

MUSICROW
38TH ANNUAL

2026
MUSICROW
AWARDS

PRESENTED BY:
CITY NATIONAL BANK

MusicRow Subscribers will
vote to determine award winners.

Ballots Emailed: **August 5, 2025.**

Ballot Voting Period:

**Aug. 5, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. CT –
Aug. 14, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT.**

Winners Announced: **Sept. 2, 2026**

To become a subscriber, click [here](#).



MusicRow Magazine is proud to reveal the nominees for the 2026 *MusicRow* Awards, presented by City National Bank. The winners of this year's honors will be announced online on all *MusicRow* platforms on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

Now in its 38th year, the *MusicRow* Awards are Nashville's longest running music industry trade publication honors and celebrate the achievements of songwriters, artists, producers and more.

Winners of the 16 awards categories are voted on by subscribers of *MusicRow* Magazine.

The final nominees revealed in this announcement are determined by a committee. For the categories of Breakthrough Songwriter and Breakthrough Artist-Writer, outside nominations are also considered. For the Male and Female Songwriter of the Year categories, nominees are based on data from *MusicRow's* Top Songwriter Chart. All nominations are based on projects that were active between the period of June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026.

Continuing *MusicRow's* tradition of recognizing talent behind the scenes, the Top 10 Album All-Star Musician Awards will be presented in conjunction with the *MusicRow* Awards. These honors salute Nashville's most in-demand studio players who performed on the most albums reaching the Top 10 of *Billboard's* Top Country Albums chart during the eligibility period.

MusicRow subscribers will vote to determine award winners. The Ballot Voting Period runs Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 11 a.m. through Friday, Aug. 14 at 5 p.m.

To become a subscriber and become eligible to vote, [click here](#).

INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

Category 1: Producer of the Year

Category 2: Studio of the Year

Category 3: Label Group of the Year

Category 4: Talent Agency of the Year

Category 5: Publishing Company of the Year

Category 6: Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year

Category 7: Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year

Category 8: Male Songwriter of the Year

Category 9: Female Songwriter of the Year

Category 10: Song of the Year

Category 11: Discovery Artist of the Year

Category 12: Breakthrough Artist of the Year

Category 13: Female Artist of the Year

Category 14: Male Artist of the Year

Category 15: Group/Duo Artist of the Year

Category 16: Entertainer of the Year

Past Winners

WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED ONLINE WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

Category 1 | PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville producer for work on commercially and critically impactful country projects during the awards time period. Can include, but is not limited to, single, chart position and album sales.



Carson Chamberlain

Billy Currington, Zach Top



Charlie Handsome

BigXthaPlug, Jelly Roll, Josh Ross, Koe Wetzel, Lil Wayne, Marshmello, Paloma Faith, Wyatt Flores



Dann Huff

Ashley Cooke, Generation Radio, Lady A, Kane Brown, Keith Urban, Maoli, Myles Erlick, Patrick Murphy, Riley Green, ROME, Ryan and Rory, The Band Perry



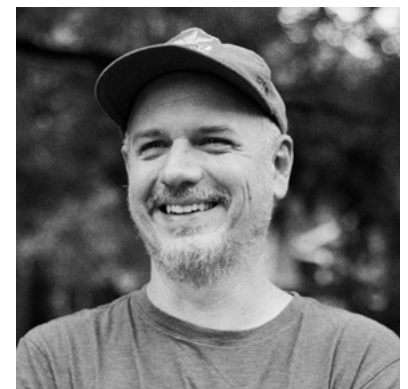
Jay Joyce

HARDY, Lainey Wilson, Molly Tuttle, The Black Crowes, Whiskey Myers



Joey Moi

In Color, Jake Worthington, Lauren Alaina, Lauren Watkins, Morgan Wallen



Ben West

Carly Pearce, Ella Langley, Kameron Marlowe, Laci Kaye Booth, Stephen Wilson Jr.

WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC NASHVILLE
CONGRATULATES
ALL 2026 MUSICROW AWARDS NOMINEES



BEAU BAILEY

Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year



SUMMER OVERSTREET

Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year



AVA SUPPELSA

Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year
Female Songwriter of the Year



CHRIS MCKENNA

Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year



DRIVER WILLIAMS

Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year



JOEY MOI

Producer of the Year



JAY JOYCE

Producer of the Year



WYATT MCCUBBIN

Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year



GRAHAM BARHAM

Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year



BLAKE PENDERGRASS

Male Songwriter of the Year



JOHN BYRON

Male Songwriter of the Year



LYDIA VAUGHAN

Female Songwriter of the Year



MORGAN WALLEN

Male Artist of the Year
Entertainer of the Year



TUCKER WETMORE

Male Artist of the Year



RILEY GREEN

Male Artist of the Year



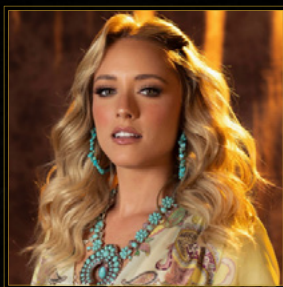
CHRIS STAPLETON

Entertainer of the Year



KASHUS CULPEPPER

Discovery Artist of the Year



EMILY ANN ROBERTS

Discovery Artist of the Year



BRAXTON KEITH

Discovery Artist of the Year



KACEY MUSGRAVES

Female Artist of the Year



BROTHERS OSBORNE

Group/Duo Artist of the Year



DAN + SHAY

Group/Duo Artist of the Year



OLD DOMINION

Group/Duo Artist of the Year



THE RED CLAY STRAYS

Group/Duo Artist of the Year



FLATLAND CAVALRY

Group/Duo Artist of the Year



"SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM"

LUKE COMBS

Song of the Year

Written by: Randy Montana

PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR



"SAY SO"

DAN+SHAY

Song of the Year

Written by: Jimmy Robbins, Dan Smyers, Shay Mooney

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Carson Chamberlain produced Zach Top's *Ain't in It for My Health* album, which won the 2026 Grammy Award for Best Traditional Country Album and earned a nomination for Album of the Year at the 2026 ACM Awards. Chamberlain also produced Top's 2024 *Cold Beer & Country Music* LP, which earned nominations for Album of the Year at the 2025 CMA Awards and Single of the Year at both the 2025 CMA Awards and 2026 ACM Awards. In addition to his production work, Chamberlain is an accomplished songwriter whose credits include recordings by Midland, Kameron Marlowe and Wynn Williams.

Charlie Handsome co-produced Morgan Wallen's 2025 *I'm the Problem* album, which earned Album of the Year nominations at the 2025 CMA Awards and 2026 ACM Awards, and Wyatt Flores' upcoming *Scared of Heights* LP. His production work also includes the 2025 CMA Award-winning Musical Event of the Year "Pour Me a Drink" by Post Malone and Blake Shelton. Handsome earned a CMA Triple Play Award recognizing his three No. 1 songs in 12 months, and his work was featured in the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's American Currents: State of the Music exhibit.

Dann Huff continued his prolific run this year with production credits on recent and upcoming projects from Ashley Cooke, Keith Urban, The Band Perry and more. Highlights from the eligibility period include Riley Green's *Don't Mind If I Do (Deluxe)* and the ACM Award-winning Musical Event of the Year "Don't Mind If I Do" by Riley Green and Ella Langley, as well as Lady A's *On This Winter's Night (Volume 2)*. Huff was recently inducted into the Musicians Hall of Fame.

Jay Joyce remained a go-to producer during the eligibility period, producing Lainey Wilson's *Whirlwind (Deluxe)*, which earned a 2025 CMA Award win for Album of the Year and 2025 CMA and 2026 ACM nominations for Single of the Year. His recent production credits also include HARDY, Morgan Wallen, Tim McGraw and Eric Church's collaboration, "McArthur," The Black Crowes' *A Pound of Feathers* and Whiskey Myers' *Whomp Whack Thunder*.

Joey Moi's production credits during the eligibility period include Lauren Watkins' *In a Perfect World* and Jake Worthington's *When I Write the Song* as well as Lauren Alaina's latest singles and upcoming album, among others. Moi produced Morgan Wallen's 2025 *I'm the Problem* album, which earned Album of the Year nominations at the 2025 CMA Awards and 2026 ACM Awards. He serves as Partner at Big Loud and President of Big Loud Rock.

Ben West produced major releases during this year's eligibility period, including Ella Langley's *Dandelion*, which features the history-making 2026 ACM Award-winning Single of the Year "Choosin' Texas, along with Kameron Marlowe's *Sad Songs for the Soul* album. His recent production credits also include projects with Carly Pearce, Lori McKenna and Laci Kaye Booth, reflecting his continued work with both established artists and emerging voices.

WME

WE PROUDLY CONGRATULATE OUR CLIENTS ON THEIR
NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2026 MUSICROW AWARDS

Entertainer of the Year

LUKE COMBS
CHRIS STAPLETON
LAINIEY WILSON

Female Artist of the Year

AVERY ANNA
LAINIEY WILSON

Male Artist of the Year

LUKE COMBS
ZACH TOP
TUCKER WETMORE

Group/Duo Artist of the Year

BROTHERS OSBORNE
FLATLAND CAVALRY
THE RED CLAY STRAYS

Breakthrough Artist of the Year

GAVIN ADCOCK
KAITLIN BUTTS
VINCENT MASON

Discovery Artist of the Year

LACI KAYE BOOTH
ALEXANDRA KAY
BRAXTON KEITH

Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year

WYATT MCCUBBIN

Song of the Year

“BACKSEAT DRIVER”
KANE BROWN

“CHOOSIN’ TEXAS”
MIRANDA LAMBERT
SONGWRITER

“MCARTHUR”

ERIC CHURCH

“SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM”
LUKE COMBS



Celebrating our nomination for *MusicRow Magazine's* "Studio of the Year."

Sound Emporium recorded some of the biggest artists of the year such as Ella Langley, Billy Strings, Kacey Musgraves, Carter Faith and Little Big Town.

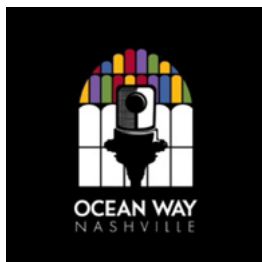
We would like to congratulate our sister studios and their talented studio managers, engineers, assistant engineers and producers on their nomination. We are proud to be part of this group.

Category 2 | STUDIO OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville recording facility with notable activity on commercially and critically impactful country projects during the awards time period.



Blackbird Studio



Ocean Way Nashville
Studio



RCA Studio A



Sound Emporium
Studios



SOUND STAGE STUDIOS

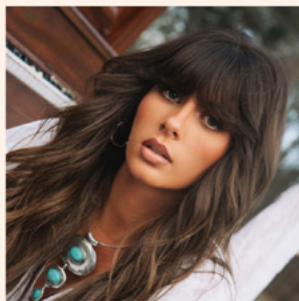
Sound Stage
Studios



Starstruck Studios

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF TRIPLE TIGERS

36 RIAA CERTIFICATIONS



MUSICROW LABEL GROUP
OF THE YEAR NOMINEE

SIXTEEN #1 SINGLES



Category 3 | LABEL GROUP OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor the achievements of a Nashville record label group during the past year.



BBR Music Group/
BMG Nashville



Big Loud
Records



MCA



Sony Music
Nashville



Triple Tigers
Records



Warner Records
Nashville



We proudly congratulate our

38TH ANNUAL MUSICROW AWARD

Nominees

GRAHAM BARHAM

Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year

EMILY ANN ROBERTS

Discovery Artist of the Year

MEGAN MORONEY

Female Artist of the Year

UTA

Talent Agency of the Year



Congratulations to our **2026 MUSICROW**
— AWARDS
nominees

UMPG

[Publisher of the Year]

Sam Banks

[Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year]

Chase McGill

[Male Songwriter of the Year, Song of the Year - "McArthur"]

Laci Kaye Booth

[Discovery Artist of the Year]

Ty Myers

[Discovery Artist of the Year]

Carter Faith

[Breakthrough Artist of the Year]

Megan Moroney

[Female Artist of the Year]

Brad Tursi

[Group/Duo Artist of the Year]

Luke Combs

[Entertainer of the Year, Male Artist of the Year, Song of the Year - "Sleepless In A Hotel Room"]

UMUSICPUB.COM

Category 4 | TALENT AGENCY OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor the achievements of a Nashville talent agency during the past year.



CAA



The Kinkead
Entertainment Agency



The Neal
Agency



THE TEAM



UTA



WME

OUR SUMMER JUST GOT **HOTTER**
WITH ANOTHER NOMINATION FOR
MUSIC ROW'S 2026 TALENT AGENCY OF YEAR!



**THE
KINKEAD
ENTERTAINMENT
AGENCY**
NASHVILLE, TN

**Thank you to *Music Row* Magazine for acknowledging
the hard work of a small boutique agency**

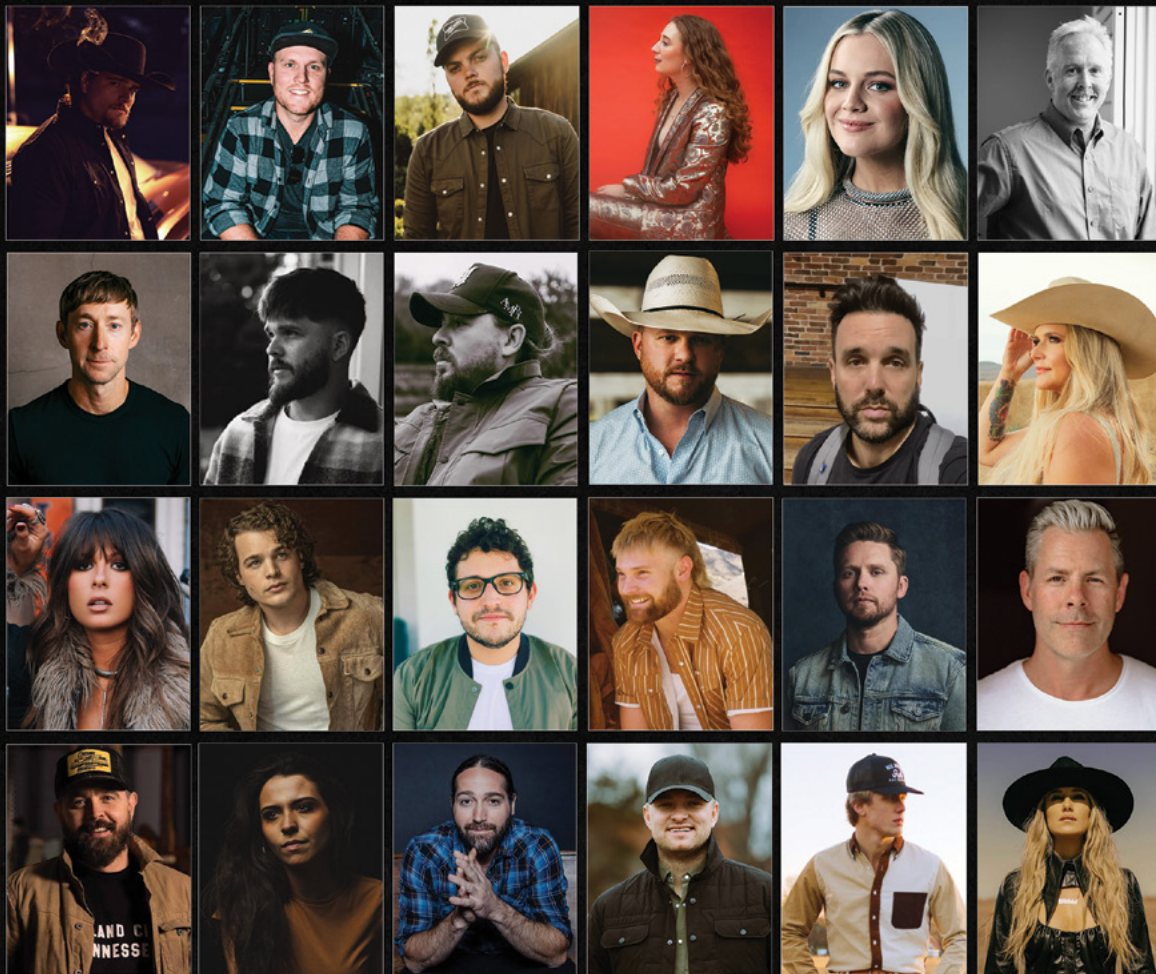
**WE PROUDLY EXCLUSIVELY REPRESENT
THESE EXTREMELY TALENTED ENTERTAINERS:**

Alli Walker * Ashland Craft * Bay Simpson & The Outlaw Apostles
Bill Engvall * Blanco Brown * Britnee Kellogg
Broadway Rock of Ages Band * Canaan Smith * Casey Chesnutt
Chevel * Colin Stough * Cowboy Troy * Craig Campbell *
Emerson Drive * Flat River Band * Frankie Moreno * Hannah Ellis
Jamie O'Neal * Jerrod Niemann * Josh Gracin * Lakelin Lemmings
Lance Burton & Friends * Lewis Brice * Lorrie Morgan * Love and Theft
Majesty: A Tribute to Queen * Macy Kate * Mike Super * New Hollow
Presley & Taylor * Raelynn * Ryan Waters * Skip Ewing
T. Graham Brown * The Band Light * Wizards of Winter
William Michael Morgan

Follow us on all socials and our website kinkeadentertainment.com

CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR 2026 **MUSICROW** AWARDS NOMINEES



GAVIN ADCOCK SMITH AHNQUIST DAN ALLEY TRANNIE ANDERSON
 KELSEA BALLERINI CARSON CHAMBERLAIN ASHLEY GORLEY JORDAN GRAY
 CHARLIE HANDSOME CODY JOHNSON JAMIE KENNEY MIRANDA LAMBERT
 ELLA LANGLEY MAX MCNOWN DAVID MESCON KEVIN POWERS
 JAMESON RODGERS TREVOR ROSEN JONATHAN SINGLETON JOYBETH TAYLOR
 JOSH THOMPSON JORDAN WALKER HUDSON WESTBROOK LAINEY WILSON



SONY MUSIC
PUBLISHING

HOME TO THE WORLD'S BEST SONGWRITERS

Category 5 | PUBLISHING COMPANY OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville publishing company whose songwriters were among the most active in creating country music's top hits during the eligibility period, as determined by data from MusicRow's Top Songwriter Chart.



Back Blocks
Music



Concord Music
Publishing



River House
Artists



Sony Music
Publishing Nashville



UMPG Nashville



Warner Chappell
Music Nashville



CONGRATULATES OUR 2026 ***MUSICROW*** AWARDS NOMINEES



BEAU BAILEY

Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year



WYATT McCUBBIN

Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year



ASHLEY GORLEY

Male Songwriter of the Year

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR THREE BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



AUSTIN GOODLOE

"ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW"
COREY KENT & KOE WETZEL

"I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE"
ELLA LANGLEY & MORGAN WALLEN

"EMPTY WORDS"
COREY KENT



JESSICA FARREN

"HATE HOW YOU LOOK"
JOSH ROSS



NICHOLAS SAINATO

"HATE HOW YOU LOOK"
JOSH ROSS

Category 6 | BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville-based songwriter who earned their first top 10 country song via radio or streaming during the eligibility period. Outside nominations from Nashville's publishing community are considered for this award.

Smith Ahnquist

Relative Music Group/Sony Music Publishing, ASCAP, "Be Her" recorded by Ella Langley

Jamie Kenney

Sony Music Publishing Nashville, ASCAP, "Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)" recorded by Max McNown

Dan Alley

River House Artists/Sony Music Publishing, BMI, "Be By You" by Luke Combs, "Country Song Came On" recorded by Luke Bryan & "House Again" by Hudson Westbrook

Chris McKenna

Group Projects/RedLight/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "Hate How You Look" recorded by Josh Ross

Beau Bailey

Tape Room Music with admin. by Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "Favorite Country Song" recorded by HARDY & "Stay Country or Die Tryin'" recorded by Blake Shelton

David "Messy" Mescon

Sony Music Publishing Nashville, BMI, "6 Months Later" recorded by Megan Moroney

Sam Banks

UMPG Nashville, BMI, "Be By You" recorded by Luke Combs

Summer Overstreet

Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "3, 2, 1" recorded by Tucker Wetmore

Jeremy Bussey

Spirit Music Nashville/Fluid Music Revolution, SESAC, "Bottle Rockets" recorded by Scotty McCreery and Hootie & The Blowfish

Nicholas Sainato

Combustion Music, BMI, "Hate How You Look" recorded by Josh Ross

Jessica Farren

Combustion Music, BMI, "Hate How You Look" recorded by Josh Ross

Ava Suppelsa

King Pen Music/Red Street Publishing/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)" recorded by Max McNown

Austin Goodloe

Combustion Music, BMI, "Rocky Mountain Low" recorded by Corey Kent & Koe Wetzel

Driver Williams

Jody Williams Songs/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "Heavens To Betsy" recorded by Jackson Dean

Jordan Gray

Sony Music Publishing Nashville, BMI, "Amen" recorded by Shaboozey & Jelly Roll

Christian Yancey

Back Row Publishing, BMI, "Hate How You Look" recorded by Josh Ross

Bobby Hamrick

Spirit Music Nashville, ASCAP, "Bottle Rockets" recorded by Scotty McCreery and Hootie & The Blowfish

RED STREET PUBLISHING
CONGRATULATES

AVA SUPPELSA

NOMINATED FOR
MUSICROW AWARDS

BREAKTHROUGH
SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR

"BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES)"
RECORDED BY MAX MCKNOWN

FEMALE
SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR

RED STREET PUBLISHING
KING PEN MUSIC • ASCAP
WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC



SpiritMusic
CONGRATULATES OUR
2026 MUSIC ROW
AWARDS NOMINEES



HARDY
"McArthur"
SONG OF THE YEAR



BOBBY HAMRICK
BREAKTHROUGH
SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR



JEREMY BUSSEY
BREAKTHROUGH
SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR



BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER: About the Nominees

Smith Ahnquist co-wrote the smash hit “Be Her,” recorded by Ella Langley, alongside Langley, Jordan Schmidt and HARDY. Ahnquist has also had other cuts with Morgan Wallen, HARDY, Lainey Wilson, John Morgan, Corey Kent, Jameson Rodgers, Chris Lane and others.

Dan Alley earned his first hits with Luke Combs “Be By You” penned with Nick Walsh and Sam Banks, the Hudson Westbrook-recorded “House Again” with Westbrook and Neil Medley, as well as Luke Bryan’s “Country Song Came On” with Medley and Ryan Beaver. Alley has also had songs cut by Luke Combs, Tyce Dolk, Kenny Whitmire and others.

Beau Bailey scored two hits with “Stay Country or Die Tryin’,” recorded by Blake Shelton and written with Drew Parker, Graham Barham and Sam Ellis, and “Favorite Country Song” recorded and written by HARDY alongside Ashley Gorley, Casey Brown, Nate Smith, Taylor Phillips and Zach Abend. Bailey has also had cuts with Hudson Westbrook, Graham Barham, Cole Swindell and others.

Sam Banks co-wrote the Luke Combs hit “Be By You” with Dan Alley and Nick Walsh. Banks has also had songs recorded by Craig Morgan, William Michael Morgan, Josh Ward and more.

Jeremy Bussey earned his first hit with the Scotty McCreery and Hootie & The Blowfish-recorded “Bottle Rockets,” which he wrote with McCreery, Bobby Hamrick, Brent Anderson, Darius Rucker, Dean Felber, Derek George, Frank Rogers, Jim Sonefeld, Mark Bryan and Monty Criswell. Bussey has also had cuts with Ashley McBryde, Dierks Bentley, Jason Aldean and more.

Jessica Farren scored her first hit with Josh Ross’ “Hate How You Look,” co-written with Chris McKenna, Christian Yancey and Nicholas Sainato. Farren has also had other cuts with Zach John King, Renee Blair, Faren Rachels, David J, JJ Wilde, Brian Fuller and more.

Austin Goodloe co-wrote the Corey Kent & Koe Wetzel hit “Rocky Mountain Low” with Kent, Michael Tyler and Thomas Archer. Goodloe has also had songs recorded by Ella Langley, Morgan Wallen, Gavin Adcock, Kameron Marlowe, Tucker Wetmore and others.

Jordan Gray earned his first hit with “Amen” by Shaboozey & Jelly Roll. The song was co-written by Shaboozey, Jelly Roll, Danny Majic, Nevin Sastry, Jackson Foote, Kevin Powers, Sean Cook and Seth Ennis. Gray has also had cuts with Kane Brown, Kassi Ashton, Walker Hayes and more.

Bobby Hamrick scored his first hit with Scotty McCreery and Hootie & The Blowfish’s “Bottle Rockets” with McCreery, Brent Anderson, Darius Rucker, Dean Felber, Derek George, Frank Rogers, Jeremy

Bussey, Jim Sonefeld, Mark Bryan and Monty Criswell. Hamrick has also had songs recorded by Kenny Chesney, Joe Nichols, Elle King and others.

Jamie Kenney scored his first hit with “Better Me For You (Brown Eyes),” written with and recorded by Max McNown with Ava Suppelsa and Trent Dabbs. Kenney has also had additional with McNown as well as Ella Maddux, Odhran Murphy, Darren Kiely, Laci Kaye Booth and more.

Chris McKenna wrote the Josh Ross-recorded hit “Hate How You Look” with Christian Yancey, Jessica Farren and Nicholas Sainato. He has also had songs cut by Avery Anna, Emily Ann Roberts, Max Alan, Ian Harrison, Trevor Snider, Lori McKenna, Clayton Mullen and more.

David “Messy” Mescon earned his first hit with “6 Months Later,” recorded by Megan Moroney, written with Moroney, Ben Williams and Rob Hatch. Mescon has also had more cuts with Moroney across her discography.

Summer Overstreet co-wrote the Tucker Wetmore hit “3, 2, 1” with Jordan Reynolds and Josh Miller. Overstreet has also had songs recorded by Max McNown, Lainey Wilson, Zoe Clark, Tyler Braden, Brian Kelley, Logan Crosby, Sophia Scott, Karley Scott Collins and more.

Nicholas Sainato earned his first hit with the Josh Ross-recorded “Hate How You Look,” which he wrote with Chris McKenna, Christian Yancey and Jessica Farren. Sainato has also had cuts with Kane Brown, Ian Harrison, Scoot Teasley, Lindsay Ell and more. He is also 1/3 of alternative pop band, Nightly.

Ava Suppelsa scored her first hit with “Better Me For You (Brown Eyes),” recorded by and written with Max McNown, as well as Jamie Kenney and Trent Dabbs. Suppelsa also has cuts with Avery Anna, Carly Pearce, Randall King and others.

Driver Williams co-wrote the Jackson Dean hit “Heaven’s To Betsy” with Dean and Benjy Davis. Williams has also had other songs recorded by Eric Church, Lainey Wilson, Morgan Wallen, Luke Combs, Eric Church, Jason Aldean, Riley Green, Jon Pardi, Max McNown and others.

Christian Yancey co-wrote the Josh Ross hit “Hate How You Look” with Chris McKenna, Jessica Farren and Nicholas Sainato. Yancey has also had other songs recorded by Austin Snell.

CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR

2026 **MUSICROW** AWARDS NOMINEES



Published by CTM | Writer Management by JWS

**Natalie
Hemby**

FEMALE SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR



**Driver
Williams**

BREAKTHROUGH
SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR



**Emily Ann
Roberts**

DISCOVERY ARTIST
OF THE YEAR



JODY WILLIAMS SONGS

★ EST'D *Song Forward* 2020 ★

JODYWILLIAMSSONGS.CO

TENASIE COURTRIGHT
DIRECTOR, CREATIVE & A&R

JODY WILLIAMS
FOUNDER

NINA JENKINS FISHER
VICE PRESIDENT/GM

JONAH GORDON
MANAGER, SYNC & A&R



Category 7 | **BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR**

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville-based songwriter and artist who earned their first top 10 country song via radio or streaming during the eligibility period. Outside nominations from Nashville's publishing community are considered for this award.



Graham Barham

Sony Music Nashville/Disruptor Records, Cornman Music/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "Stay Country or Die Tryin'" recorded by Blake Shelton



Wyatt McCubbin

Lucille Records/MCA, Tape Room Music/50 Egg Music with admin. by Warner Chappell Music Nashville, BMI, "Good Times & Tan Lines" recorded by Zach Top



Max McNown

Fugitive Recordings, Sony Music Publishing Nashville/Tooth & Nail, BMI, "Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)" recorded by Max McNown



Kevin Powers

American Dogwood/EMPIRE, Sony Music Publishing Nashville, BMI, "Amen" recorded by Shaboozey & Jelly Roll



Hudson Westbrook

River House Artists/Warner Records Nashville | Warner Records, River House Artists/Sony Music Publishing, BMI, "House Again" recorded by Hudson Westbrook

Congratulations to our **2026 *MUSICROW***
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR NOMINEE
KEVIN POWERS

"Amen" recorded by **Shaboozey & Jelly Roll**

★ *Congratulations* ★
to our nominees

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
DAN ALLEY

BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
HUDSON WESTBROOK

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR

★ **RIVER HOUSE ARTISTS** ★
PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR

RIVER HOUSE
ARTISTS

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER: About the Nominees

Graham Barham earned his breakthrough with Blake Shelton's "Stay Country or Die Tryin'." Born and raised in Oak Ridge, Louisiana (population: 106), Barham has built a sound that reflects the full spectrum of his musical upbringing, from classic country to rap, hip-hop, pop and EDM. That vision comes to life on *CLUB COUNTRY*, a 16-track, self-defined statement that expands the genre without losing its roots. Co-writing every song, Barham delivers a project designed to resonate everywhere today's audiences discover music, from country radio and festival stages to streaming playlists. The album features his current radio single "BREAKUP (DOWN)," alongside fan favorites "COUNTRY MUSIC," "WHISKEY RAIN" featuring Tyler Hubbard, and viral hit "OIL MONEY." With nearly 625 million global career streams, two RIAA Gold-certified singles, Barham's 2026 is gaining momentum, earning spots in the Opry NextStage and *MusicRow* Next Big Things classes while headlining his "WHISKEY RAIN Tour." and appearing at major festivals nationwide.

Wyatt McCubbin co-penned Zach Top's "Good Times & Tan Lines." McCubbin has built a reputation for timeless storytelling and memorable country melodies. As a songwriter, he has penned hit songs Cody Johnson's "Horseback" and Jon Pardi's "Boots Off." In addition to writing for some of country music's biggest artists, McCubbin continues to release his own music, with new projects on the horizon. His songwriting credits also include cuts by Luke Combs, Riley Green, Dustin Lynch, and many more. McCubbin will also hit the road this summer/fall supporting Top.

Max McNown scored his breakout with "Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)." McNown has emerged as one of music's fastest-growing crossover artists over the past year. His Platinum-certified "A Lot More Free" has garnered more than 400 million streams and earned McNown his *Billboard* Hot 100 debut and a spot atop *Billboard*'s Emerging Artists chart. McNown's follow-up track, "Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)," a single from his 2025 sophomore album, *Night Diving (The Cost of Growing Up)*, has achieved double Platinum certification, gained more than 500 million streams and spent 36 weeks on the *Billboard* Hot 100, peaking at No. 26. The single also reached No. 6 at country radio, Top 30 at Pop and No. 8 at Hot AC Radio, further showcasing McNown's multi-format appeal. He also made his television debut on *The Kelly Clarkson Show*. McNown continues to build his audience online, where he currently has more than 2.6 million TikTok followers.

Kevin Powers broke through with "Amen," recorded by Shaboozey & Jelly Roll. Born in Boston, raised in Raleigh, North Carolina, and now based in Nashville, Powers is carving out a distinctive lane in contemporary music with his self-defined "Southern Pop" sound. Blending country, pop and singer-songwriter influences, Powers first broke through with the independently released singles "Walked In" and "How You Been?," which have amassed more than 36 million combined Spotify streams. "Amen" surpassed 50 million streams within its first three months. Powers' rapid ascent has positioned him as one of Nashville's most promising emerging multi-hyphenate talents. In 2025, he signed a global publishing deal with Sony Music Publishing, joined Range Media Partners for management, became one of the inaugural signings to Shaboozey's American Dogwood label venture, and was tapped to open Shaboozey's 12-date "The Great American Road Show" U.S. tour, marking a breakout chapter for both his recording and songwriting careers.

Hudson Westbrook scored his breakout with "House Again." Westbrook has quickly become one of country music's fastest-rising new artists. Raised in Stephenville, Texas, on a foundation of Red Dirt and traditional country influences, Westbrook broke through in 2024 with his debut release, "Take It Slow," and quickly followed with a string of grassroots successes, including Texas radio No. 1 "Two Way Drive" and his chart-topping country radio debut, "House Again." His signature blend of traditional country storytelling and modern sensibility is showcased on his Top 10 debut album, *Texas Forever*, and its follow-up EP, *Exclusive*. In less than two years, Westbrook has amassed more than 1.5 billion global streams while selling out headline dates nationwide and sharing stages with George Strait, Parker McCollum, Morgan Wallen, Bailey Zimmerman, Midland and Ian Munsick. A 2026 ACM New Male Artist of the Year nominee and member of the Opry NextStage Class of 2026, Westbrook has also been recognized as a *Billboard* Country Rookie of the Month and a 2025 Artist to Watch by Spotify, *Country Now*, *Holler*, *The Country Wire* and SiriusXM.

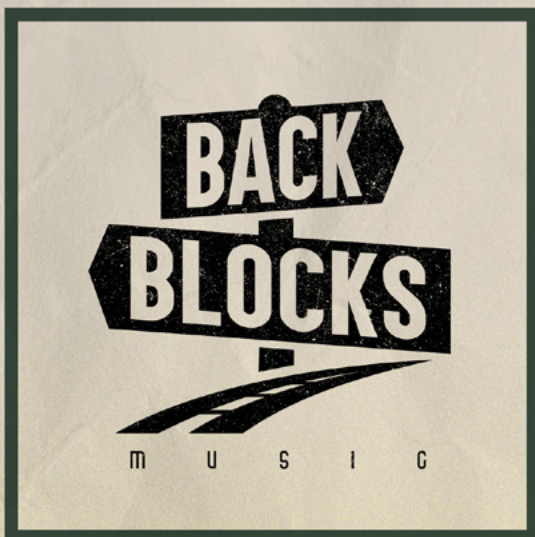
BACK BLOCKS MUSIC

CELEBRATES OUR



TUCKER WETMORE
MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

2026
MUSICROW
AWARD
NOMINEES



PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR



BLAKE PENDERGRASS
MALE SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Category 8 | MALE SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville-based songwriter with notable activity on high-performing country songs during the eligibility period, as determined by data from MusicRow's Top Songwriter Chart.



John Byron

Big Loud Publishing admin.
by Warner Chappell Music
Nashville, BMI



Ashley Gorley

Sony Music Publishing
Nashville/Domain Capital
Group, ASCAP



Charlie Handsome

Sony Music Publishing Nashville,
BMI



Chase McGill

UMPG Nashville, BMI



Josh Miller

Concord Music Publishing, BMI



Blake Pendergrass

Back Blocks/Warner Chappell
Music Nashville, BMI

THE **HOUSE** MANAGEMENT



**WELCOME TO THE HOUSE.
ARTIST-FIRST MANAGEMENT.
BUILT FOR LASTING CAREERS.**

A DIVISION OF RIVER HOUSE ARTISTS

RIVERHOUSE
ARTISTS

MALE SONGWRITER: Credits from the *MusicRow* Top Songwriter Chart

John Byron

"After All The Bars Are Closed" by Thomas Rhett
 "Ain't A Bad Life" by Thomas Rhett feat. Jordan Davis
 "Don't We" by Morgan Wallen
 "Eyes Are Closed" by Morgan Wallen
 "Genesis" by Morgan Wallen
 "Interlude" by Morgan Wallen
 "Just In Case" by Morgan Wallen
 "Kiss Her In Front Of You" by Morgan Wallen
 "Love Somebody" by Morgan Wallen
 "Smile" by Morgan Wallen
 "Superman" by Morgan Wallen
 "TN" by Morgan Wallen
 "Woman" by Kane Brown
 "What I Want" by Morgan Wallen feat. Tate McRae
 "Where'd That Girl Go" by Morgan Wallen

Ashley Gorley

"Ain't A Bad Life" by Thomas Rhett feat. Jordan Davis
 "Blame Texas" by Cody Johnson
 "Don't We" by Morgan Wallen
 "Favorite Country Song" by HARDY
 "Fix What You Didn't Break" by Nate Smith
 "Hurts Like You" by Koe Wetzel
 "Kiss Her In Front Of You" by Morgan Wallen
 "Love Somebody" by Morgan Wallen
 "Me & A Beer" by Chris Janson
 "Not At This Party" by Dasha
 "Park" by Tyler Hubbard
 "She Hates Me" by Dierks Bentley
 "Surrounded" by Koe Wetzel
 "TN" by Morgan Wallen
 "Woman" by Kane Brown

Charlie Handsome

"Come Back As A Redneck" by Morgan Wallen
 "Don't We" by Morgan Wallen
 "Eyes Are Closed" by Morgan Wallen
 "Falling Apart" by Morgan Wallen
 "Genesis" by Morgan Wallen
 "I Ain't Comin' Back" by Morgan Wallen
 "I Got Better" by Morgan Wallen
 "I'm The Problem" by Morgan Wallen
 "Interlude" by Morgan Wallen
 "Hell At Night" by BigXthaPlug feat. Ella Langley
 "Holy Water" by Marshmello & Jelly Roll
 "Just In Case" by Morgan Wallen
 "Kick Myself" by Morgan Wallen
 "Kiss Her In Front Of You" by Morgan Wallen
 "Leavin's The Least I Could Do" by Morgan Wallen
 "Love Somebody" by Morgan Wallen
 "Miami" by Morgan Wallen
 "Missing" by Morgan Wallen
 "Smile" by Morgan Wallen
 "Superman" by Morgan Wallen
 "TN" by Morgan Wallen
 "What I Want" by Morgan Wallen feat. Tate McRae
 "Where'd That Girl Go" by Morgan Wallen
 "Whiskey In Reverse" by Morgan Wallen
 "Working Man's Song" by Morgan Wallen

Chase McGill

"20 Cigarettes" by Morgan Wallen
 "Brunette" by Tucker Wetmore
 "Carry On" by Kenny Chesney
 "Happen To Me" by Russell Dickerson
 "I Got Better" by Morgan Wallen
 "It Won't Be Long" by George Birge
 "McArthur" by HARDY, Tim McGraw, Eric Church and Morgan Wallen
 "Miami" by Morgan Wallen
 "Missing" by Morgan Wallen
 "She Hates Me" by Dierks Bentley
 "Skoal, Chevy, and Browning" by Morgan Wallen
 "Straight Line" by Keith Urban
 "the hell you are" by Ashley Cooke
 "TN" by Morgan Wallen
 "Water At A Wedding" by Greylan James

Josh Miller

"20 Cigarettes" by Morgan Wallen
 "3,2,1" by Tucker Wetmore
 "Brunette" by Tucker Wetmore
 "Crazy Eyes" by Morgan Wallen
 "Country And She Knows It" by Luke Bryan
 "Friday Night Heartbreaker" by Jon Pardi
 "LA Night" by Morgan Wallen
 "Leavin's The Least I Could Do" by Morgan Wallen
 "Lies Lies Lies" by Morgan Wallen
 "Nothin' Left" by Morgan Wallen
 "Skoal, Chevy, and Browning" by Morgan Wallen
 "Working Man's Song" by Morgan Wallen

Blake Pendergrass

"20 Cigarettes" by Morgan Wallen
 "Ain't A Bad Life" by Thomas Rhett feat. Jordan Davis
 "Brunette" by Tucker Wetmore
 "Don't We" by Morgan Wallen
 "Eyes Are Closed" by Morgan Wallen
 "Falling Apart" by Morgan Wallen
 "Genesis" by Morgan Wallen
 "Heart Of Stone" by Jelly Roll
 "I Got Better" by Morgan Wallen
 "Interlude" by Morgan Wallen
 "Just In Case" by Morgan Wallen
 "Miami" by Morgan Wallen
 "Missing" by Morgan Wallen
 "Number 3 And Number 7" by Morgan Wallen
 "Superman" by Morgan Wallen
 "The Dealer" by Morgan Wallen
 "Wish You Well" by Vincent Mason
 "Where'd That Girl Go" by Morgan Wallen
 "Working Man's Song" by Morgan Wallen



VERSE 2 MUSIC

Congratulates

Joybeth Taylor

on her nominations in the 38th annual Music Row Awards



**Female Songwriter
of the Year**

**Song of the Year
"Choosin' Texas"**

Category 9 | **FEMALE SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR**

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville songwriter who earned the most points on the MusicRow Top Songwriter Chart over the eligibility period.



Trannie Anderson

Sony Music Publishing
Nashville, BMI



Jessie Jo Dillon

Big Machine Music, BMI



Natalie Hemby

CTM Outlander, BMI



Ava Suppelsa

King Pen Music/Red Street
Publishing/Warner Chappell
Music, BMI



Joybeth Taylor

Sony Music Publishing
Nashville/Verse 2 Music,
BMI



Lydia Vaughan

Cornman Music/Warner
Chappell Music Nashville, BMI

CONGRATULATIONS **NATALIE HEMBY**

Nominated for MusicRow's
FEMALE SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR


CTM OUTLANDER

Creatively Managed by Jody Williams Songs



FEMALE SONGWRITER: Credits from the *MusicRow* Top Songwriter Chart

Trannie Anderson

"Can't Sit Still" by Lainey Wilson
"It Won't Be Long" by George Birge
"Revelation" by Morgan Wallen
"Somewhere Over Laredo" by Lainey Wilson

Jessie Jo Dillon

"Beautiful Things" by Megan Moroney
"Bottomland" by HARDY
"Cloud 9" by Megan Moroney
"Convincing" by Megan Moroney
"Crazy Eyes" by Morgan Wallen
"Friday Night Heartbreaker" by Jon Pardi
"Happen To Me" by Russell Dickerson
"If You Were Mine" by Morgan Wallen
"Liars & Tigers & Bears" by Megan Moroney
"Lies Lies Lies" by Morgan Wallen
"Medicine" by Megan Moroney
"Proving Me Right" by Tucker Wetmore
"Waiting On The Rain" by Megan Moroney
"Who Hurt You?" by Megan Moroney
"Wish You Well" by Vincent Mason

Natalie Hemby

"If I Didn't Know You" by The Red Clay Strays
"What Kinda Man" by Parker McCollum

Ava Suppelsa

"Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)" by Max McNown

Joybeth Taylor

"Broken" by Ella Langley
"Butterfly Season" by Ella Langley
"Choosin' Texas" by Ella Langley
"Dandelion" by Ella Langley
"Empty Words" by Corey Kent
"girl you're taking home" by Ella Langley
"Hell At Night" by BigXthaPlug feat. Ella Langley
"I Can't Love You Anymore" by Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen
"I Gotta Quit" by Ella Langley
"Last Call For Us" by Ella Langley
"Low Lights" by Ella Langley
"Most Good Things Do (Acoustic)" by Ella Langley
"Need To" by Gavin Adcock
"Never Call Again" by Gavin Adcock
"Somethin' Simple" by Ella Langley
"Speaking Terms" by Ella Langley
"We Know Us" by Ella Langley
"weren't for the wind" by Ella Langley
"You & Me Time" by Ella Langley

Lydia Vaughan

"Bar None" by Jordan Davis
"Don't Tell On Me" by Jason Aldean
"Empty Words" by Corey Kent
"Friends Like That" by John Morgan feat. Jason Aldean



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
**2026 MUSIC ROW
AWARD NOMINEES**

JESSIE JO DILLON

*Female Songwriter
of the Year*



LACI KAYE BOOTH

*Discovery Artist
of the Year*



Category 10 | SONG OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor Nashville writers and publishers on the craft of country songwriting, not necessarily chart position.



“Backseat Driver”

Songwriters: Jacob Davis, Jordan Walker
Publishers: Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/
 Songs Of Black River Music, ASCAP/Me
 Gusta Music, BMI/Songs Of Combustion
 Five, BMI/Seeker From The Speaker
 Music, BMI/On Cor Music, BMI
Recorded by: Kane Brown (Sony Music Nashville)



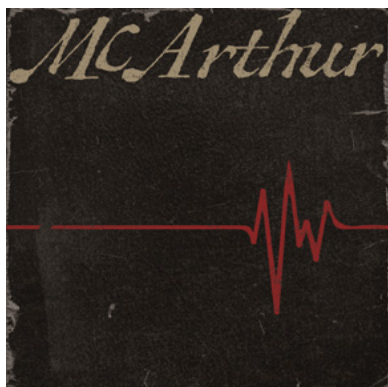
“Choosin’ Texas”

Songwriters: Ella Langley, Joybeth Taylor, Luke Dick,
 Miranda Lambert
Publishers: Langley Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree
 Publishing, BMI/Luke Dick Publishing
 Designee, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing,
 BMI/Bada Bing Bada Boom Publishing,
 BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI
Recorded by: Ella Langley (SAWGOD/Columbia
 Records)



“I Sit In Parks”

Songwriters: Kelsea Ballerini
Publishers: Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/
 Feel Your Way Through Publishing,
 ASCAP
Recorded by: Kelsea Ballerini (Black River
 Entertainment)



“McArthur”

Songwriters: Chase McGill, Jameson Rodgers, Josh
 Thompson, Michael Hardy
Publishers: Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/
 Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/
 Relative Music Group Family, ASCAP/
 Head Coach Music, ASCAP/Songs
 Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippians 4:7
 Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/
 Red Bandana Publishing, BMI
Recorded by: HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen,
 Tim McGraw (Big Loud Records)



“Say So”

Songwriters: Dan Smyers, David Hodges, Jimmy
 Robbins, Shay Mooney
Publishers: Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/WC
 Music Corp., ASCAP/Shay Mooney
 Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane
 Publishing Corp., BMI/Eleventh
 Wave Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt
 Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/
 Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Lilyridge Music,
 ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs,
 ASCAP
Recorded by: Dan + Shay (Warner Records
 Nashville)



“Sleepless In A Hotel Room”

Songwriters: Jonathan Singleton, Luke Combs, Randy
 Montana
Publishers: Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg
 Lyrics, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing
 Corp., BMI/Sullivan S Guns Music, BMI/
 Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Hits
 Of 50 Egg Music, ASCAP/Braven Baker
 Music, ASCAP
Recorded by: Luke Combs (Sony Music Nashville)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2026 NOMINEES



LUKE COMBS

Song of the Year: *"Sleepless in a Hotel Room"*
Male Artist of the Year
Entertainer of the Year



FLATLAND CAVALRY

Group / Duo of the Year



WYATT McCUBBIN

Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year
"Good Times & Tan Lines" recorded by Zach Top

MUSICROW

**MAKE
WAKE**
ARTISTS

SONG OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Featured on Kane Brown's album *The High Road*, "**Backseat Driver**," produced by Dann Huff, reflects on parenthood through the everyday moments that shape a father's perspective. Written by Jacob Davis and Jordan Walker, the song follows a morning drive as the narrator's young daughter fills the ride with questions about the world around her, shifting his attention from the distractions of adulthood to the curiosity of childhood. "Daddy, look, there's a plane in the sky. Are we there yet? Did you just see that dog run by?" she asks, prompting him to see life through her eyes. Later, he reflects, "One day, I'll look back and I'll miss when my whole world wasn't over that dash, it was back there buckled in," before closing with, "I wish I could be more like her. My little dangling feet, pretty in pink, backseat driver." "Backseat Driver" became Brown's 13th career No. 1 on country radio and his eighth consecutive chart-topper.

Co-written by Ella Langley, Joybeth Taylor, Luke Dick and Miranda Lambert, "**Choosin' Texas**" follows a narrator who realizes she cannot keep her man from choosing what his heart wants. "Just when I thought I got him to fall in love with Tennessee, I shoulda known better than to take him back to Abilene," she reflects before admitting, "I put him right back into her arms. I wasn't a match for that kinda spark." Langley continues, "It doesn't take a crystal ball to see a cowboy always finds a way to leave," before concluding, "Drinkin' Jack all by myself. He's choosin' Texas, I can tell." Featured on Langley's sophomore album *Dandelion*, the history-making track spent 11 weeks atop the *Billboard* Hot 100, becoming the longest-running No. 1 by a woman with a country hit in the chart's history. It also recorded six separate runs at No. 1 on the Hot 100, setting a new record for a single release cycle, and logged its 29th week atop the Hot Country Songs chart.

Written solely by Kelsea Ballerini for her 2025 *Mount Pleasant* EP, "**I Sit in Parks**" reflects on the pressure women face as they pursue the lives they have worked for while confronting the reality that a biological clock does not stop along the way. Watching young families around her, she questions whether she has "missed the mark," asking, "Did I miss it? By now, is it a lucid dream? Is it my fault for chasing things a body clock doesn't wait for? I did the damn tour." She later acknowledges the complexity of those feelings, singing, "They lay on a blanket and goddamit he loves her. I wonder if she wants my freedom like I wanna be a mother," before adding, "But *Rolling Stone* says I'm on the right road, so I refill my Lexapro" Rather than framing career and motherhood as mutually exclusive, the song captures the emotional space where gratitude for one path exists alongside a longing for another for women who want it all.

Written by Chase McGill, Jameson Rodgers, Josh Thompson and Michael Hardy, "**McArthur**," performed by HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen and Tim McGraw, traces four generations of the

McArthur family as each man reflects on the land that has defined his life. Beginning with the family's patriarch, the song follows each generation in turn, from a farmer who built a life on the property to a son lost in Vietnam, a grandson determined to preserve the family legacy and, finally, an heir tempted to sell it to developers. "My bloodline, it bled on this ground. Soon we all find that's where we're bound," each generation sings, before asking, "And father time don't leave anyone out. And when you pass on, what you gonna pass down?" In the opening verse, the family's patriarch reflects, "I kept my family fed with a mule and a plow. I'm a whisper in the wind through the pine trees now." By the song's close, that promise returns as Hunter McArthur prepares to sell the land but hears "a whisper in the pines that's tellin' me, 'Don't.'"

Co-written by Dan Smyers, Shay Mooney, David Hodges and Jimmy Robbins, "**Say So**" was written in honor of Warner Chappell Music Nashville executive Ben Vaughn. The song serves as a reminder that no one has to carry life's struggles alone and encourages those who are hurting to ask for help rather than suffer in silence. "Sometimes the words you don't know how to say are the loudest. No one can shoulder the weight if they don't know about it," Dan + Shay sing before offering, "I'll be there every time you call. Pick you up every time you fall. If you're going through hell, you're not alone. If you need somebody, say so." The song closes with the hopeful reassurance, "Hold on tight. The sun is gonna rise. So open up your eyes. Tomorrow is a brand new day." Dan + Shay performed "Say So" in Vaughn's honor during the 60th ACM Awards, with the performance helping spotlight the importance of suicide prevention and encouraging conversations around mental health and seeking support.

Co-written by Luke Combs, Randy Montana and Jonathan Singleton, Combs' "**Sleepless in a Hotel Room**," featured on his recent *The Way I Am* LP, captures the loneliness that can come with a job that requires you to be away from home. Written through the lens of a musician on the road, Combs describes lying awake in a hotel room, unable to sleep while thinking about the person waiting at home. Throughout the song, Combs imagines the parallel night unfolding back home, wondering whether the person he misses is just as restless as he is. "I can hear the lonely howlin' out my window. I can feel the whiskey not do anything. 2 in the morning, TV's on and I've never felt so far from home," Combs sings. He later says, "I wonder if you're starin' at our bedroom ceiling. Lyin' right beside a glass of wine. I wonder if you're tossin', turnin', wishin' you were kissin' me," before admitting, "The morning light can't come too soon. Lyin' here not next to you. Wide awake I dream of you. Sleepless in a hotel room."



Is Proud To Congratulate **Riley Green**
On His MusicRow Nomination For *Male Artist Of The Year*



New Album
That's Just Me
AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 18

Category 11 | **DISCOVERY ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville developing artist who has demonstrated the most promise of future success during the eligibility period.



Laci Kaye Booth

Lost Highway Records, Big Machine Music/UMPG Nashville, TMWRK, WME, BMI



Kashus Culpepper

Big Loud Records, Big Loud Publishing/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, Left I Right Management, CAA, BMI



Alexandra Kay

Wheelhouse Records (BBR Music Group), self-published, Beth Keith, Sound Talent Group, BMI



Braxton Keith

Warner Records Nashville | Warner Records, Liz Rose Music admin. by Warner Chappell Music Nashville, Vincent Torrez Management, WME, BMI



Ty Myers

RECORDS Nashville/Columbia Records, UMPG Nashville, Starstruck Entertainment, CAA, BMI



Emily Ann Roberts

Sony Music Nashville/RECORDS Nashville, Jody Williams Songs/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, Starstruck Entertainment, UTA, SESAC

CONGRATULATIONS TO
2026 MUSICROW AWARDS NOMINEE

BRAXTON KEITH



NOMINATED FOR
DISCOVERY ARTIST OF THE YEAR



DISCOVERY ARTIST OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Hailing from Livingston, Texas, **Laci Kaye Booth**, who recently signed to Lost Highway Records, grew up inspired by the sounds of Merle Haggard and Patsy Cline. After moving to Music City, she released her self-titled debut record in 2021, followed by 2024's *The Loneliest Girl In The World*, which appeared on the *Los Angeles Times*' list of the best albums of the year. Named as a *MusicRow* 2026 Next Big Thing, Spotify Artists to Watch for 2026 and CMT's Next Women of Country, Booth will release her third album, *Love Ain't For The Faint Of Heart*, on Sept. 18. Booth has previewed the Ben West-produced project with recent singles "Ethereal Redneck Shit" and "Pathetic." She has spent time on the road with Ella Langley, Parker McCollum, Megan Moroney, Marcus King Band and more. Last year, she made her Grand Ole Opry debut, and recently she made an appearance during CMA Fest at Nissan Stadium's Platform Stage. Later this year, she will join Langley and Brad Paisley for select dates.

Alabama-born artist-writer **Kashus Culpepper** grew up a student and reverent purveyor of Southern music, singing in church as young as five years old. In 2020, he picked up a guitar and began learning cover songs to play at barrack bonfires in Rota, Spain during his deployment with the Navy. Culpepper began making a name in dive bars up and down the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Since signing with Big Loud Records, he has joined Leon Bridges, Sierra Ferrell, Darius Rucker, Niall Horan, Eric Church, Shaboozey, Jelly Roll, Thomas Rhett and Wyatt Flores on tour along with his own headline dates. Culpepper has been named to the GRAMMY.com's 25 Artists to Watch in 2025, 2025 *Variety* Power of Young Hollywood Impact Report, Opry NextStage Class of 2025, 2025 Amazon Music Bonfire Artist to Watch, Apple Music's February 2025 Country Riser of the Month, 2025 Pandora Country Artist to Watch, Martin Artist Showcase Class of 2025, *MusicRow*'s 2026 Next Big Thing list and more. He released his debut album, *Act 1*, on Jan. 23 and the addendum, *Act I: Summer Nights*, earlier this summer.

With more than 8.7 million social media followers, BBR Music Group/BMG Nashville recording artist **Alexandra Kay** first gained national attention as a cast member on Netflix's *Westside*. Since then, she has earned recognition from *People*, *American Songwriter* and *Billboard*, among others. Her 2023 debut project, *All I've Ever Known*, reached No. 1 on the iTunes All Genre and Country charts globally and landed in the Top 10 on *Billboard*'s Current Country Album, Emerging Artist and HeatSeeker charts. Last year, Kay released her sophomore album, *Second Wind*, which reached No. 1 on the iTunes Country Album chart, and embarked on three headlining tours with multiple sold-out dates. She has shared the stage with artists including Jelly Roll, Brad Paisley and Tim McGraw. Named a 2026 *MusicRow* Next Big Thing, her debut single, "Straight For The Heart," ranked among country radio's most-added songs upon impact, placing her alongside Taylor Swift and Carrie Underwood in the Top 5 for most first-week stations by a debut solo female artist. Last year, Kay opened her flagship coffee shop, The Coffee Girl, in her hometown of Waterloo, Illinois.

Texas native **Braxton Keith** started his musical journey early, learning to play piano in kindergarten. He decided to pursue music in college and launched his career touring his home state in support of artists including Randall King and Triston Marez while making trips to Music City. Earlier this year, Keith released his debut album, *Real Damn Deal*, via Warner Records Nashville, co-writing 10 of the project's 15 tracks. The collection includes "Little Bit by Little Bit," "I Ain't Tryin'" and "I Own This Bar." Named one of 2026's Artists to Watch by Amazon Music, *Rolling Stone*, *MusicRow* and more, Keith is continuing a year of touring and new music releases. In 2025, he made his Grand Ole Opry debut and earned his first RIAA Gold certification for "Cozy." He is set to perform more than 130 shows this year, including appearances at fairs and festivals across the country, before launching his headlining "Real Damn Deal Tour". Keith will also join Tucker Wetmore and Gavin Adcock for select dates this fall.

Texas-born singer-songwriter and guitarist **Ty Myers** began writing and performing at a young age, developing a sound rooted in country, Southern rock, soul and blues. The 18-year-old released his debut album, *The Select*, in 2025, featuring the Platinum-certified singles "Ends of the Earth," "Thought It Was Love" and "Drinkin' Alone," with "Ends of the Earth" reaching the Top 10 at country radio. Myers followed the release with his 73-date "The Select Tour" before returning in 2026 with his sophomore album, *Heavy On The Soul*. Recorded at the historic FAME Recording Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, the project marked his first album at the renowned studio. Along the way, Myers has been featured by *Variety*, *People*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *Rolling Stone*, appeared on *Billboard*'s "21 Under 21" list, Spotify's RADAR program, and was named a *MusicRow* 2026 Next Big Thing. He has amassed more than 1.4 billion global streams, made his Austin City Limits debut, supported Luke Combs on tour and recently launched his headlining "The Legal Tour."

Knoxville, Tennessee, native **Emily Ann Roberts** began performing on local stages before gaining national attention as the runner-up on Blake Shelton's team during *The Voice* in 2015. Since then, she has released her debut album, *Can't Hide Country*, followed by the EP *Memory Lane*. Spotlit by *Billboard*, *MusicRow* and *People*, *Can't Hide Country* showcases Roberts' blend of traditional country and bluegrass influences. She has since amassed more than 146 million global streams and has made numerous appearances on the Grand Ole Opry stage. Roberts has also toured with Blake Shelton, Cody Johnson, Megan Moroney, Jamey Johnson and more, and is on the road with Thomas Rhett throughout 2026. Along the way, she has been named an ACM New Female Artist of the Year nominee, the AIMP Nashville Rising Artist-Writer of the Year, a member of the Opry NextStage and *MusicRow* Next Big Thing Class of 2026, a CMT Next Woman of Country and a *Nashville Briefing* Artist to Watch. Roberts is also featured in Walt Disney World's Country Bear Musical Jamboree.

CONGRATULATING OUR NOMINEES

38th Annual
MusicRow Awards



Josh Miller

MALE SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR



**Concord Music
Publishing**

PUBLISHER
OF THE YEAR



Vincent Mason

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST
OF THE YEAR

concord
music publishing

Category 12 | **BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor a Nashville artist who achieved significant career progress for the first time.



Gavin Adcock

Warner Records Nashville |
Warner Records, Sony Music
Publishing Nashville/Good Cock
Tunes, Sticks Management, WME,
BMI



Kaitlin Butts

Republic Records, self-published
with admin. by Me Gusta Music,
Triple 8 Management, WME, BMI



Carter Faith

MCA/Gatsby Records, UMPG
Nashville, Range Media Partners,
CAA, BMI



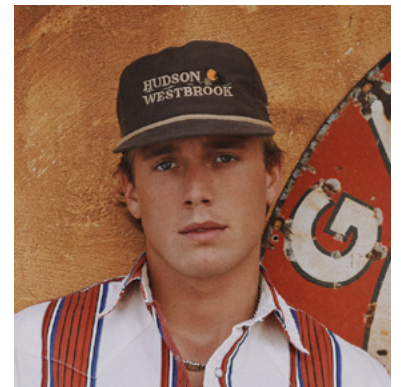
Vincent Mason

Interscope/Lost Highway/Music
Soup, Hang Your Hat/Concord
Music Publishing, Red Light
Management, WME, BMI



Max McNown

Fugitive Recordings, Sony Music
Publishing Nashville/Tooth &
Nail, Brandon Ebel, THE TEAM,
BMI



Hudson Westbrook

River House Artists/Warner
Records Nashville | Warner
Records, River House Artists/
Sony Music Publishing Nashville,
The House Management,
Evergreen Artist Group, BMI



ME GUSTA MUSIC

CONGRATS TO ALL OUR MUSICROW AWARDS NOMINEES!

KAITLIN BUTTS

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR

CODY JOHNSON

MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

49 WINCHESTER

GROUP/DUO ARTIST OF THE YEAR

FLATLAND CAVALRY (JASON ALBERS/ADAM GALLEGOS)

GROUP/DUO ARTIST OF THE YEAR

OLD DOMINION (WHIT SELLERS/GEOFF SPRUNG)

GROUP/DUO ARTIST OF THE YEAR

COMBUSTION MUSIC

BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

(JESSICA FARREN/AUSTIN GOODLOE/NICHOLAS SAINATO)

SONG OF THE YEAR (BACKSEAT DRIVER)

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Georgia native **Gavin Adcock** has continued his rapid rise in country music, amassing more than two billion global streams alongside a growing list of RIAA certifications. His 2024 album, *Actin' Up Again*, was the largest major-label country debut from a solo male artist released that year and was 2024's top-streaming major-label debut across the genre. His latest project, *Own Worst Enemy*, was released in August 2025, earning more than 25 million first-week U.S. streams and debuting at No. 4 on the *Billboard* 200 Country Chart. This year, Adcock added Executive Producer to his achievements with the release of *Country Never Dies*, a collaborative project featuring Adcock and nine fellow artists. The *MusicRow* Awards Discovery Artist of the Year nominee was also nominated for New Artist of the Year at both the 60th and 61st ACM Awards. Adcock is currently on his fourth extensive headlining run since 2024 with "The Day I Hang It Up Tour 2026." He also joined Morgan Wallen for the second time on 16 dates of Wallen's "Still The Problem Tour 2026."

Kaitlin Butts has continued her whirlwind year with new music, touring and several creative projects. In October 2025, Butts signed with Republic Records before releasing *The Yeehaw Sessions*, featuring her takes on songs from Chappell Roan, Jimmy Eat World, The Chicks and Don Williams. The project also included "You Ain't Gotta Die (To Be Dead To Me)," which has garnered over 67 million global streams and 157 million TikTok views. Butts recently released her new single "Never Really Mine," which marked her first new music since the project. She also joined Willow Avalon on her track "Hypothetically Speaking," starred in Ella Langley's "Choosin' Texas" music video and co-directed and wrote the treatment for Flatland Cavalry's "Unglued" video. Butts wrapped her sold-out headlining "European Cowgirl Experience," which included stops across the UK and an appearance at Highway Festival at London's Royal Albert Hall. She was also featured in the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's American Currents exhibition for the second consecutive year and was named to both the 2025 Opry NextStage and CMT Next Women of Country classes.

Carter Faith reached a career milestone this year with an ACM Album of the Year nomination for her debut album *Cherry Valley* and a performance during the awards show. The nomination made the project the first debut album to earn a nomination in the category since Chris Stapleton's album *Traveller* in 2016. Alongside acclaim from *Billboard*, *Stereogum*, *NPR Music*, *The Hollywood Reporter* and more, *Cherry Valley* was also named *Rolling Stone*'s best country album of the year and landed at No. 17 on the outlet's Best 100 Albums of 2025 list. Faith recently expanded the project with *Cherry Valley Forever*, featuring five new songs released during the eligibility period. She is currently on the road with Post Malone on his "Big Ass Stadium Tour" and will also perform select dates with Chris Stapleton, Kacey Musgraves and Shaboozey this year. Her breakout year has quickly established Faith among the genre's rising artists.

Vincent Mason further established himself as one of country music's fastest-rising new artists. His 14-track debut album, *There I Go*, was released in November 2025 and features the Platinum-certified "Hell Is A Dance Floor" and Gold-certified "Damned If I Do." The tracks have helped Mason surpass 500 million career streams, while "Damned If I Do" also reached the *Billboard* Hot 100 and Hot Country Songs chart. Mason made his national television debut on *The Kelly Clarkson Show* and *Today* before making his late-night debut on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*. He was also named one of four country artists in Spotify's 2026 Artists to Watch program and earned his first ACM New Male Artist of the Year nomination. Mason kicked off 2026 with his sold-out "There I Go Tour," performed at CMC Rocks in Australia, toured internationally with Jordan Davis and joined Morgan Wallen for select stadium dates. He also expanded his reach with chart success in Canada, the UK and Australia.

Max McNown emerged as one of music's fastest-growing crossover artists over the past year. His Platinum-certified "A Lot More Free" has garnered more than 400 million streams and earned McNown his *Billboard* Hot 100 debut and a spot atop *Billboard*'s Emerging Artists chart. McNown's follow-up track, "Better Me For You (Brown Eyes)," a single from his 2025 sophomore album, *Night Diving (The Cost of Growing Up)*, has achieved double Platinum certification, gained more than 500 million streams and spent 36 weeks on the *Billboard* Hot 100, peaking at No. 26. The single also reached No. 6 at country radio, Top 30 at Pop and No. 8 at Hot AC Radio, further showcasing McNown's multi-format appeal. He also made his television debut on *The Kelly Clarkson Show*. McNown continues to build his audience online, where he currently has more than 2.6 million TikTok followers.

Hudson Westbrook has quickly made his mark in country music since releasing his debut single "Take It Slow" in 2024. The Texas native followed the release with a string of hits, including Texas radio chart-topper "Two Way Drive" and his first country radio No. 1, "House Again." Westbrook released his 17-track debut album *Texas Forever*, which landed in the Top 10, before following the project with his *Exclusive* EP. In less than two years of releasing original music, Westbrook has amassed nearly 1.5 billion global streams and earned his first ACM New Male Artist of the Year nomination. He was also named to the 2026 Opry NextStage class and earned recognition from *Billboard*, Spotify, *Country Now*, *Holler*, *The Country Wire* and SiriusXM. On the road, Westbrook has sold out headline shows across the country and performed alongside George Strait, Parker McCollum, Morgan Wallen, Bailey Zimmerman, Midland and Ian Munsick.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2026
MUSICROW AWARDS **NOMINEES**



BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR
**VINCENT
MASON**



FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR
ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
**LAINY
WILSON**



MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR
**RILEY
GREEN**



ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
**CHRIS
STAPLETON**

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY AT

RED LIGHT
MANAGEMENT

Category 13 | FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor the achievements of a Nashville female artist during the eligibility period.



Avery Anna

Warner Records Nashville |
Warner Records, self-published,
33 Creative, WME, BMI



Kelsea Ballerini

Black River Entertainment, Sony
Music Publishing Nashville,
Sandbox Entertainment, CAA,
ASCAP



Ella Langley

SAWGOD/Columbia Records,
Sony Music Publishing Nashville,
Painted Rock Management, The
Neal Agency, BMI



Megan Moroney

Sony Music Nashville/Columbia
Records, UMPG Nashville, Hayley
Corbett, UTA, SESAC



Kacey Musgraves

Lost Highway Records, Warner
Chappell Music Nashville,
Sandbox Entertainment, CAA,
ASCAP



Lainey Wilson

BBR Music Group/Broken
Bow Records, Sony Music
Publishing Nashville, Red Light
Management, WME, BMI

CONGRATULATIONS

AVERY ANNA



2026

MUSICROW

FEMALE ARTIST
OF THE YEAR NOMINEE



FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Warner Records Nashville artist **Avery Anna** first garnered attention by sharing videos online before releasing her debut EP, *Mood Swings*, in 2022. Since then, the Arizona native has developed a catalog that blends country, pop and singer-songwriter influences, earning more than 1.7 billion global streams. Her 2022 single “Narcissist” was certified Platinum. Last year, her sophomore album, *let go letters*, inspired by the real life stories of her fans, was named one of *Billboard*’s “50 Best Albums of 2025.” In 2026, she took home ACM New Female Artist of the Year and completed her “Girl of Constant Sorrow” headline run. In March, Anna released her EP *forgive, forget.*, featuring “Fear In God,” a faith-inspired duet with Sam Barber. The pair previously reached the Top 10 on *Billboard*’s Hot Country Songs chart with “Indigo” and later performed the song together on *The Kelly Clarkson Show*. Alongside her headlining dates, Anna has also toured with Megan Moroney, Luke Bryan, Cole Swindell and others. Anna is currently amidst a run of festival dates throughout the summer.

Black River Entertainment’s **Kelsea Ballerini** entered a new creative chapter in 2026 with the release of her EP *Mount Pleasant*, a project that continues the personal songwriting that has become a hallmark of her recent work through songs that explore personal identity, relationships and the changing priorities that come with adulthood. She followed the EP this summer with collaborations including “Another Drink” with Marshmello and “The Math of Us” with Patrick Droney. Earlier in 2025, Ballerini wrapped her 35-date “KELSEA BALLERINI LIVE ON TOUR,” performing in arenas across the country. Those releases followed her 2024 album *PATTERNS*, which debuted atop *Billboard*’s Country Albums chart, and the acclaimed 2023 *Rolling Up The Welcome Mat*. Ballerini earned nominations for Female Vocalist of the Year at the 2025 CMA Awards, Female Artist of the Year at the 2026 ACM Awards and Best Contemporary Country Album at the 2026 GRAMMY Awards for *Patterns*, continuing a career that has included seven No. 1 singles, induction into the Grand Ole Opry and collaborations spanning country and pop.

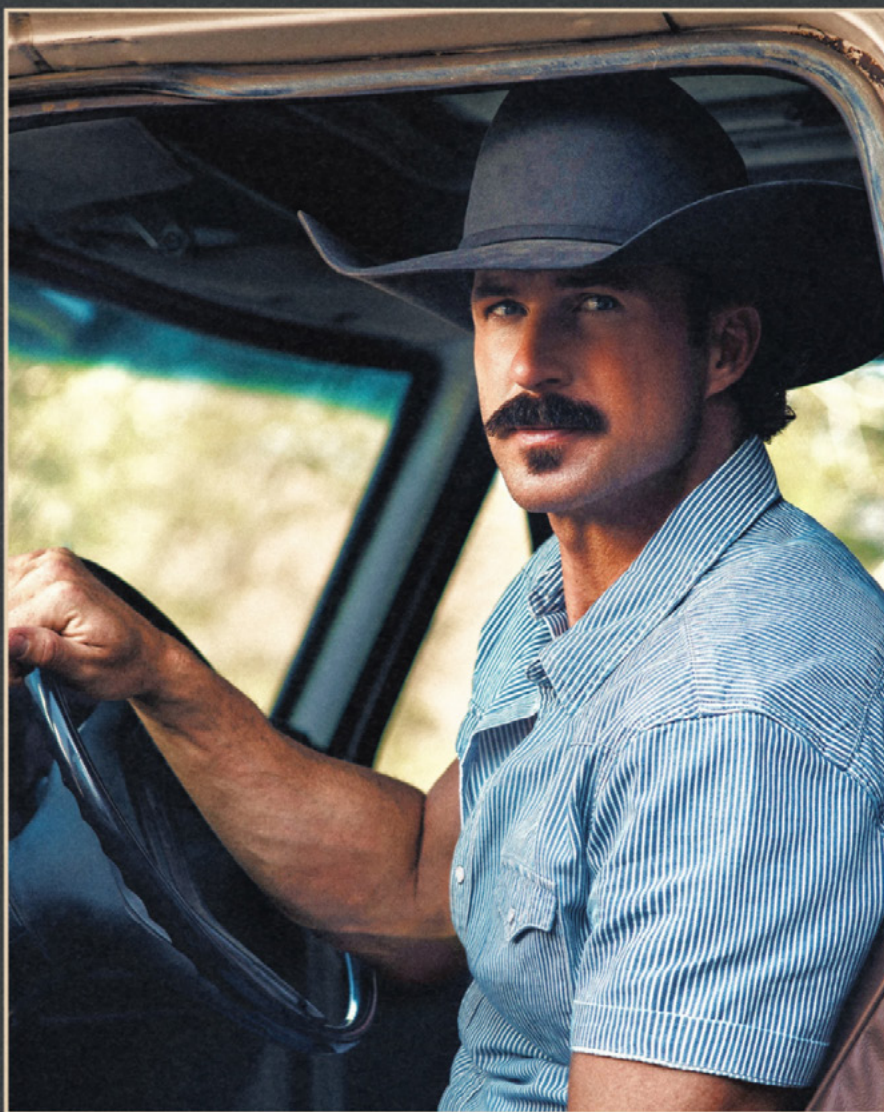
Before moving to Nashville in 2019, Columbia Records’ **Ella Langley** cut her teeth playing bars and festivals throughout her home state of Alabama. After a few years in Music City, her 2023 debut EP *Excuse the Mess* introduced fan-favorite songs before she released her debut album, *hungover*, in 2024. She followed it with her 2026 sophomore album, *Dandelion*, which debuted at No. 1 and was executive produced by Langley alongside Miranda Lambert and Ben West. The album includes the 4x Platinum single “Choosin’ Texas” and the Platinum-certified “Be Her.” “Choosin’ Texas” spent 11 weeks atop the *Billboard* Hot 100, becoming the longest-running No. 1 by a woman with a country hit on the chart. The song also recorded six separate runs at No. 1 during a single release cycle while spending 29 weeks atop *Billboard*’s Hot Country Songs chart. Langley is currently on her headlining “Dandelion Tour” after earning seven ACM Awards in 2026, including Female Artist of the Year, Song of the Year, Single of the Year and Musical Event of the Year alongside Riley Green for “Don’t Mind If I Do.”

Sony Music Nashville’s **Megan Moroney** entered 2026 with the February release of her third studio album, *Cloud 9*, which includes the chart-topping singles “Beautiful Things” and “6 Months Later,” her highest debut on the *Billboard* Hot 100 to date. The album follows her Gold-certified sophomore release, *Am I Okay?*, which debuted at No. 9 on the *Billboard* 200 in 2024 and became one of the year’s biggest releases by a female country artist. The project produced the double-Platinum No. 1 hit “Am I Okay?” and the Platinum-certified “No Caller ID,” which set the record for the largest U.S. streaming debut for a female country song. Moroney’s catalog has now surpassed 3.9 billion global streams, led by her four-times Platinum No. 1 hit “Tennessee Orange” from her 2023 debut album, *Lucky*. Following the sold-out 50-date “Am I Okay? tour,” Moroney returned to the road earlier this year with an international headline run featuring arena dates across North America, Europe and the United Kingdom in support of *Cloud 9*.

Lost Highway’s **Kacey Musgraves** returned in 2026 with her sixth studio album, *Middle of Nowhere*, a 13-song collection she co-wrote and co-produced with longtime collaborators Daniel Tashian and Ian Fitchuk. Inspired by the sounds and stories of her Texas upbringing, the album features collaborations with Willie Nelson, Miranda Lambert, Billy Strings and Gregory Alan Isakov. Later this year, Musgraves will launch the “Middle of Nowhere Tour” in support of the new album. It follows 2024’s *Deeper Well*, which delivered the biggest debut sales week of Musgraves’ career, debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top Album Sales chart and became her fifth No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart. The album’s single “The Architect” earned the Grammy Award for Best Country Song. In 2023, Musgraves scored her first *Billboard* Hot 100 No. 1 with “I Remember Everything,” her duet with Zach Bryan, becoming the first country duet in 40 years to top the chart. The song also won the Grammy Award for Best Country Duo/Group Performance. Across her career, Musgraves has earned eight Grammy Awards.

Lainey Wilson continued the *Whirlwind* era in 2025 with the release of the album’s deluxe edition, featuring five additional tracks, including her No. 1 single “Somewhere Over Laredo.” The Louisiana native carried that momentum into 2026 by headlining Stagecoach, launching a run of stadium shows with Chris Stapleton and becoming the subject of the Netflix documentary *Lainey Wilson: Keepin’ Country Cool*. At the 2025 CMA Awards, Wilson became the first solo female host since Reba McEntire in 1991 while winning Entertainer of the Year, Female Vocalist of the Year and Album of the Year for *Whirlwind*. A member of the Grand Ole Opry, Wilson has earned nine No. 1 singles, including “Heart Like a Truck,” “Watermelon Moonshine,” “Wildflowers and Wild Horses,” “4x4xU” and “Somewhere Over Laredo,” and more. She also earned three nominations at the 2026 Grammy Awards for Best Country Song and Best Country Solo Performance for “Somewhere Over Laredo,” as well as Best Country Duo/Group Performance for “Trailblazer,” her collaboration with Reba McEntire and Miranda Lambert. Wilson recently released her latest single, “Phone Keys Wallet,” featuring John Mayer.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION



2026 MUSICROW AWARD
MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Riley Green

fusion
MUSIC

RED LIGHT
MANAGEMENT

Category 14 | MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor the achievements of a Nashville male artist during the eligibility period.



Luke Combs

Sony Music Nashville, UMPG Nashville, Make Wake Artists, WME, BMI



Riley Green

Big Machine Records/
Nashville Harbor Records &
Entertainment, Warner Chappell
Music Nashville, Fusion Music/
Red Light Management, The
Neal Agency, BMI



Cody Johnson

Warner Records Nashville,
self-published with admin.
by Sony ATV, Durango Artist
Management, CAA, BMI



Zach Top

Leo33, Major Bob Music, Bob
Doyle & Associates, WME, BMI



Morgan Wallen

Big Loud Records/Mercury
Records, Warner Chappell Music
Nashville, Sticks Management,
The Neal Agency, BMI



Tucker Wetmore

MCA/Mercury Records, Warner
Chappell Music Nashville/Back
Blocks Publishing, Sandbox
Entertainment, WME, BMI

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MUSICROW
AWARDS NOMINEE

ZACH TOP
MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Luke Combs added another historic year to his career. Last year, Combs became the first country artist to headline both Bonnaroo and Lollapalooza, in addition to topping the bills at Austin City Limits, Newport Folk Festival and New Orleans JazzFest. He became the first country artist with two songs earning one billion streams on Spotify and, with the release of his recent album *The Way I Am*, became the highest-certified country artist in history with 168 certified tracks. He also became the first country artist to earn four RIAA Diamond-certified singles, adding another milestone to one of the genre's most decorated commercial careers. The Grand Ole Opry member and 11x CMA, 4x ACM and 6x *Billboard* Music Award winner also partnered with Opry Entertainment Group to open Category 10 in downtown Nashville, with new locations planned for Las Vegas and Orlando. Combs has also collaborated with Post Malone, Bailey Zimmerman and Jon Bellion, and joined Alex Warren for a live performance of "Ordinary" at Lollapalooza.

Riley Green is on track for another banner year with the release of his fourth studio album, *That's Just Me*, in September. Green's 2024 project, *Don't Mind If I Do*, gave way to breakout hits including "Don't Mind If I Do," "Change My Mind," "Jesus Saves" and his solo-written, third country radio No. 1, "Worst Way." The album followed Green's breakout success alongside Ella Langley, with "You Look Like You Love Me" becoming one of his defining hits and earning multiple ACM Awards. Green has won five ACM Awards and four CMA Awards, while also receiving recognition as *MusicRow* Breakout Artist of the Year, a CMT Listen Up Artist and one of CRS' New Faces of Country Music. Beyond music, Green recently made his acting debut on CBS' *Marshals* and was announced as a coach for Season 30 of *The Voice*. He also continues to expand his Duck Club Bourbon brand and the charitable work of his Buford Bonds Fund.

Cody Johnson added several major career milestones over the past year. At the 2026 ACM Awards, Johnson was crowned Entertainer of the Year and Male Artist of the Year, bringing his career total to four ACM wins. Johnson's catalog now spans six albums, including the 2024 CMA Album of the Year-winning *Leather*. The project also contained the ACM Song of the Year winner "Dirt Cheap." He sold more than 400,000 concert tickets in 2025 and landed on *Billboard*'s Top 100 Tours list. Throughout his career, Johnson has also been recognized as a CMT Artist of the Year, won four CMA Awards and three CMT Music Awards, and was named Best New Country Artist at the iHeartRadio Music Awards. Johnson has also appeared on *Today*, *The Kelly Clarkson Show* and *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*. Last summer, he co-hosted the three-hour *CMA Fest Presented by SoFi* alongside Ashley McBryde.

Zach Top followed his breakout debut with the release of his sophomore album, *Ain't In It For My Health*. The project earned an ACM Album of the Year nomination and won the inaugural Grammy Award for Best Traditional Country Album. Its lead single, "Good Times & Tan Lines," continued Top's momentum at country radio following one of the genre's biggest breakout years. His debut album, *Cold Beer & Country Music*, has surpassed one billion streams, earned RIAA Gold certification and also received an ACM Album of the Year nomination. The project includes the 2x Platinum "I Never Lie," along with Gold-certified hits "Sounds Like The Radio," "Use Me" and "Bad Luck." Top was awarded the ACM New Male Artist of the Year honor in 2025 and performed during this year's ACM Awards before returning to the road. He previously supported Lainey Wilson and launched his sold-out "Cold Beer & Country Music Tour," establishing himself as one of country music's most promising traditional artists.

Morgan Wallen added another record-breaking chapter to his career in 2026. His fourth studio album, *I'm The Problem*, debuted at No. 1 globally across seven countries and spent 13 non-consecutive weeks atop the *Billboard* 200. At release, all 37 tracks charted on the *Billboard* Hot 100, allowing Wallen to break his own record for the most simultaneous entries in the chart's history. The project has already produced six No. 1 singles at country radio, including the title track, which spent eight weeks atop the chart. Wallen's previous albums, *Dangerous: The Double Album* and *One Thing At A Time*, have each spent more than 100 weeks in the *Billboard* 200 Top 10, making him the first artist to accomplish the feat. He recently concluded his 23-stadium "Still The Problem Tour 2026." A portion of every ticket sold continues to benefit the Morgan Wallen Foundation, supporting youth music and athletic programs.

Tucker Wetmore emerged as one of country music's fastest-rising artists over the past year. His 2025 debut album, *What Not To*, marked the biggest country album debut from a new artist that year while helping push his career total beyond 2.4 billion streams. Wetmore earned his first three country radio No. 1s with the 2x Platinum "Wind Up Missin' You," "3,2,1" and "Brunette," which topped both the *Billboard* Country Airplay and Mediabase Country charts. This year, Wetmore earned his first ACM Award and performed during the awards show. He also made his Nissan Stadium debut during CMA Fest before continuing his "Brunette World Tour" across the U.S., U.K. and Europe. On the road, Wetmore has had runs alongside Thomas Rhett, Luke Bryan, Jason Aldean and Jordan Davis. Wetmore has additionally earned Artist to Watch recognition from *Billboard*, *MusicRow*, Spotify, Vevo and the Grand Ole Opry.

Category 15 | **GROUP/DUO ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor the achievements of a Nashville group or duo artist during the eligibility period.



49 Winchester

MCA/New West Records, self-published with admin. by Me Gusta Music, MNJR, CAA, BMI



Brothers Osborne

MCA, King Pen/Warner Chappell Music Nashville, Q Prime South, WME, ASCAP



Dan + Shay

Warner Records Nashville | Warner Records, Warner Chappell Music Nashville, The Core Entertainment, CAA, ASCAP/BMI



Flatland Cavalry

BBR Music Group/Stoney Creek Records, Sony Music Publishing Nashville, 33 Creative, WME, BMI



Old Dominion

RCA Records, Warner Chappell Music Nashville, Ontourage Management, WME, BMI



The Red Clay Strays

RCA Records, Warner Chappell Music Nashville, All For One MGMT, WME, BMI

GROUP/DUO ARTIST OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

49 Winchester has continued its rise with the release of its sixth studio album, *Change of Plans*, its first project for Lucille Records/MCA. Produced by Dave Cobb, the album earned praise from *Billboard*, *Rolling Stone*, *People* and *NPR* while helping the band surpass 500 million career streams, 2 million monthly listeners and more than 10 million streams of the project. The Virginia-based six-piece recently joined Eric Church at Red Rocks Amphitheatre before kicking off their North American run with Tim McGraw. Later this year, 49 Winchester will headline its first-ever show at Freedom Hall Civic Center Arena in Johnson City, Tennessee, marking the band's only homecoming performance of 2026. Formed by childhood friends Isaac Gibson and Chase Chafin, the ACM-nominated group has steadily grown from regional venues across Appalachia to sold-out headline shows and international touring, building one of country music's strongest grassroots followings while remaining rooted in the songwriting and musicianship that first defined the band.

Brothers Osborne are building on one of the most decorated careers of any duo in country music. The duo has earned seven CMA Awards, seven ACM Awards and 13 Grammy nominations, including a nomination for Best Country Duo/Group Performance in 2025. Brothers Osborne also received the ASCAP Vanguard Award in 2019. Their catalog has surpassed 3.4 billion global streams while producing multiple Gold and Platinum-certified hits. Last year, the duo released the four-song *Break Mine* EP before returning with their latest single, "Finish This Drink." Beyond performing, John Osborne has become one of Nashville's most sought-after producers, producing Ashley McBryde's *Linderville* along with recent projects for Grace Bowers and Caylee Hammack. On the road, the duo's latest headlining tour "We're Not For Everyone" hit more than 50 markets. Brothers Osborne are currently in the studio working on new music and they recently celebrated the 10-year anniversary of their breakthrough album, *Pawn Shop*, the project that launched the duo's career.

Dan + Shay have built one of the most commercially successful catalogs in modern country music. The duo has garnered more than 14 billion global streams and 139 worldwide Multi-Platinum, Platinum and Gold certifications, including 60 RIAA awards in the US. Dan + Shay recently celebrated their 11th country radio No. 1 with the Grammy-nominated title track from their fifth studio album, *Bigger Houses*. The pair has collected 10 ACM Awards, eight American Music Awards, four *Billboard* Music Awards, three Grammy Awards, two CMA Awards and two People's Choice Awards. In 2024, they also became the first coaching duo in the history of NBC's *The Voice*. Their catalog includes the 5x Platinum Justin Bieber collaboration "10,000 Hours," which spent 21 weeks atop the Hot Country Songs chart and surpassed 1 billion Spotify streams, along with "Speechless" and "Tequila," certified 7x and 8x Platinum, respectively. The duo is gearing up for the release of their new album, *Young*, this month, and will embark on "The Young Tour" across North America in September.

Flatland Cavalry has expanded its reach from the Americana and country radio circuits to stages across the country. The six-piece recently released its fifth studio album, *Work of Heart*, while sending its debut country radio single, "Never Comin' Back," to stations across the country. The group has earned three consecutive ACM Group of the Year nominations, reached 1 billion global streams and notched seven No. 1 singles at Texas country radio. Flatland Cavalry's music has also appeared across television and film, including *Twisters*, Paramount's *Yellowstone* and *Landman*, *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes* and Netflix's *The Ranch*. On the road, the band has headlined months-long tours while also joining Willie Nelson, Luke Combs and Lainey Wilson. With vocals by Cleto Cordero, the group includes Jason Albers, Jonathan Saenz, Reid Dillon, Wesley Hall and Adam Gallegos.

Old Dominion added another major chapter to its career over the past year with the release of its sixth studio album, *Barbara*, and the band's massive "How Good Is That – World Tour," which included arena and amphitheater performances across the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Following the tour, Old Dominion returned to Las Vegas for a two-night "OLD DOMINION. HITS. VEGAS." engagement at Planet Hollywood, celebrating the band's career-spanning catalog. The group recently earned its 11th consecutive ACM Group of the Year nomination with eight ACM Group of the Year and seven CMA Group of the Year wins already under its belt. Between the ACM and CMA Awards, Old Dominion has earned more Group of the Year honors than any other group in country music history. Earlier this year, the band completed a seven-show residency at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, raising more than \$1.25 million for seven charities. Since breaking onto the country music scene, Old Dominion has garnered nine No. 1 singles at country radio, more than six billion on-demand streams and a dozen RIAA Gold and Platinum certifications.

The Red Clay Strays reached another career milestone this year with the release of their third studio album, *Grateful*. Produced by Dave Cobb, the 11-track project follows the success of *Made By These Moments* and includes "Demons In Your Choir," "People Hatin'" and "If I Didn't Know You." At the 61st ACM Awards, the Alabama band was crowned Group of the Year for the first time after earning New Duo or Group of the Year honors in 2025. The group also performed "Demons In Your Choir" during the awards show alongside a full gospel choir. The Red Clay Strays then launched their largest headline run to date with the "Grateful Tour '26," featuring arena stops at Madison Square Garden, TD Garden, Rogers Arena, Bridgestone Arena, State Farm Arena and MGM Grand Garden Arena. The band also performed at Stagecoach and CMA Fest and hosted a *Grateful* album release concert at Nashville's Pinnacle benefiting Thistle Farms. Since breaking through with the 3x Platinum "Wondering Why," The Red Clay Strays have continued to expand their audience.

Category 16 | ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribers to honor outstanding achievements by a Nashville artist during the eligibility period.



Luke Combs

Sony Music Nashville, UMPG Nashville, Make Wake Artists, WME, BMI



Cody Johnson

Warner Records Nashville, self-published with admin. by Sony ATV, Durango Artist Management, CAA, BMI



Ella Langley

SAWGOD/Columbia Records, Sony Music Publishing Nashville, Painted Rock Management, The Neal Agency, BMI



Chris Stapleton

MCA, Warner Chappell Music Nashville Nashville, Red Light Management, WME, ASCAP



Morgan Wallen

Big Loud Records/Mercury Records, Warner Chappell Music Nashville, Sticks Management, The Neal Agency, BMI



Lainey Wilson

BBR Music Group/Broken Bow Records, Sony Music Publishing Nashville, Red Light Management, WME, BMI

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR: About the Nominees

Luke Combs added another historic year to his career. Last year, Combs became the first country artist to headline both Bonnaroo and Lollapalooza, in addition to topping the bills at Austin City Limits, Newport Folk Festival and New Orleans JazzFest. He became the first country artist with two songs earning one billion streams on Spotify and, with the release of his recent album *The Way I Am*, became the highest-certified country artist in history with 168 certified tracks. He also became the first country artist to earn four RIAA Diamond-certified singles, adding another milestone to one of the genre's most decorated commercial careers. The Grand Ole Opry member and 11x CMA, 4x ACM and 6x *Billboard* Music Award winner also partnered with Opry Entertainment Group to open Category 10 in downtown Nashville, with new locations planned for Las Vegas and Orlando. Combs has also collaborated with Post Malone, Bailey Zimmerman and Jon Bellion, and joined Alex Warren for a live performance of "Ordinary" at Lollapalooza.

Cody Johnson added several major career milestones over the past year. At the 2026 ACM Awards, Johnson was crowned Entertainer of the Year and Male Artist of the Year, bringing his career total to four ACM wins. Johnson's catalog now spans six albums, including the 2024 CMA Album of the Year-winning *Leather*. The project also contained the ACM Song of the Year winner "Dirt Cheap." He sold more than 400,000 concert tickets in 2025 and landed on *Billboard*'s Top 100 Tours list. Throughout his career, Johnson has also been recognized as a CMT Artist of the Year, won four CMA Awards and three CMT Music Awards, and was named Best New Country Artist at the iHeartRadio Music Awards. Johnson has also appeared on *Today*, *The Kelly Clarkson Show* and *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*. Last summer, he co-hosted the three-hour *CMA Fest Presented by SoFi* alongside Ashley McBryde.

Before moving to Nashville in 2019, Columbia Records' **Ella Langley** cut her teeth playing bars and festivals throughout her home state of Alabama. After a few years in Music City, her 2023 debut EP *Excuse the Mess* introduced fan-favorite songs before she released her debut album, *hungover*, in 2024. She followed it with her 2026 sophomore album, *Dandelion*, which debuted at No. 1 and was executive produced by Langley alongside Miranda Lambert and Ben West. The album includes the 4x Platinum single "Choosin' Texas" and the Platinum-certified "Be Her." "Choosin' Texas" spent 11 weeks atop the *Billboard* Hot 100, becoming the longest-running No. 1 by a woman with a country hit on the chart. The song also recorded six separate runs at No. 1 during a single release cycle while spending 29 weeks atop *Billboard*'s Hot Country Songs chart. Langley is currently on her headlining "Dandelion Tour" after earning seven ACM Awards in 2026, including Female Artist of the Year, Song of the Year, Single of the Year and Musical Event of the Year alongside Riley Green for "Don't Mind If I Do."

Chris Stapleton has continued one of the most dominant runs in music with a landmark year. In 2026, he won the Grammy Award for Best Country Solo Performance for "Bad As I Used To Be," earned six ACM Award nominations, the most of any male artist, and made history as the first country artist to achieve an RIAA Double Diamond certification when "Tennessee Whiskey" surpassed 20 million units sold. Stapleton is currently headlining his expansive "All-American Road Show", playing major stadiums and iconic venues across North America while sharing the stage with an acclaimed lineup of special guests. Over the past year, he released "Heart Letting Go" for Netflix's *Nobody Wants This*, "A Song To Sing" with Miranda Lambert, and "Bad As I Used To Be" from *F1 The Album*, while celebrating the 10th anniversary of his landmark debut, *Traveller*. He also recently made a television appearance on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* where he covered Willie Nelson's "Living in the Promiseland"

Morgan Wallen added another record-breaking chapter to his career in 2026. His fourth studio album, *I'm The Problem*, debuted at No. 1 globally across seven countries and spent 13 non-consecutive weeks atop the *Billboard* 200. At release, all 37 tracks charted on the *Billboard* Hot 100, allowing Wallen to break his own record for the most simultaneous entries in the chart's history. The project has already produced six No. 1 singles at country radio, including the title track, which spent eight weeks atop the chart. Wallen's previous albums, *Dangerous: The Double Album* and *One Thing At A Time*, have each spent more than 100 weeks in the *Billboard* 200 Top 10, making him the first artist to accomplish the feat. He recently concluded his 23-stadium "Still The Problem Tour 2026." A portion of every ticket sold continues to benefit the Morgan Wallen Foundation, supporting youth music and athletic programs.

Lainey Wilson continued the *Whirlwind* era in 2025 with the release of the album's deluxe edition, featuring five additional tracks, including her No. 1 single "Somewhere Over Laredo." The Louisiana native carried that momentum into 2026 by headlining Stagecoach, launching a run of stadium shows with Chris Stapleton and becoming the subject of the Netflix documentary *Lainey Wilson: Keepin' Country Cool*. At the 2025 CMA Awards, Wilson became the first solo female host since Reba McEntire in 1991 while winning Entertainer of the Year, Female Vocalist of the Year and Album of the Year for *Whirlwind*. A member of the Grand Ole Opry, Wilson has earned nine No. 1 singles, including "Heart Like a Truck," "Watermelon Moonshine," "Wildflowers and Wild Horses," "4x4xU" and "Somewhere Over Laredo," and more. She also earned three nominations at the 2026 Grammy Awards for Best Country Song and Best Country Solo Performance for "Somewhere Over Laredo," as well as Best Country Duo/Group Performance for "Trailblazer," her collaboration with Reba McEntire and Miranda Lambert. Wilson recently released her latest single, "Phone Keys Wallet," featuring John Mayer.

Awards were selected by critics until 2008, when they became member voted.

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor a Nashville producer's work on albums active during the eligibility period. Achievements may include, but are not limited to, single chart performance and album sales.

2025: Alysa Vanderheym
2024: Jay Joyce
2023: Joey Moi
2022: Shane McAnally
2019-21: Dann Huff
2018: Dave Cobb
2017: Jay Joyce
2016: Dave Cobb
2015: Jay Joyce
2014: Frank Liddell
2013: Dann Huff
2012: Frank Liddell
2011: Paul Worley
2010: Frank Liddell & Mike Wrucke
2008-09: Frank Rogers
2007: Byron Gallimore
2006: Dann Huff
2005: Frank Rogers
2004: Buddy Cannon
2003: James Stroud
2002: Keith Stegall
2001: Mark Wright
1999-00: Byron Gallimore

PRODUCER HONOR ROLL

Producer earning the most Top 20 singles and Top 10 albums for each year. Became Producer of the Year in 1999.

1998: No award presented
1997: Wilbur C. Rimes
1996: Tony Brown
1995: Allen Reynolds
1994: James Stroud
1993: Tony Brown
1991-92: Allen Reynolds
1990: Tony Brown
1982-89: Jimmy Bowen

STUDIO OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville recording studio during the eligibility period.

2025: Blackbird Studio

LABEL GROUP OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville label group during the eligibility period.

2022-25: Big Loud Records
2019-21: UMG Nashville

TALENT AGENCY OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville talent agency during the eligibility period.

2021-25: WME
2019-20: CAA

PUBLISHING COMPANY OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville publishing company during the eligibility period.

2025: Warner Chappell Music Nashville

BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor a Nashville songwriter who wrote or co-wrote a Top 10 song for the first time.

2025: Johnny Clawson
2024: Ryan Larkins
2023: Trannie Anderson
2022: Josh Jenkins
2021: Nicolette Hayford
2020: Randy Montana
2019: Jordan Reynolds
2018: Emily Shackelton
2017: Jesse Lee
2016: Maren Morris
2015: Michael Carter
2014: Nicolle Galyon and Cole Swindell (tie)
2013: Kacey Musgraves
2012: Johnny Bulford and Phil Barton
2011: Kimberly Perry
2010: Chris Young
2009: James Otto
2008: Luke Bryan
2007: Chris Tompkins and Josh Kear
2006: Jason Matthews
2005: Vicky McGehee
2004: Jim Brown and Don Rollins
2003: Lee Thomas Miller
2002: Anthony Smith
2001: Troy Verges
2000: Carolyn Dawn Johnson
1999: Phil Vassar
1998: Harley Allen
1997: Cathy Majeski, Sunny Russ, Stephony Smith
1996: Jim Lauderdale

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor a Nashville songwriter and recording artist who wrote or co-wrote a Top 10 song for the first time.

2025: Ella Langley
2024: Ashley Cooke
2023: Jelly Roll
2022: Lainey Wilson
2021: Ashley McBryde
2020: Ingrid Andress
2019: Jimmie Allen
2018: Devin Dawson
2017: Lauren Alaina

MALE SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville songwriter during the eligibility period.

2020-25: Ashley Gorley
2019: Josh Osborne

FEMALE SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor the achievements of a Nashville songwriter during the eligibility period.

2025: Jessie Jo Dillon
2023-24: Jessi Alexander
2022: Nicolle Galyon
2021: Natalie Hemby
2019-20: Hillary Lindsey

TOP SONGWRITER

Songwriter earning the most Top 20 singles for each year. Category merged with Breakthrough Songwriter in 1998.

1997: Craig Wiseman
1996: Mark D. Sanders
1995: Tom Shapiro
1994: Gary Burr
1993: Clint Black
1992: Garth Brooks
1991: Pat Alger
1987-90: Don Schlitz
1986: Dave Loggins
1985: Troy Seals

SONG OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor Nashville writers and publishers on the craft of songwriting, not necessarily chart performance.

2025: **(tie) "I Never Lie"** written by Zach Top, Carson Chamberlain, Tim Nichols; published by Rio Bravo Music, Inc. / Zach Top Music, BMI; Too Broke To Quit Music, BMI; Sony Tree Publishing / Music and Magazines Publishing, BMI
(tie) "Weren't For The Wind" written by Ella Langley, Joybeth Taylor, Johnny Clawson; published by Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/ Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Songs Of Smack, BMI/ Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Music Of CTM Outlander Music LP, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI
2024: **"Dirt Cheap"** written by Josh Phillips; published by Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Write Or Die Music, BMI/Write The Lightning Publishing, BMI
2023: **"Wait In The Truck"** written by Jordan Schmidt, Michael Hardy, Hunter Phelps, Renee Blair; published by Sony Tree Publishing, BMI; Relative Music Group, BMI; Redneck Music, BMI; Humerus Publishing Global, BMI; Round Hill Verses Publishing, BMI; Who Wants To Buy My Publishing, ASCAP; WC Music Corp., ASCAP Nontypical Music, ASCAP; Sony Accent, ASCAP; Pile Of Schmidt Songs, ASCAP; The Money Tree Vibe, ASCAP
2022: **"Til You Can't"** written by Matt Rogers and Ben Stennis; published by Anthem Canaleco Publishing, ASCAP/Dead Aim Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/The Stennis Mightier Music
2021: **"Hell Of A View"** written by Eric Church, Casey Beathard, Monty Criswell; published by Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Longer And Louder Music, BMI/Seven Ring Circus Songs, BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI Spirit Of Nashville One, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid, BMI/Rust And Chrome Music, BMI
2020: **"More Hearts Than Mine"** written by Ingrid Andress, Sam Ellis, Derrick Southerland; published by What Is An Ingrid, Songs Of Universal, Inc., Straight From The Art Music, Songs For A Stone Heart, Universal Music Corp., Happy Rock Publishing, ASCAP, BMI

2019: **"Girl Goin' Nowhere"** written by Ashley McBryde, Jeremy Bussey; published by Songs Of Song Factory, BMI/Beejo Fetch Publishing, BMI/Universal Tunes, SESAC
2018: **(tie) "Drunk Girl"** written by Chris Janson, Scooter Carusoe, Tom Douglas; published by ole Red Vinyl Music, Buckkilla Music, Scrambler Music, Abbotts Creek Music Two, Sony/ATV Tree Publishing, Tomdouglassmusic, ASCAP, BMI
(tie) "Most People Are Good" written by David Frasier, Ed Hill, Josh Kear; published by SB 21 Music Publishing, Purdy Beard Music, Songs Of Amylase Music, Five Hills Music, Do Write Music, Year Of The Dog Music, Champagne Whiskey Publishing, Downtown DLJ Songs, ASCAP, BMI
2017: **"Blue Ain't Your Color"** written by Steven Lee Olsen, Hillary Lindsey, Clint Lagerberg; published by WB Music Corp., Music Of The Corn, Rezolution Music, BMG Gold Songs, House Of Sea Gayle Music, Spirit Catalog Holdings, S.a.r.l/Spirit Two Nashville, ASCAP
2016: **"Humble and Kind"** written by Lori McKenna; published by Songs of Universal, Hoodie
2015: **"Girl Crush"** written by Hillary Lindsey, Lori McKenna, Liz Rose; published by Warner-Tamerlane, Songs of Crazy Girl, Songs of Universal, Hoodie, HillarodyRathbone, BMG
2014: **"All Kinds Of Kinds"** written by Phillip Coleman and Don Henry; published by Carnival Music, Warner-Tamerlane
2013: **(tie) "I Drive Your Truck"** written by Jessi Alexander, Connie Harrington, Jimmy Yeary; published by Vistaville Music, Happy Tears Music, EMI Blackwood, Watch This Girl Publishing, Great Day At This Time Music, Beattyville Music
(tie) "Merry Go 'Round" written by Kacey Musgraves, Josh Osborne, Shane McAnally; published by 351 Music, Warner Tamerlane, Crazy Water Music, Little Blue Egg, Universal Music, Want A Fresh One
2012: **"You and Tequila"** written by Deana Carter and Matraca Berg; published by Deanaling Music, Hannaberg Music, Songs of Universal Inc., WB Music Corp
2011: **"If I Die Young"** written by Kimberly Perry; published by Pearlfeather, Rio Bravo
2010: **"The House That Built Me"** written by Allen Shamblin, Tom Douglas; published by Sony/ATV-Tree Publishing Co., Tomdouglassmusic, Built On Rock Music
2009: **"In Color"** written by Jamey Johnson, James Otto, Lee Thomas Miller; published by New Songs of Sea Gayle, EMI Blackwood, Warner Tamerlane, Eldorotto Music
2008: **"Letter To Me"** written by Brad Paisley; published by EMI April Music, Sea Gayle Music
2007: **"Stealing Kisses"** written by Lori McKenna; published by Melanie Howard Music, Inc.
2006: **"What Hurts The Most"** written by Jeffrey Steele, Steve Robson; published by Songs of Windswept Pacific, Almo Music Corp.
2005: **"Whiskey Lullaby"** written by Bill Anderson, Jon Randall; published by Sony/ATV-Tree, Mr. Bubba, Reynsong, Who Ya Say, Wrensong
2004: **"Almost Home"** written by Craig Morgan, Kerry Kurt Phillips; published by Magic Mustang Music Inc., Sufferin' Succotash Songs
2003: **"Red Ragtop"** written by Jason White; published by Sony/ATV Music
2002: **"Where Were You (When The World Stopped Turning)"** written by Alan Jackson; published by EMI Music Publishing
2001: **"There Is No Arizona"** written by Jamie O'Neal, Shaye Smith, Lisa Drew; published by EMI Music, Zomba Music
2000: **"He Didn't Have To Be"** written by Brad Paisley, Kelley Lovelace; published by EMI April Music, Sea Gayle Music, Love Ranch Music
1999: **"Don't Laugh At Me"** written by Allen Shamblin, Steve Seskin; published by Built On Rock Music, David Aaron Music, Love This Town Music
1998: **"Something That We Do"** written by Clint Black, Skip Ewing; published by Blackened Music, Opryland Music Group
1997: **"Friends"** written by Jerry Holland; published by That's A Smash Publishing, Mike Curb Music

1996: **“What Mattered Most”** written by Vince Melamed, Gary Burr;
 published by MCA Music, Patrick Joseph Music

DISCOVERY ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor a Nashville developing artist who demonstrates significant talent and potential to rise.

2025: Carter Faith
 2024: Zach Top
 2023: Ashley Cooke
 2022: MacKenzie Porter
 2021: Lainey Wilson
 2020: Jameson Rodgers
 2019: Tenille Townes

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor a Nashville artist who achieved significant career progress for the first time.

2025: Ella Langley
 2024: Shaboozey
 2023: Jelly Roll
 2022: Lainey Wilson
 2021: Tenille Arts
 2020: Ingrid Andress
 2019: Ashley McBryde
 2018: Luke Combs
 2017: Maren Morris
 2016: Old Dominion
 2015: Sam Hunt
 2014: Brandy Clark
 2013: Kacey Musgraves
 2012: Eli Young Band
 2011: The Band Perry
 2010: Zac Brown Band
 2009: Jamey Johnson
 2008: Lady A

CRITICS' PICK/NEW ARTIST

To recognize an outstanding new artist who released their first single in the awards year. Became Breakthrough Artist in 2008.

2007: Taylor Swift
 2006: Carrie Underwood
 2005: Miranda Lambert
 2004: Buddy Jewell
 2003: Joe Nichols
 2002: Blake Shelton
 2001: Mark McGuinn
 2000: Eric Heatherly

FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor outstanding achievements by a Nashville female artist during the eligibility period.

2023-25: Lainey Wilson

MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor outstanding achievements by a Nashville male artist during the eligibility period.

2025: Morgan Wallen
 2024: Jelly Roll
 2023: Morgan Wallen

GROUP/DUO ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor outstanding achievements by a Nashville male artist during the eligibility period.

2023-25: Old Dominion

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow's subscribed members to honor outstanding achievements by a Nashville artist during the eligibility period. Became Entertainer of the Year in 2023.

2025: Morgan Wallen
 2024: Lainey Wilson
 2023: Morgan Wallen
 2019-22: Luke Combs