learning to] negotiate those licenses, I called **Del Bryant** all the time. He really helped me.

Getting jobs meant I had to spend a lot of time in LA, which means I wasn't here as much. Sync and music supervision weren't common words in Nashville in 2002, so I kept on going to LA to chase projects. I chased *August Rush* so hard for a year and a half. I just would not give up. I wanted that movie so badly.



**What's one of your favorite projects you've gotten to work on as a music supervisor?**

*August Rush* is one of my favorites. I worked on that with **Julia Michels**, who became a close friend. We did get an Oscar nomination for Best Song. *The Shack* is another one that I'm proud of because, thanks to Lionsgate, we got to score the entire movie at Ocean Way in Nashville. To be in that studio with 74 Nashville musicians was amazing. There were so many songs that written in Nashville for that movie and for the soundtrack.

**You joined Visionary Media Group as Chief Content Strategist in 2020. Tell me about that move.**

I had just finished two television series and was about to start a movie and another TV series when the pandemic hit. My projects got put on hold and I was like every touring musician in town, saying "uh-oh."

All of a sudden I get a call from **Ron Zamber**, the chairman of VPEG private equity group, he and **Nick Sciorra** had decided to establish a media company in Nashville five years before he called me. Ron and his team had been making some calls and my name kept coming up to head up content and act as A&R for the record label within the media group. So we met and I found out he is just as purpose-driven as I am. He feels like Nashville is a culture that can be shared with the world through content. So I came on as chief content strategist. Of course I'll continue music supervising, but I'll co-music supervise with **Andrew Weaver** and some other music supervisors and composers.

**What is the most fulfilling thing about what you do now?**

Working with local creatives that have the same goal. We've created a forum of actors and producers that are creating content full-time—not as a hobby or a one-off project. This is what they want to do full-time. We're all sharing sources and locking arms, whether we work together on a specific project or not. A rising tide lifts all boats.

**Who have been some of your mentors?**

Miles Copeland was definitely my first. Les Bohem is my second. There's a gaggle of girls—**Dawn Solér**, **Laray Mayfield**, **Julia Michels** and **Frankie Pine**—we are there for each other almost like a football team. If someone needs advice about Nashville, I'm here. If I need advice about something I'm not close to, I've got this group of girls. We all lift each other up.

**What's some of the best advice you've ever gotten?**

My grandmother would say, "Anastasia. You have two ears and one mouth. This means you listen more than you talk." [Laughs]

Another one is the "no's" you say are as important as the projects you agree to do. I wish my 30 year old self knew this, but if I don't get a project or I don't get something I really want, I now know it wasn't mine to begin with. **MR**



Pictured (L-R): Johnathon Schaeck, Cody Belew, Leigh Nash, Nick Sciorra, Anastasia Brown, Ron Zamber, O.N.E The Duo's Prana Supreme Diggs & Tekitha Washington and Clayton Anderson. Photo: Courtesy of Brown

# COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

## CHART ACTION

### New On The Chart —Debuting This Week

song/artist/label—Chart Position

I'm All In/Glen Shelton/Jordash

Used To Be Me/Joe Hermes/OTM Productions

Take Me Out To The Bar/Grant Gilbert/River House Artists

### Greatest Spin Increase

song/artist/label—Spin Increase

Everything I Love/Morgan Wallen/Big Loud/Mercury/Republic - 334

Love You Anyway/Luke Combs/River House Artists/Columbia Nashville - 144

We Don't Fight Anymore/Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton/Big Machine - 126

But I Got A Beer In My Hand/Luke Bryan/Capitol Nashville - 114

Try That In A Small Town/Jason Aldean/Broken Bow - 110

### Most Added

song/artist/label—No. of Adds

Everything I Love/Morgan Wallen/Big Loud/Mercury/Republic - 20

We Don't Fight Anymore/Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton/Big Machine - 6

Wine Country/Hannah Ellis/Curb Records - 5

Something Real/Dierks Bentley/Capitol Nashville - 5

### On Deck—Soon To Be Charting

song/artist/label—No. of Spins

Ain't Buyin' It/XOLEX/XOLEX Music - 114

High Lonesome Stranger/CIMARRON 615/Blue Elan Records/KZZ Music - 113

Drinkin' Problems/Dillon Carmichael/Riser House Records - 108

Smoke On My Mind/Michael David - 103

June in July/Robby Johnson/Nashville Record Company - 97

## NO. 1 SONG



Two weeks after topping the *MusicRow* CountryBreakout Radio Chart with "Fast Car," **Luke Combs** is back again with "Love You Anyway."

Combs wrote the tune with **Ray Fulcher** and **Dan Isbell** and it appears on his fourth full-length album, *Gettin' Old*.

"Love You Anyway" was [chosen as a single](#) by Combs' fans. When given the choice between "Love You Anyway" and "Five Leaf Clover" going to radio, Combs' fans voted for the former.

The tune currently sits at No. 9 on the *Billboard* Country Airplay chart and No. 9 on the Mediabase chart.



Each songwriter and artist earning No. 1 credit on the *MusicRow* Chart receives a *MusicRow* Challenge Coin. [Click here](#) to view a full list of recipients.

## MusicRow CountryBreakout Chart Reporting Stations

WHMA Anniston, AL	KKMV Rupert, ID	WTCM Traverse City, MI	KWEY Weatherford, OK	KYKX Longview, TX
WXFL Florence, AL	WOOZ Cartersville, IL	KZPK St. Cloud, MN	WCJW Warsaw, NY	KLLL Lubbock, TX
KQUS Hot Springs, AR	WAAG Galesburg, IL	KFAV Warrenton, MO	KWOX Woodward, OK	KXOX Sweetwater, TX
KDXY Jonesboro, AR	WYOT Rochelle, IL	WBBN Laurel, MS	KRKT Albany, OR	WAKG Danville, VA
KBOD Mountain Home, AR	WRTB Rockford, IL	WFAY Fayetteville, NC	KRWQ Medford, OR	WAXX Altoona, WI
KWCK Searcy, AR	WIFE Connersville, IN	KZZY Devils Lake, ND	WVNW Lewistown, PA	WJVL Janesville, WI
KRAZ Santa Barbara, CA	KAIR Atchison, KS	KYCK Thompson, ND	WNBT Mansfield, PA	WGLR Platteville, WI
WCTY Norwich, CT	KQZQ Pratt, KS	KRVN Lexington, NE	WCFT Selinsgrove, PA	WQPC Prairie du Chien, WI
WUBB Savannah, GA	WKDZ Cadiz, KY	KFGE Lincoln, NE	KZZI Spearfish, SD	WCOW Sparta, WI
KXIA Marshalltown, IA	WDHR Pikeville, KY	KBRX O'Neill, NE	WUCZ Carthage, TN	WDGG Huntington, WV
KIAI Mason City, IA	KRRV Alexandria, LA	KQBA Santa Fe, NM	WDKN Dickson, TN	
KBOE Oskaloosa, IA	WKPE Hyannis, MA	WDNB Monticello, NY	WLLX Lawrenceburg, TN	
KTHK Idaho Falls, ID	KYSM Mankato, MN	KITX Hugo, OK	KFTX Corpus Christi, TX	

# COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

Weeks On Chart	Last Week	This Week	Song / Artist / Label	Spins / Reports	% Spin Power	Spins +/-
12	3	1	<b>Love You Anyway / Luke Combs</b> / River House Artists/Columbia Nashville	1803/56	9	144
26	2	2	<b>Memory Lane / Old Dominion</b> / Arista Nashville	1694/49	1	11
16	7	3	<b>Bury Me In Georgia / Kane Brown</b> / RCA Nashville	1639/55	7	106
23	5	4	<b>Drinkaby / Cole Swindell</b> / Warner Music Nashville	1633/58	1	21
24	1	5	<b>Need A Favor / Jelly Roll</b> / Stoney Creek Records	1584/45	-8	-129
9	4	6	<b>Fast Car / Luke Combs</b> / River House Artists/Columbia Nashville	1583/46	-4	-72
17	8	7	<b>Standing Room Only / Tim McGraw</b> / Big Machine Records	1493/59	3	41
21	6	8	<b>Next Thing You Know / Jordan Davis</b> / MCA Nashville	1437/39	-8	-117
12	10	9	<b>Religiously / Bailey Zimmerman</b> / Elektra/Warner Music Nashville	1349/55	4	51
24	9	10	<b>Looking For You / Chris Young</b> / RCA Nashville	1335/55	-1	-17
42	11	11	<b>Can't Have Mine / Dylan Scott</b> / Curb	1317/56	5	67
9	13	12	<b>But I Got A Beer In My Hand / Luke Bryan</b> / Capitol Nashville	1292/55	10	114
39	12	13	<b>Girl In Mine / Parmalee</b> / Stoney Creek Records	1192/46	0	3
8	14	14	<b>Watermelon Moonshine / Lainey Wilson</b> / Broken Bow Records	1128/56	5	50
19	15	15	<b>Light On In The Kitchen / Ashley McBryde</b> / Warner Music Nashville	1021/51	-1	-10
21	16	16	<b>All I Need Is You / Chris Janson</b> / BMLG/Harpeth 60 Records	985/49	0	2
7	18	17	<b>Try That In A Small Town / Jason Aldean</b> / Broken Bow	979/52	13	110
28	17	18	<b>If You Go Down (I'm Goin' Down Too) / Kelsea Ballerini</b> / Black River Entertainment	925/48	3	23
26	20	19	<b>Stars Like Confetti / Dustin Lynch</b> / Broken Bow Records	834/46	3	27
32	19	20	<b>Heaven By Then / Brantley Gilbert &amp; Blake Shelton feat. Vince Gill</b> / Valory	831/42	-2	-19
12	21	21	<b>Nobody's Nobody / Brothers Osborne</b> / EMI	819/44	3	21
14	22	22	<b>Creek Will Rise / Conner Smith</b> / Valory	781/47	2	19
27	23	23	<b>Fearless / Jackson Dean</b> / Big Machine	752/42	0	0
14	24	24	<b>Fires Don't Start Themselves / Darius Rucker</b> / Capitol	681/38	0	1
8	26	25	<b>Different 'Round Here / Riley Green (feat. Luke Combs)</b> / BMLG	679/43	4	23
17	25	26	<b>Buy A Bar / Tim Dugger</b> / Curb Records	673/43	-1	-6
26	28	27	<b>God Gave Me A Girl / Russell Dickerson</b> / Triple Tigers Records	637/38	5	33
5	29	28	<b>See You Next Summer / Brian Kelley</b> / Big Machine Records	618/38	6	34
18	27	29	<b>Save The Roses / Lee Brice</b> / Curb	608/32	-1	-6
10	32	30	<b>Blacktop Don't / BoomTown Saints</b> / 8 Track Entertainment	554/40	3	16
3	40	31	<b>We Don't Fight Anymore / Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton</b> / Big Machine	547/42	30	126
27	31	32	<b>We Got History / Mitchell Tenpenny</b> / Riser House Records	545/33	0	-1
27	33	33	<b>Jealous Of Myself / Tenille Arts</b> / Dreamcatcher Artists	531/30	1	6
7	34	34	<b>Truck Bed / HARDY</b> / Big Loud Records	523/31	9	43
6	35	35	<b>Out Of That Truck / Carrie Underwood</b> / Capitol Records	498/31	5	25
4	39	36	<b>Glory Days / Gabby Barrett</b> / Warner Music Nashville	493/37	15	65
5	37	37	<b>On The Boat Again / Jake Owen</b> / Big Loud Records	487/33	8	37
2	74	38	<b>Everything I Love / Morgan Wallen</b> / Big Loud/Mercury/Republic	473/28	127	334
18	41	39	<b>The Longer I Live / Aaron Goodvin &amp; Ryan Kinder</b> / Reviver Records/Sakamoto Music/Warner Music Canada	467/28	14	57





Weeks On Chart	Last Week	This Week	Song / Artist / Label	Spins / Reports	% Spin Power	Spins +/-
14	38	40	<b>Dents On A Chevy / Ty Herndon, Terri Clark / Pivotal Records</b>	443/28	2	8
49	36	41	<b>Something In The Orange / Zach Bryan / Belting Bronco/Warner Records</b>	427/18	-7	-30
8	43	42	<b>Make You Mine / MaRynn Taylor / Black River Records</b>	369/30	14	46
3	45	43	<b>Something Real / Dierks Bentley / Capitol Nashville</b>	362/25	24	70
10	42	44	<b>Blue Suede Boots / Coffey Anderson / Coffey Global LLC</b>	353/26	5	16
5	47	45	<b>World On Fire / Nate Smith / Sony Music Nashville</b>	335/24	17	49
12	44	46	<b>State You Left Me In / Jake Worthington / Big Loud</b>	324/23	10	29
43	46	47	<b>If He Wanted To He Would / Kylie Morgan / EMI Records Nashville</b>	276/18	-4	-11
19	30	48	<b>3 Tequila Floor / Josiah Siska / Black River</b>	268/16	-54	-314
3	53	49	<b>Burn It Down / Parker McCollum / MCA Nashville</b>	261/19	21	46
9	48	50	<b>Wings Of A White Dove / Flat River Band / Early Bird Records</b>	261/19	2	6
5	49	51	<b>Should've Known Better / Erin Viancourt / Late August Records</b>	255/25	11	25
15	55	52	<b>I Ain't Done Singin' Yet / Jon Brennan / CDX Records</b>	240/13	17	34
19	50	53	<b>We Ride / Bryan Martin / Average Joes Entertainment</b>	231/19	1	2
5	54	54	<b>My Favorite / Glen Templeton / Coastal Cowboy Entertainment</b>	226/15	7	14
19	51	55	<b>Sunday Chapel / Dave Herrera / Brokerade, Inc</b>	223/13	0	0
3	58	56	<b>Save Me / Jelly Roll (with Lainey Wilson) / Stoney Creek</b>	218/14	12	23
24	52	57	<b>Marry That Girl / Easton Corbin / Stone Country Records</b>	215/14	-3	-6
6	56	58	<b>Seven Year Ache / Aaron Watson / BIG Label Records</b>	204/16	3	6
2	69	59	<b>Wine Country / Hannah Ellis / Curb Records</b>	177/17	23	33
3	65	60	<b>When The Rodeo Is Over (Where Does The Cowboy Go?) / Tanya Tucker/ Fantasy/Concord</b>	176/12	15	23
10	62	61	<b>Trouble / Rachel Stacy / CDX Records</b>	175/9	12	19
8	60	62	<b>If I Die Young Pt. 2 / Kimberly Perry / RECORDS Nashville/Columbia Records</b>	175/13	-1	-2
7	66	63	<b>Bad Day To Be A Cold Beer / Chase Rice / Dack Janiels/Broken Bow</b>	174/12	15	23
5	67	64	<b>If I Was A Beer / Ken Domash / Thunder Mountain Records</b>	169/16	14	21
13	61	65	<b>Little Bit Of You / Brooke Moriber / Reviver Records</b>	169/14	-1	-1
13	64	66	<b>23 / Chayce Beckham / BMG</b>	165/14	7	11
1	88	67	<b>I'm All In / Glen Shelton / Jordash</b>	164/10	52	56
6	76	68	<b>Could Really Use a Friend / Rebecca Moreland / Kino Mas Entertainment</b>	161/12	16	22
8	63	69	<b>Rest In Peace / Taylor Austin Dye / LMG</b>	155/12	0	0
3	78	70	<b>Brokenhearted / Joe Nichols / Quartz Hill Records</b>	154/10	16	21
2	73	71	<b>Mind On You / George Birge / RECORDS</b>	152/11	9	12
7	72	72	<b>Why Didn't I Call You / Andrew Salgado / Synapse Publishing &amp; Entertainment, LLC</b>	146/11	4	5
5	75	73	<b>Glass Half Empty / Chris Clark / Tribe 615</b>	143/8	3	4
6	71	74	<b>Wind Up / Josh Mirenda / Average Joes</b>	143/13	0	0
21	59	75	<b>Honky Tonk Roll / Wade Bowen / Bowen Sounds</b>	143/10	-21	-38
2	79	76	<b>Blaze A Trail / Ashley Barron / SSM Nashville</b>	137/13	4	5
13	77	77	<b>Shoot Tequila / Tigirlily Gold / Monument Records</b>	130/9	-4	-5
5	80	78	<b>Live While You Got The Chance / Luke Kelly / General Records</b>	128/8	0	0
1	89	79	<b>Used To Be Me / Joe Hermes / OTM Productions</b>	123/12	15	16
1	81	80	<b>Take Me Out To The Bar / Grant Gilbert / River House Artists</b>	123/10	-2	-3

No. 1 Song
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## On The Row: Lauren Watkins Puts Her Hazy, Honey-Glazed Sound On Display



Lauren Watkins. Photo: Courtesy of MusicRow

Music has followed rising singer-songwriter **Lauren Watkins** everywhere life has taken her. The Nashville native combines her clever songwriting style, guitars skills and hazy yet silky vocals to create a soothing, southern blend.

Watkins [officially signed a record deal with Big Loud Records and Songs & Daughters](#), the label helmed by hit songwriter and artist **Niccole Galyon**, and released her debut EP *Introducing Lauren Watkins* in April. Spring continued to be a big season for Watkins, as she was [named SiriusXM The Highway's newest "Highway Find"](#) in May. She's not slowing down this summer as she has been on the bill for festivals including CMA Fest and Carolina Country Fest and is slated for more in the coming weeks.

Watkins recently stopped by *MusicRow* to tell her story and share a little of her latest project and recent work.

Growing up in Music City, she and her older sister—SMACKSongs writer **Caroline Watkins**—played at various spots around town. The first gig they booked was at the sports bar Corner Pub, which didn't typically have live music. As they got older, the sisters started playing downtown at the Broadway bars as well as Puckett's locations.

Watkins then left Nashville to attend the University of Mississippi—known as Ole Miss—and study marketing.

"I was still doing music, because I could never fully [stop]. I wasn't playing shows, but I always had my guitar with me in every place I lived in college and would [play] for my roommates and [post] little cover videos on Instagram. I just couldn't ever not do music," she shares.

It wasn't until Caroline, who was still playing live shows, came to perform in Oxford, Mississippi and pulled her up on stage that Watkins remembered how much she loved performing live.

"That was the turning point where I [decided], 'I'm going to come home and [pursue] music.'"

Watkins notes that she wanted to stay and finish school with her best friends, having developed special bonds and a deep affinity for Ole Miss. She began writing songs while still in college to give herself every opportunity to flourish musically once she returned home. Watkins also got to know a local cover band and started to play gigs with them.

"Ole Miss," one of the tracks on the project, is dedicated to her alma mater and has an accompanying video that was filmed in Oxford along with the video for track "Anybody But You."

After graduating in May of 2021, she moved back to Nashville and signed a publishing deal with Songs & Daughters later that year. As a newly-signed artist, Watkins is introducing herself and her talents to the country music space with her seven-song collection. Inspired by stars such as **Kacey Musgraves**, she creates clever tunes that utilize traditional country elements.



Produced by Joey Moi, Introducing Lauren Watkins includes the cleverly sugared single “Shirley Temple,” which Watkins wrote alongside Galyon and Meg McRee.

“It is my favorite song from [the EP] and it seems to have gotten a pretty good response,” she shares. “I’m just really proud it.”

The EP also features single “Camel Blues,” which was one of the first Introducing Lauren Watkins releases along with “Shirley Temple,” and rowdy track “Sleeping In My Makeup,” written by Watkins, McRee, Tofer Brown and Lauren Hungate.

During her MusicRow visit, Watkins shared an unreleased tune called “Cowboys on Music Row.” She wrote the song while on a retreat with her sister and a few of their friends/collaborators. Watkins notes the song came to be after the group had binged music documentaries such as Mike Judge Presents: Tales from the Tour Bus, among others, leaving them inspired to write a tribute to the country music greats.



Photo: Claire Schaper/Courtesy of Big Loud Records / Songs & Daughters

Next weekend, she will perform as a part of the [Faster Horses Festival](#) lineup at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Michigan, before taking the Next From Nashville stages at both the [Watershed Music & Camping Festival](#) in George, Washington and [TidalWave Music Festival](#) in Atlantic City, New Jersey. **MR**

## Doug Phillips & Brian Kaplan Appointed To Leadership At EM.Co & Down Home

Industry veteran **Doug Phillips** has been appointed to Vice President of Marketing and Digital at EM.Co, **Tim McGraw's** management and marketing company. Concurrently, **Brian Kaplan** has stepped into a key role as Co-Founder/Chief Strategy Officer of Down Home, McGraw's innovative media venture launched earlier this year with partners Skydance and social content studio Shareability.

Phillips brings over a decade of experience into his new role, including a dynamic skill set honed through significant positions at Q Prime South, Universal Music Group and Sony Music Nashville. His digital expertise and strategic thinking will guide EM.Co's marketing strategies for McGraw and other acclaimed artists on the roster.

Kaplan's move to Down Home represents a strategic elevation of his role. As Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer, he will be instrumental in aligning the media company's vision.

Of the appointments, EM.Co's President **Scott Siman** shares, “Doug's addition to our team signifies a new chapter of innovation and growth at EM.Co. His vast experience and proven track record will undoubtedly be invaluable assets. Equally, we're excited about the strategic vision that Brian brings to Down Home and it's future.” **MR**



## DISClaimer Single Reviews: David Nail & Jo Dee Messina Share The Disc Of The Day

Summer has arrived in full force on the country music scene.

As the temperature soars, the songs are cool. Especially from Jon Langston, Restless Road, Maddie & Tae, Track 45 and Kameron Marlowe. Tuneful, talented veterans Jo Dee Messina and David Nail share the Disc of the Day award this week.

Teenage multi-instrumentalist New Yorker David J takes home a DISCOVERY Award. Not necessarily for his debut disc, but for what I believe will be more accomplished outings in the future.

[Click here to read Robert K Oermann's weekly single reviews](#)



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### MORE TOP STORIES

[Little Big Town To Host Inaugural 'People's Choice Country Awards'](#)

['CMT Summer Sessions' To Premiere With Tanya Tucker On Friday](#)

[Jordan Davis Earns Multi-Week No. 1 With 'Next Thing You Know'](#)

[Entertainment Attorney Ralph Gordon Passes](#)

[The Eagles Offer Final 'Long Goodbye' With Last Cross-Country Run](#)

[Entertainment Attorney Terri Nolan Passes](#)

['An All-Star Salute To Lee Greenwood' Comes To Theaters Nationwide On Veterans Day Weekend](#)

[Dolly's Imagination Library Celebrates 200 Million Books Gifted With Enchanted Bookmarks](#)

[Josh Turner Announces 'Greatest Hits' Album Coming in September](#)

[Singer-Songwriter Nanci Griffith's Legacy Celebrated With Two New Releases](#)

[Chris Stapleton's 'Star Spangled Banner' Super Bowl Performance Out Now](#)

[Whiskey Myers Launches Uncle Chicken's Sippin' Whiskey](#)

[MaRynn Taylor Makes Grand Ole Opry Debut](#)

[Nashville Audio Engineer Duane Tabinski Dies At NASCAR Race In Chicago](#)



## Music City's Let Freedom Sing! Celebration Wraps Another Successful Year

Nashville's Let Freedom Sing! 4th of July Celebration was a big success last night despite a brief rain delay, with the NCVC and Metro Nashville Police estimating more than 250,000 people were in attendance for the annual downtown festivities.

**Brad Paisley** headlined the multi-genre July 4th lineup that also included **Ben Rector**, **The War And Treaty**, **Langhorne Slim** and **Tiera Kennedy**, who performed the national anthem. Media personality **Kelly Sutton** hosted both stages and **DJ Dave Audé** entertained between sets.

Paisley invited special guests **Dan Tyminski**, **Jerry Douglas**, **Kelleigh Bannen** and **Joe Bonamassa** to perform during his more than 90 minute concert, which included all of his many hits as well as his new song "So Many Summers."

The packed crowd was also treated to a brilliant fireworks display—which is one of the largest fireworks shows in the country—choreographed to a live performance by the Grammy-winning **Nashville Symphony**. 40,000 pounds of explosives and 200 miles of wire were used for the fireworks show and event, which has regularly drawn more than 200,000 attendees and last year generated \$11 million in estimated direct visitor spending for the city.

"This was really a great turnout considering the Fourth was on a Tuesday and given the weather issues," says **Deana Ivey**, President and CEO, Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp. "We hope everyone enjoyed our gift to the city showcasing some of Nashville's best artists and one of the largest fireworks shows in the country." **MR**



Brad Paisley performs during Let Freedom Sing! Photo: Sean O'Halloran

## Bill Anderson To Be Honored As Longest-Serving Grand Ole Opry Member



Bill Anderson Performs At Grand Ole Opry.  
Photo: Chris Hollo For Grand Ole Opry

**Bill Anderson** will be honored by the Grand Ole Opry as the longest-serving member in the show's history on Saturday, July 22.

One of the most awarded songwriters in the history of country music, Anderson was inducted in the Opry family on July 15, 1961. His membership has not lapsed in those 62 years, eclipsing the membership run of past Opry member **Herman Crook**, who joined the Opry in 1926 and remained with the show until his death in 1988.

"Whisperin' Bill" will be celebrated with a Saturday night performance which will include Anderson and fellow Opry members **Vince Gill**, **Jamey Johnson**, **Jeannie Seely** and **Ricky Skaggs**, among others.

"The Grand Ole Opry continues to be built on the shoulders of Opry members such as Bill Anderson," says **Dan Rogers**, Opry Vice President and Executive Producer. "Singling Bill out as the Opry's longest-tenured member in our history among so many greats who came before him as well as so many contemporaries he calls his friends is a tremendous honor for all of us. We look forward to celebrating his achievement and dedication later this month."

The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum is currently featuring Anderson's life and career in the exhibit, [Bill Anderson: As Far as I Can See](#), which has been extended through September 25. The exhibit explores his life and musical legacy, from childhood through his contributions as one of the most decorated artists, songwriters and entertainers in history. **MR**

## Nominees Announced For 2023 Nashville Songwriters Hall Of Fame Gala

13 songwriters have been announced as nominees for the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame (NaSHOF). The new group will be among those honored at the 53rd Anniversary Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame Gala, taking place on Wednesday, Oct. 11 at the Music City Center.

"We congratulate this year's nominees in our contemporary categories. Their nominations are richly deserved," says NaSHOF Executive Director **Mark Ford**. "We look forward in several weeks to announcing those who will be inducted this fall as members of our Class of 2023."



The 2023 nominees in the Contemporary Songwriters category are **Casey Beathard, Shawn Camp, Jim Collins, Don Henry, David Lee Murphy, Leslie Satcher, Darrell Scott** and **Victoria Shaw**. The 2023 nominees in the Contemporary Songwriter/Artists category are **Steven Curtis Chapman, Martie Maguire, Keith Urban** and **Gillian Welch** and **David Rawlings**, who are nominated as a team.

All nominees experienced their first significant songs at least 20 years ago. A total of two songwriters and one artist-songwriter will be elected from the contemporary categories by members of the Hall of Fame along with other professional songwriters and artists from a variety of genres who are prominently associated with Nashville and who have written/co-written at least one original and significant Nashville song.

In addition, three more will be named to the Class of 2023. A separate body of veteran voters will elect a Veteran Songwriter, a Veteran Songwriter/Artist and a Legacy Songwriter (deceased), all of whom experienced their first significant songs at least 30 years ago. As part of that process, nominees in those categories are not announced.

**MR**

## UMPG Nashville Signs Seth Ennis



Universal Music Publishing Nashville has signed songwriter **Seth Ennis** to an exclusive, global publishing agreement.

Ennis has co-written songs by **Jordan Davis, Dylan Scott, Matt Stell, Lauren Alaina, Mitchell Tenpenny, The Band Camino, Little Big Town, Avery Anna, Dylan Marlowe, Devin Dawson, Tyler Farr, Chase Rice** and more. In addition to being a songwriter, he is a talented vocalist and multi-instrumentalist.

"The sky is the limit for Seth. He has done an outstanding job honing his craft and building relationships over the years. We are thrilled to be a part of this upcoming chapter and help elevate his career to the next level," shares **Roxy King**, Director A&R, UMPG Nashville.

Ennis adds, "Roxy is a rockstar. As my music publishing A&R, her focus, tenacity, and versatility are what I'm most excited to match going forward. I can't wait to get going with the Universal Music Publishing family." **MR**



## TOP SONGWRITER CHART

This Week	Last Week	Songwriter's Name	Song(s)	Artist
1	1	<b>Ashley Gorley</b>	All I Need Is You Cowgirls Everything I Love Girl In Mine God Gave Me A Girl Last Night Thinkin' Bout Me Truck Bed You Proof	Chris Janson Morgan Wallen (feat. ERNEST) Morgan Wallen Parmalee Russell Dickerson Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Hardy Morgan Wallen
2	2	<b>Tracy Chapman</b>	Fast Car	Luke Combs
3	3	<b>Zachary Lane Bryan</b>	Something In The Orange	Zach Bryan
4	4	<b>Ryan Vojtesak</b>	Cowgirls Everything I Love Last Night Thinkin' Bout Me You Proof	Morgan Wallen (feat. ERNEST) Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen
5	6	<b>Jordan Schmidt</b>	Bury Me In Georgia Drinkaby Watermelon Moonshine We Got History	Kane Brown Cole Swindell Lainey Wilson Mitchell Tenpenny
6	7	<b>John Byron</b>	'98 Braves Last Night Sunrise Thinkin' Bout Me	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen
7	5	<b>Chase McGill</b>	5 Leaf Clover Ain't That Some But I Got A Beer In My Hand Creek Will Rise God Gave Me A Girl Next Thing You Know	Luke Combs Morgan Wallen Luke Bryan Conner Smith Russell Dickerson Jordan Davis
8	9	<b>Jason DeFord</b>	Need A Favor Save Me	Jelly Roll Jelly Roll with Lainey Wilson
9	8	<b>Michael Hardy</b>	Drinkaby Heaven By Then I Wrote The Book See You Next Summer Truck Bed	Cole Swindell Brantley Gilbert & Blake Shleton feat. Vince Gill Morgan Wallen Brian Kelley Hardy
10	10	<b>Jessi Alexander</b>	5 Leaf Clover Light On In The Kitchen You, Me, And Whiskey	Luke Combs Ashley McBryde Justin Moore & Priscilla Block
11	12	<b>David Fanning</b>	Girl In Mine Tennessee Orange	Parmalee Megan Moroney
12	14	<b>Luke Combs</b>	5 Leaf Clover Growin' Up and Gettin' Old Love You Anyway	Luke Combs Luke Combs Luke Combs
13	15	<b>Dan Isbell</b>	Fires Don't Start Themselves Love You Anyway	Darius Rucker Luke Combs
14	77	<b>Shane McAnally</b>	If You Go Down (I'm Going Down Too) We Don't Fight Anymore	Kelsea Ballerini Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton
15	16	<b>Julian Bunetta</b>	Angels Don't Always Have Wings If You Go Down (I'm Going Down Too)	Thomas Rhett Kelsea Ballerini
16	17	<b>Brock Berryhill</b>	Heaven By Then You, Me, And Whiskey	Brantley Gilbert & Blake Shleton feat. Vince Gill Justin Moore & Priscilla Block
17	19	<b>Hunter Phelps</b>	Drinkaby Heaven By Then Truck Bed	Cole Swindell Brantley Gilbert & Blake Shleton feat. Vince Gill Hardy
18	20	<b>Cole Taylor</b>	You, Me, And Whiskey	Justin Moore & Priscilla Block
19	21	<b>Ray Fulcher</b>	Love You Anyway	Luke Combs

This Week	Last Week	Songwriter's Name	Song(s)	Artist
20	26	<b>Josh Osborne</b>	Next Thing You Know Outskirts	Jordan Davis Sam Hunt
21	18	<b>John Pierce</b>	Giving Up On That Your Heart Or Mine	Dalton Dover Jon Pardi
22	11	<b>Morgan Wallen</b>	Everything I Love I Wrote The Book You Proof	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen
23	23	<b>Justin Ebach</b>	Your Heart Or Mine	Jon Pardi
24	24	<b>Bart Butler</b>	Your Heart Or Mine	Jon Pardi
25	22	<b>Jacob Kasher</b>	Last Night	Morgan Wallen
26	25	<b>Chayce Beckham</b>	23	Chayce Beckham
27	13	<b>Ernest Keith Smith</b>	Cowgirls Everything I Love You Proof	Morgan Wallen (feat. ERNEST) Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen
28	33	<b>Josh Thompson</b>	Angels Don't Always Have Wings Stars Like Confetti	Thomas Rhett Dustin Lynch
29	34	<b>Thomas Rhett</b>	Angels Don't Always Have Wings Stars Like Confetti	Thomas Rhett Dustin Lynch
30	31	<b>Jordan Davis</b>	Next Thing You Know	Jordan Davis
31	32	<b>Greylan James</b>	Next Thing You Know	Jordan Davis
32	27	<b>Ross Copperman</b>	Dancin' In The Country	Tyler Hubbard
33	28	<b>Jon Nite</b>	Dancin' In The Country	Tyler Hubbard
34	29	<b>Keith Urban</b>	Dancin' In The Country	Tyler Hubbard
35	30	<b>Tyler Hubbard</b>	Dancin' In The Country	Tyler Hubbard
36	35	<b>Rob Ragosta</b>	Need A Favor	Jelly Roll
37	36	<b>Joe Ragosta</b>	Need A Favor	Jelly Roll
38	37	<b>Austin Nivarel</b>	Need A Favor	Jelly Roll
39	42	<b>Jessie Jo Dillon</b>	Memory Lane	Old Dominion
40	43	<b>Brad Tursi</b>	Memory Lane	Old Dominion
41	44	<b>Trevor Rosen</b>	Memory Lane	Old Dominion
42	45	<b>Matthew Ramsey</b>	Memory Lane	Old Dominion
43	38	<b>Megan Moroney</b>	Tennessee Orange	Megan Moroney
44	39	<b>Ben Williams</b>	Tennessee Orange	Megan Moroney
45	40	<b>Paul Jenkins</b>	Tennessee Orange	Megan Moroney
46	49	<b>Travis Wood</b>	'98 Braves Drive You Out Of My Mind Girl In Mine	Morgan Wallen Kassi Ashton Parmalee
47	41	<b>Blake Pendergrass</b>	Ain't That Some On The Boat Again Sunrise	Morgan Wallen Jake Owen Morgan Wallen
48	46	<b>Bryan Simpson</b>	Everything She Ain't	Hailey Whitters
49	47	<b>Ryan Tyndell</b>	Everything She Ain't	Hailey Whitters
50	48	<b>Hailey Whitters</b>	Everything She Ain't	Hailey Whitters
51	50	<b>Josh Hoge</b>	Bury Me In Georgia	Kane Brown
52	51	<b>Matt McGinn</b>	Bury Me In Georgia	Kane Brown
53	52	<b>Kane Brown</b>	Bury Me In Georgia	Kane Brown
54	56	<b>David Ray Stevens</b>	Save Me	Jelly Roll with Lainey Wilson
55	57	<b>Zach Crowell</b>	God Gave Me A Girl Outskirts Stars Like Confetti	Russell Dickerson Sam Hunt Dustin Lynch
56	61	<b>Lainey Wilson</b>	Watermelon Moonshine	Lainey Wilson
57	62	<b>Josh Kear</b>	Watermelon Moonshine	Lainey Wilson
58	58	<b>Patrick Murphy</b>	Standing Room Only	Tim McGraw
59	59	<b>Tommy Cecil</b>	Standing Room Only	Tim McGraw
60	60	<b>Craig Wiseman</b>	Standing Room Only	Tim McGraw

## CALENDAR

### Single/Track Releases

#### July 7

**Matt Jordan**/Always a Girl/ONErpm

**Drew Baldridge**/Honky Tonk Town

**Jennifer Alvarado**/Trigger Warning

#### July 10

**Corey Kent**/Something's Gonna Kill Me/RCA Nashville

**Warren Zeiders**/Pretty Little Poison/Warner Music Nashville

**Dianña**/Girl With No Last Name/Billiegee Productions

**Andy Pursell**/Right Amount Of Wrong/Southern Dreams Entertainment

**Adam Warner**/The Farmer/Duncan Music Group

### Album/EP Releases

#### July 7

**Randy Rogers & Wade Bowen**/*Hold My Beer Vol. 3*

**Frank Ray**/*Frank Ray*/Stoney Creek Records

#### July 14

**Lukas Nelson + POTR**/*Sticks and Stones*/6ACE Records/Thirty Tigers

**Kristian Bush**/*Drink Happy Thoughts*/Songs of the Architect

**Tyler Farr**/*Rednecks Like Me*/BBR Music Group/Night Train Records

**Alana Springsteen**/*Twenty Something: Figuring It Out*/Columbia Records NY/Sony Music Nashville

**Colter Wall**/*Little Songs*/La Honda Records/RCA Records

### Industry Events

#### July 10

Country Radio Hall of Fame Induction and Dinner

#### August 14

Music Row Ladies Golf Tournament

#### August 23

ACM Honors