MUSIC ROW
Tuesday, October 27, 2026
WEEKLY

This is an inside look at the nominees for the 60th annual CMA Awards. The final nominations list was determined by eligible voting CMA members comprised of professionals within the country music industry.

Ella Langley leads the group with nine nods, including her first for Entertainer of the Year. Other top nominees include **Miranda Lambert** with seven nominations; **Kacey Musgraves** and **Ben West** with five nominations each; **Cody Johnson, Chris Stapleton** and **Stephen Wilson Jr.** with four nominations each; and **Dave Clauss, Luke Combs** and **Lainey Wilson** with three each.

Alongside Langley, Combs, Johnson, Stapleton and Wilson are vying for Entertainer of the Year.

There are 13 first-time nominees, including **Smith Ahnquist, Avery Anna, Jack Antonoff, Tim Cofield, Carter Faith, Austin Goodloe, Muscadine Bloodline, Emily Ann Roberts, Caylee Robillard, Laura Sisk, Joybeth Taylor, Thelma & James** and **Ben West.**

The CMA Awards broadcasts live from Nashville's Bridgestone Arena on Wednesday, Nov. 18 (8:00 – 11:00 PM/EST) on ABC, Disney+ and next day on Hulu. ***MR***

FOR YOUR CMA AWARD CONSIDERATION

STEPHEN WILSON JR.

NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR
MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

"NASHVILLE'S BREAKOUT STAR"
SPIN

"ONE OF COUNTRY MUSIC'S MOST ELECTRIFYING NEW ARTISTS."
RollingStone

"GARY"

SONG OF THE YEAR
VIDEO OF THE YEAR
(STARRING GARY SINISE)

"MIGHT BE THE MOST POWERFUL MUSIC VIDEO OF THE DECADE"
ALL COUNTRY NEWS

"EVERYTHING YOU WANT FROM A VISUAL PIECE."
WHISKEYRIFF

BIG LOUD

Entertainer Of The Year

Luke Combs

- Scored 23rd consecutive No. 1 with “Be By You,” extending record for the most consecutive No. 1s to start a career
- Became first solo country artist to headline Wembley Stadium with three sold-out shows
- 2026 tour sold more than 1.37 million tickets, including record-setting stadium shows around the world

Cody Johnson

- Won 2026 ACM Entertainer of the Year and Male Artist of the Year
- Released sixth studio album, *Banks of the Trinity*
- Set a RODEOHOUSTON attendance record, selling 80,203 tickets for the largest concert-only event at NRG Stadium

Ella Langley

- Made history with “Choosin’ Texas,” which became the longest-running No. 1 song in *Billboard* Hot 100 history at 23 weeks
- “Choosin’ Texas” named *Billboard*’s No. 1 Song of the Summer for 2026
- Released her sophomore album, *Dandelion*, earning RIAA Platinum certification

Chris Stapleton

- “Tennessee Whiskey” became the first country song certified RIAA Double Diamond, surpassing 20 million units in the U.S.
- Won Best Country Solo Performance at the 2026 Grammys for “Bad As I Used To Be”
- Drew more than 550,000 fans across the first 21 dates of his 2026 "All-American Road Show"

Lainey Wilson

- Headlined Stagecoach 2026
- Earned first No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200 with *Whirlwind*
- "Whirlwind World Tour" crew won seven CMA Touring Awards

FOR YOUR **CMA AWARDS** CONSIDERATION

LUKE COMBS

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
ALBUM OF THE YEAR ***THE WAY I AM***

MEGAN MORONEY

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
SONG OF THE YEAR **"BEAUTIFUL THINGS"**

BROOKS & DUNN

VOCAL DUO OF THE YEAR

EMILY ANN ROBERTS

NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR

OLD DOMINION

VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

SONY MUSIC | NASHVILLE

SINGLE OF THE YEAR

"Be Her"

- Artist: Ella Langley; Producers: Miranda Lambert, Ella Langley, Ben West; Mix Engineer: Dave Clauss
- Langley's fourth No. 1 at country radio
- Fastest No. 1 climb by a solo female artist in the past decade

"Choosin' Texas"

- Artist: Ella Langley; Producers: Miranda Lambert, Ella Langley, Ben West; Mix Engineer: Dave Clauss
- Became the longest-running No. 1 song in *Billboard* Hot 100 history at 23 weeks
- Named *Billboard*'s No. 1 Song of the Summer for 2026

"I Knew It, I Knew You"

- Artist: Taylor Swift; Producers: Jack Antonoff, Taylor Swift; Mix Engineer: Laura Sisk
- Debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* Hot 100
- Became the first song by a woman to debut in the top 10 of *Billboard*'s Country Airplay chart

"Somewhere Over Laredo"

- Artist: Lainey Wilson; Producer: Jay Joyce; Mix Engineers: Jason Hall, Jay Joyce
- Opened with more than 1.16 million streams in its first 24 hours
- Wilson's ninth No. 1 at country radio

"The Fall"

- Artist: Cody Johnson; Producer: Trent Willmon; Mix Engineer: Jack Clarke
- Johnson's fifth career No. 1 at country radio
- RIAA certified Platinum

FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

LAINEY WILSON

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

SINGLE OF THE YEAR
"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO"

RETURNING TO HOST FOR HER THIRD STRAIGHT YEAR

BBR MUSIC GROUP BBR BMG

Album Of The Year

Ain't In It For My Health

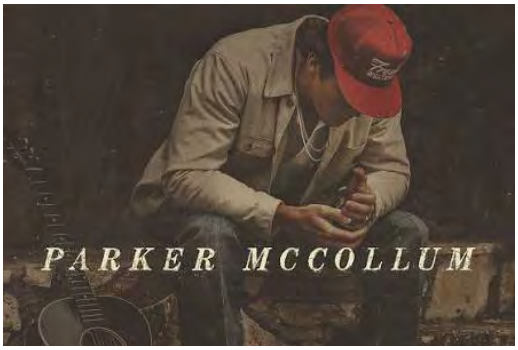
- **Artist: Zach Top; Producer: Carson Chamberlain; Mix Engineer: Matt Rovey**
- **Won the inaugural Grammy for Best Traditional Country Album at the 2026 Grammys**
- **Reached No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top Traditional Country Albums chart**

Dandelion

- **Artist: Ella Langley; Producers: Devin Dawson, Ella Langley, Miranda Lambert, Ben West; Mix Engineer: Dave Clauss**
- **Became the first country album by a woman this decade to produce four Country Airplay top 10s**
- **All 15 tracks debuted on the *Billboard* Hot 100**

Middle of Nowhere

- **Artist: Kacey Musgraves; Producers: Ian Fitchuk, Luke Laird, Kacey Musgraves, Daniel Tashian; Mix Engineers: Serban Ghenea, Konrad Snyder**
- **Debuted at No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Top Country Albums chart**
- **Features collaborations with Willie Nelson, Miranda Lambert and Billy Strings**



Parker McCollum

- **Artist: Parker McCollum; Producers: Frank Liddell, Eric Masse; Mix Engineer: Eric Masse**
- **ACM album of the year**
- **"Killin' Me" became a top 10 hit on the *Billboard* Hot Country Songs chart**

The Way I Am

- **Artist: Luke Combs; Producers: Luke Combs, Chip Matthews, Jonathan Singleton; Mix Engineer: Chip Matthews**
- **Debuted at No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Top Country Albums chart**
- **Produced three simultaneous top 10 hits on Hot Country Songs**

FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

Carly Pearce & Riley Green

If I Don't Leave I'm Gonna Stay

MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

BBR MUSIC GROUP · STONEY CREEK · BMG

SONG OF THE YEAR

"BE HER"

- Songwriters: Smith Ahnquist, Michael Hardy, Ella Langley, Jordan Schmidt
- Langley's fourth No. 1 at country radio
- Fastest No. 1 climb by a solo female artist in the past decade

"BEAUTIFUL THINGS"

- Songwriters: Jessi Alexander, Jessie Jo Dillon, Connie Harrington, Megan Moroney
- Reached the top 10 on *Billboard* Country Airplay
- RIAA certified Gold

"CHOOSIN' TEXAS"

- Songwriters: Luke Dick, Ella Langley, Miranda Lambert, Joybeth Taylor
- Became the longest-running No. 1 song in *Billboard* Hot 100 history at 23 weeks
- Named *Billboard*'s No. 1 Song of the Summer for 2026

"DRY SPELL"

- Songwriters: Luke Laird, Shane McAnally, Kacey Musgraves, Josh Osborne
- Reached No. 15 on *Billboard* Hot Country Songs
- Reached No. 55 on *Billboard* Hot 100

"GARY"

- Songwriter: Stephen Wilson Jr.
- Reached the top 40 on *Billboard* Country Airplay
- Nominated for Song of the Year at the 2026 ACM Awards

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

Miranda Lambert

- "Crisco" debuted at No. 13 on *Billboard*'s Country Digital Song Sales chart following her ACM Awards performance
- "A Song To Sing" became Lambert's biggest streaming debut to date
- Opening Nashville's newest venue, The Truth

Ella Langley

- Made history with "Choosin' Texas," which became the longest-running No. 1 song in *Billboard* Hot 100 history at 23 weeks
- "Choosin' Texas" named *Billboard*'s No. 1 Song of the Summer for 2026
- Released her sophomore album, *Dandelion*, earning RIAA Platinum certification

Megan Moroney

- *Cloud 9* debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200
- "Beautiful Things" became her fourth top 10 on *Billboard* Country Airplay
- Launched first arena tour with the "Cloud 9 Tour"

Kacey Musgraves

- Released sixth studio album, *Middle of Nowhere*
- "Dry Spell" reached No. 15 on *Billboard* Hot Country Songs
- *Middle of Nowhere* named one of the best albums of 2026 by *Billboard, ELLE, Esquire, NPR, Variety* and *Vulture*

Lainey Wilson

- Headlined Stagecoach 2026
- Earned first No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200 with *Whirlwind*
- "Whirlwind World Tour" crew won seven CMA Touring Awards

MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

LUKE COMBS

- Scored 23rd consecutive No. 1 with “Be By You,” extending record for the most consecutive No. 1s to start a career
- Became first solo country artist to headline Wembley Stadium with three sold-out shows
- 2026 tour sold more than 1.37 million tickets, including record-setting stadium shows around the world

CODY JOHNSON

- Won 2026 ACM Entertainer of the Year and Male Artist of the Year
- Released sixth studio album, *Banks of the Trinity*, featuring collaborations with Luke Combs and Brothers Osborne
- Set a RODEOHOUSTON attendance record, selling 80,203 tickets for the largest concert-only event at NRG Stadium

CHRIS STAPLETON

- “Tennessee Whiskey” became the first country song certified RIAA Double Diamond, surpassing 20 million units in the U.S.
- Won Best Country Solo Performance at the 2026 Grammys for “Bad As I Used To Be”
- Drew more than 550,000 fans across the first 21 dates of his 2026 "All-American Road Show"

ZACH TOP

- Won Best Traditional Country Album at the 2026 Grammys for *Ain’t In It For My Health*
- “I Never Lie” earned a Grammy nomination for Best Country Song
- Continued to sell out venues across the country on his headlining tours

STEPHEN WILSON JR.

- Won first ACM Award for Visual Media of the Year for the “Cuckoo” music video
- “Gary” became his first Country Airplay charting single
- Sold out the first leg of "Gary The Torch Tour"

VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

LADY A

- Released new single “I Love The One" with Boyz II Men
- Supported Tim McGraw’s "Pawn Shop Guitar Tour"
- Will embark on a 2026 holiday tour

LITTLE BIG TOWN

- Released 12th studio album *It’s a Dying Art*
- Launched "For the Art of It Tour"
- Will hold a three-night Christmas residency at Ryman Auditorium

MIDLAND

- Released new album *Stages*
- Launched the "Stages Tour" and a co-headline tour with Clint Black
- Tour dates with Kacey Musgraves

OLD DOMINION

- Completed seven-show Ryman Auditorium residency, raising more than $1.25 million for seven charities
- Took "How Good Is That World Tour" overseas
- Surpassed six billion on-demand streams

THE RED CLAY STRAYS

- Won Group of the Year at the 2026 ACM Awards
- *Grateful* debuted in the top 10 on *Billboard*’s Top Country Albums chart
- Sold out Madison Square Garden

VOCAL DUO OF THE YEAR

Brooks & Dunn

- Earned six additional Platinum and multi-Platinum certifications
- Extended "Neon Moon Tour" into 2026
- Named recipients of the 2026 CMA Willie Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award

Brothers Osborne

- Celebrated 10 years of *Pawn Shop* with a special anniversary edition featuring new recordings and previously unreleased material
- Slated their fifth studio album *Watertown*
- Surpassed 3.4 billion global streams

Dan + Shay

- Released sixth studio album *Young*
- Launched "The Young Tour"
- Surpassed 14 billion global streams

Muscadine Bloodline

- Released *The Sound of Roses*
- Tour dates with the Turnpike Troubadours and Red Clay Strays
- Surpassed 1 billion global streams

Thelma & James

- Tour dates with Luke Combs
- Won Video of the Year at the 2026 Canadian Country Music Awards for "Parking Lot Prayers"
- Released debut EP, *Starting Over*

MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

"A Song To Sing"

- **Artists: Miranda Lambert & Chris Stapleton; Producer: Dave Cobb**
- **Earned two 2026 Grammy nominations**
- **Received three ACM nominations**

"Horses and divorces"

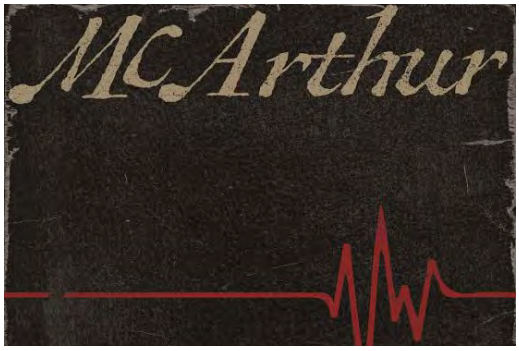
- **Artists: Kacey Musgraves & Miranda Lambert; Producers: Kacey Musgraves, Daniel Tashian**
- **Surpassed 10 million Spotify streams**
- **Was selected by *The Guardian* as one of its 2026 Songs of the Summer**

"I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE"

- **Artists: Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen; Producers: Austin Goodloe, Ella Langley, Ben West**
- **Reached No. 1 on *Billboard* Country Airplay in just 15 weeks**
- **Peaked at No. 4 on the *Billboard* Hot 100**

"If I Don't Leave I'm Gonna Stay"

- **Artists: Carly Pearce & Riley Green; Producers: Carly Pearce, Ben West**
- **Reached the top 10 on *Billboard* Country Airplay**
- **Reached the top 20 on the *Billboard* Hot 100**



"MCARTHUR"

- **Artists: HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw; Producer: Jay Joyce**
- **Debuted at No. 6 on *Billboard* Hot Country Songs**
- **Over 36 million Spotify streams**

MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

Tom Bukovac

- Drake Milligan, Ella Langley, Emily Ann Roberts, Fai Laci, Lauren Alaina, Maggie Rose, Vince Gill, Wyatt Flores

Jenee Fleenor

- Aaron Watson, Carly Pearce, Chayce Beckham, Cody Johnson, Drake Milligan, Emily Ann Roberts, Hudson Westbrook, Luke Bryan, Midland, The Boykinz

Paul Franklin

- Aaron Lewis, Alan Jackson, Billy Strings, Dan + Shay, Drake Milligan, Kacey Musgraves, Leah Blevins, Miranda Lambert, Ringo Starr, Vince Gill

Rob McNelley

- Amy Grant, Blake Whiten, Carly Pearce, Chase Matthew, Drake Milligan, Ella Langley, Jackson Dean, Lauren Alaina, Luke Combs, Rodney Atkins

Charlie Worsham

- Aaron Lewis, Alan Jackson, Billy Strings, Dan + Shay, Drake Milligan, Kacey Musgraves, Leah Blevins, Miranda Lambert, Ringo Starr, Vince Gill

MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR

"Choosin' Texas"

- **Artist: Ella Langley; Directors: Ella Langley, Caylee Robillard, Wales Toney**
- **93 million views**

"DRY SPELL"

- **Artist: Kacey Musgraves; Directors: Hannah Lux Davis, Kacey Musgraves**
- **5.7 million views**

"GARY"

- **Artist: Stephen Wilson Jr.; Directors: Tim Cofield, Stephen Wilson Jr.**
- **1.9 million views**

"THE FALL"

- **Artist: Cody Johnson; Director: Dustin Haney**
- **17 million views**

"WHITE HORSE"

- **Artist: Chris Stapleton; Director: Running Bear**
- **6.5 million views**

NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR

AVERY ANNA

- **Won first ACM award for New Female Artist of the Year**
- **Released new EP *forgive, forget***
- **Surpassed more than 1.7 billion global streams**

CARTER FAITH

- ***Cherry Valley* became first debut album nominated for ACM album of the year in a decade**
- **Released *Cherry Valley Forever***
- **Tour dates with Post Malone, Chris Stapleton, Kacey Musgraves and Shaboozey**

EMILY ANN ROBERTS

- **Selected for the 2026 Opry NextStage**
- **Surpassed 162 million worldwide streams**
- **Named a CMT Next Woman of Country**

TUCKER WETMORE

- **Won first ACM award for New Male Artist of the Year**
- **Scored his third consecutive No. 1 at country radio with “Brunette"**
- **Released *Sunburn Mixtape***

STEPHEN WILSON JR.

- **Won first ACM Award for Visual Media of the Year for the “Cuckoo” music video**
- **“Gary” became his first Country Airplay charting single**
- **Sold out the first leg of "Gary The Torch Tour"**