



**COUNTRY
AIRCHECK**

VOTER'S GUIDE TO THE

ACADEMY

OF

COUNTRY

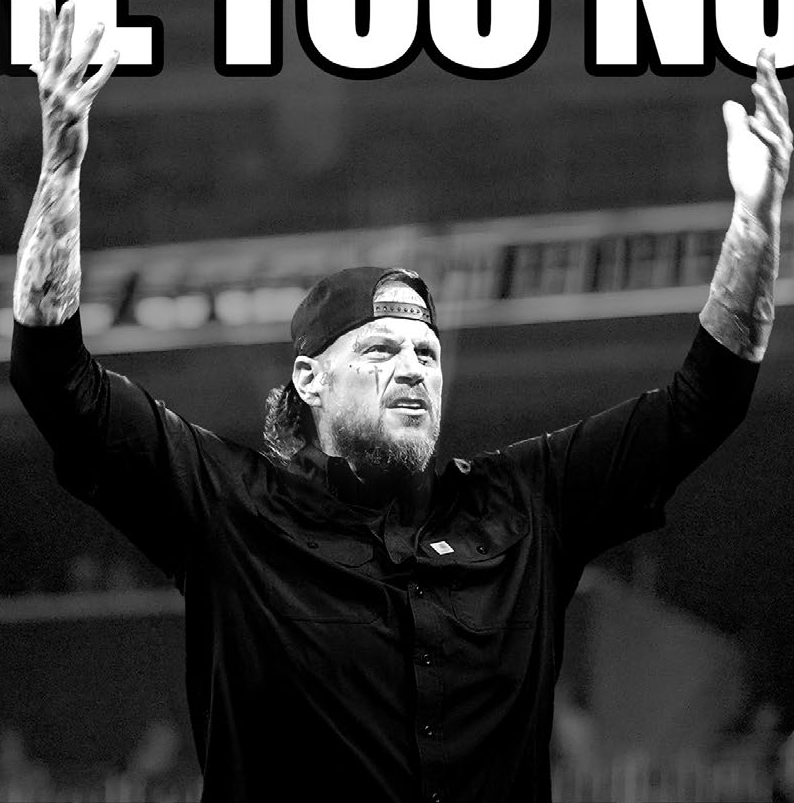
MUSIC

AWARDS

MAY 17, 2026 | 7PM | prime video



ARE YOU NOT



ENTERTAINED?

ACADEMY
OF
COUNTRY
MUSIC
AWARDS

JELLY ROLL

NOMINEE
ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
MUSIC EVENT OF THE YEAR
"AMEN" SHABOOZEY & JELLY ROLL

BBR
MUSIC GROUP

republic
RECORDS

STONE
CREEK

BMG

left|right
MANAGEMENT

CONGRATS TO OUR 2026 ACM AWARDS NOMINEES



DAN + SHAY
DUO OF THE YEAR



CODY JOHNSON
ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR
SINGLE OF THE YEAR

"THE FALL"

VISUAL MEDIA OF THE YEAR

"THE FALL"



**GAVIN ADCOCK
HUDSON WESTBROOK**
NEW MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR



**AVERY ANNA
DASHA**

NEW FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

CHRIS STAPLETON

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

SONG OF THE YEAR

MIRANDA LAMBERT AND CHRIS STAPLETON "A SONG TO SING"

VISUAL MEDIA OF THE YEAR

MIRANDA LAMBERT AND CHRIS STAPLETON "A SONG TO SING"

MUSIC EVENT OF THE YEAR

MIRANDA LAMBERT AND CHRIS STAPLETON "A SONG TO SING"



MCA
MUSIC CORPORATION OF AMERICA

Mercury
RECORDS

FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

LAINIEY WILSON

ENTERTAINER
OF THE YEAR

FEMALE ARTIST
OF THE YEAR

SONG OF THE YEAR
"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO"

SINGLE OF THE YEAR
"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO"

VISUAL MEDIA OF THE YEAR
"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO"

MUSIC EVENT OF THE YEAR
"TRAILBLAZER"

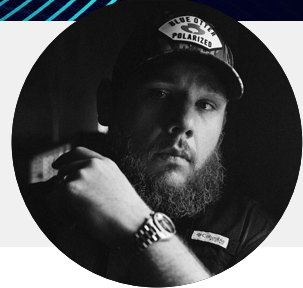
REBA MCENTIRE, MIRANDA LAMBERT, LAINIEY WILSON



BMG

LUKE COMBS

"He's the regular guy who constantly does the extraordinary thing" –GQ
"The dominant hitmaker in country" –New York Times
"It's hard to overstate how big a star Luke Combs has become" –Esquire
"He's a legend in the making, already pushing past simple stardom" –American Songwriter
"This is a superstar at the peak of his powers." –Music Row



JELLY ROLL

The three-time Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter has topped the country chart with nine No. 1s and is the Grand Ole Opry's newest member.
"His inspiring story of redemption has captured fans around the globe, and that connection is undeniable." –Grand Ole Opry
"One of the genre's most prolific voices" –Billboard
"There is no understating the authenticity of Jelly Roll." –USA Today
"From inmate to icon." –People
"Jelly Roll's authenticity creates a fierce bond with the audience ... a kind of rapt devotion." –Variety



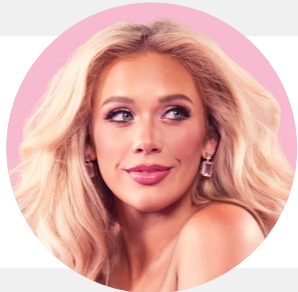
CODY JOHNSON

"His ability to get a crowd fired up and also draw them in for a sentimental ballad is unmatched." –Taste of Country
"Texas has an important, rich history of influence on country music – going way back before George Strait amassed the most No. 1s in country history. Johnson is continuing that tradition, modernizing the audience, and respecting the authenticity of its sound." –Music Universe
"Johnson's superstardom will sustain itself because he embodies a culture and genre bigger than his Texas-tattooed heart." –Tennessean



MEGAN MORONEY

A record-breaking headliner and undeniable cultural force, Megan Moroney shattered attendance records at multiple U.S. venues on her sold-out *Am I Okay? Tour*. After two sold-out nights at L.A.'s Greek Theatre, the *Los Angeles Times* declared Moroney, "One of the leading lights of country for the last two or three years." Her upcoming *The Cloud 9* international headline tour sold over 450,000 tickets instantly. Offstage, she expanded her impact as a Revlon global ambassador, *Rolling Stone* Future of Music cover star and *Variety's* Storyteller of the Year – proof she's defining the modern country entertainer.



CHRIS STAPLETON

"One of the most reliably compelling figures in modern music" –NPR Music
"The rare country star with both traditional bona fides and broad commercial appeal. He has an outlaw soul and a pop star's capacity for inescapable hooks." –New Yorker
"In an age rife with division, he's maybe the only thing Americans all agree on ... one of the most reliable hit makers in music." –GQ
"A generational talent" –Forbes



MORGAN WALLEN



LAINIE WILSON

"One of country music's most charismatic, multi-faceted entertainers" –Billboard
"Lainie Wilson continues her reign as country's current queen" –Grammy.com
"Wilson is nothing short of a force of nature when she wraps her hands around a microphone" –American Songwriter
"The reigning current standard-bearer for women in country" –Variety
"A bona fide superstar" –Music Row



Kelsea Ballerini

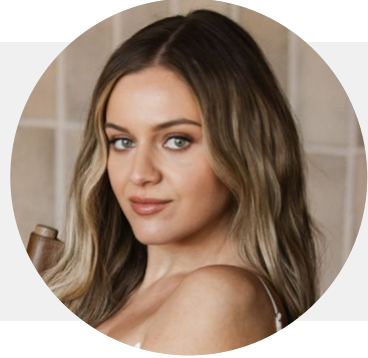
**FOR YOUR ACM AWARDS CONSIDERATION
FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

"BALLERINI HAS ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN FOR WRITING AND RECORDING SONGS THAT ARE UNFLINCHINGLY PERSONAL AND HONEST, CHRONICLING HER LIFE, DREAMS, ASPIRATIONS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS IN DARING DETAIL... SHE CONTINUES PAINSTAKINGLY BUILDING A CATALOG OF SONGS THAT EVINCES HER TALENTS FOR TRANSLATING PERSONAL THOUGHTS INTO GLOBALLY REACHING ANTHEMS."

billboard

**BLACK RIVER
ENTERTAINMENT**

SANDBOX



KELSEA BALLERINI

"One of the most thoughtful, album-oriented artists working in country music" –*Rolling Stone*

"Ballerini has always been known for writing and recording songs that are unflinchingly personal and honest, chronicling her life, dreams, aspirations and disappointments in daring detail ... she continues painstakingly building a catalog of songs that evinces her talents for translating personal thoughts into globally reaching anthems." –*Billboard*



MIRANDA LAMBERT

"You'd have to look pretty far and wide to find anyone in music who has been as consistently good or eternally enjoyable as Miranda Lambert. Almost 20 years into her run, she's defined her career by always going her own way, both musically and lyrically." –*Rolling Stone*



ELLA LANGLEY

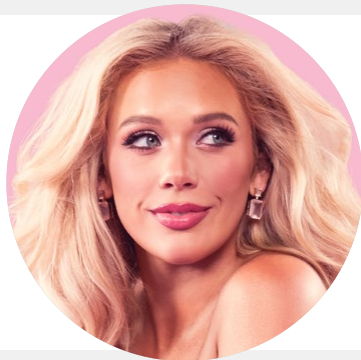
The first female artist to top the *Billboard* Hot 100, Country Airplay and Hot Country Songs charts simultaneously with "Choosin' Texas."

"A Budding Country Superstar" –*Rolling Stone*

"Langley brings the past to her present, melding wistful insights with contemporary acuity." –*Associated Press*

"A standout artist, with the kind of talent that promises a long, lasting career." –*Country Now*

"Her voice is emerging as one of the defining new sounds of country music" –*Tennessean*



MEGAN MORONEY

Crowned "The Gen Z Country Queen We Need" by *Rolling Stone* for good reason. Reaching multi-platinum heights with sold-out tours, Megan Moroney surpassed 5.3 billion streams and debuted No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200 with her third studio album, *Cloud 9*. *Rolling Stone* proclaimed the LP, "should transform the Georgia singer-songwriter from star-in-the-making to plain old megastar," and *Billboard* professed Moroney as the "Poet of Gen Z heartbreak." In 2026, "Megan Moroney is never coming back down to earth," according to *Esquire*.



LAINAY WILSON

"One of country music's most charismatic, multi-faceted entertainers" –*Billboard*

"Lainey Wilson continues her reign as country's current queen" –*Grammy.com*

"Wilson is nothing short of a force of nature when she wraps her hands around a microphone" –*American Songwriter*

"The reigning current standard-bearer for women in country" –*Variety*

"A bona fide superstar" –*Music Row*

FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION
RILEY GREEN



MALE ARTIST
OF THE YEAR

ALBUM OF THE YEAR
DON'T MIND IF I DO
(DELUXE)

MUSIC EVENT OF THE YEAR
DON'T MIND IF I DO
(feat. Ella Langley)

ARTIST-SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR

LUKE COMBS

"He's the regular guy who constantly does the extraordinary thing" – *GQ*

"The dominant hitmaker in country" – *New York Times*

"It's hard to overstate how big a star Luke Combs has become" – *Esquire*

"He's a legend in the making, already pushing past simple stardom" – *American Songwriter*

"This is a superstar at the peak of his powers." – *Music Row*



RILEY GREEN

One of country music's most powerful creative forces, Green capped a monumental 2025 with his sixth No. 1, "Don't Mind If I Do (feat. Ella Langley)," while also becoming the first country artist since Taylor Swift to earn consecutive solo-written No. 1s on the *Billboard* Country Airplay chart with "Worst Way." He stepped into 2026 with his headlining *Cowboy As It Gets Tour*, including a stop at Stagecoach.



CODY JOHNSON

"Cody Johnson has a way of captivating his fans with his heartfelt delivery and powerful, rugged vocals." – *Taste of Country*

"The evening's biggest superstar was Johnson's voice." – *Tennessean*

"He didn't go big. He went supernova. The truth is, Johnson has a sturdy, commanding voice that elevates much of his material." – *Holler Country*



CHRIS STAPLETON

"One of the most reliably compelling figures in modern music" – *NPR Music*

"The rare country star with both traditional bona fides and broad commercial appeal. He has an outlaw soul and a pop star's capacity for inescapable hooks." – *New Yorker*

"In an age rife with division, he's maybe the only thing Americans all agree on ... one of the most reliable hit makers in music." – *GQ*

"A generational talent" – *Forbes*



ZACH TOP

"The fastest-rising star in country music" – *Variety*

"The future of country music" – *Billboard*

"Top has shown that he's here to carve out a new seat at the table among the next generation of country music's greats" – *Holler*



FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

“A MUCH-NEEDED NEW DUO IN COUNTRY MUSIC”



DUO OF THE YEAR

thelma & james

BIG LOUD

BROOKS & DUNN

Brooks & Dunn – the best-selling duo – celebrated a sold-out 2025 *Neon Moon Tour*, drawing multi-generational crowds to arenas and amphitheaters nationwide. Handpicked by Morgan Wallen for six stadium shows last year and eight in 2026, the Country Music Hall of Famers forged new territory with their first-ever UK shows earlier this year – hailed as “worth the wait.” Their *Neon Moon Tour* extends into 2026, with limited tickets remaining months ahead of its launch, underscoring their continued demand.



BROTHERS OSBORNE

“TJ Osborne’s gritty vocals and his sibling John’s rootsy riffs pack a one-two punch, melding harmonies with biting, bluesy grooves.” –*People*

“They won over Nashville critics with a distinctive sound combining classic country and hints of soul, with songs centered on John’s impressive guitar skills and TJ’s rich baritone.” –*Washington Post*

“Epic, full of harmonics, finger taps and inspired picking that identify the Maryland natives as one of Nashville’s best” –*Rolling Stone*



DAN + SHAY

Three-time Grammy Award-winning and 7x ACM Award-winning duo Dan + Shay have released their powerful new song, “Say So,” amidst one of the most prolific seasons of their storied 13+ year career thus far. The global superstars have amassed more than 13 billion global streams, 139 worldwide career Multi-Platinum, Platinum and Gold certifications, including 60 US RIAA and 81 international awards.



MUSCADINE BLOODLINE

Muscadine Bloodline, the independent country duo of Gary Stanton and Charlie Muncaster, have built a decade-long career on electric live shows, sharp songwriting and a fiercely loyal fanbase. Hailing from Mobile, AL, they blend Gulf Coast storytelling with modern country grit. Their latest project, *Longleaf Lo-fi*, showcases a raw, intimate sound that has further cemented them as one of the genre’s most compelling and hard-working acts on the road today while reaching new mainstream heights.



THELMA & JAMES

An undeniable force, married Nashville-based singer-songwriters MacKenzie Porter and Jake Etheridge form the musical partnership Thelma & James. *Grammy.com* praises the pair as “a much-needed new duo in country music,” while *Country Central* declares: “country music found its modern-day Sonny and Cher or The White Stripes.” Thelma & James are currently on tour with Luke Combs, serenading stadiums with their irresistible catalog of haunting songs and distinct harmonies.





FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

49 WINCHESTER

GROUP OF THE YEAR

"49 Winchester has proven itself to be among the top-tier groups over the past decade ...and with this new release, they seem poised to continue building upon that solid trajectory."

-BILLBOARD

"In a few years...we'll look back at 49 Winchester as one of the most important bands of the decade."

-WHISKEY RIFF

NEW ALBUM CHANGE OF PLANS OUT MAY 15

NEW+WEST
RECORDS

Lucille

MCA
MUSIC CORPORATION OF AMERICA

FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION



RASCAL FLATTS

GROUP OF THE YEAR



The Red Clay Strays

FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION



GROUP OF THE YEAR

NEW SINGLE "DEMONS IN YOUR CHOIR" APRIL 23

IMPACTING COUNTRY APRIL 27

PERFORMING LIVE AT STAGECOACH

"49 Winchester has proven itself to be among the top-tier groups over the past decade, and with this new release, they seem poised to continue building upon that solid trajectory." –*Billboard*

"In a few years, as the 2020s are coming to an end, we'll look back at 49 Winchester as one of the most important bands of the decade." –*Whiskey Riff*

"Country Music's Buzziest of Buzz Bands" –*Rolling Stone*



FLATLAND CAVALRY

"To say that it has been a big year for Flatland Cavalry would be an understatement of the highest order." –*American Songwriter*

"A stellar catalog of songs." –*Billboard*

"And so, we put a score on the board for Flatland Cavalry – Flatland Forever." –*Country Living*

"Enough Flatland Cavalry fans are convinced this is the best country band in America to keep the group in that conversation indefinitely." –*Rolling Stone*

"... straightforward, upbeat electrified country-rock band" –*Wall Street Journal*



Old Dominion's skyscraping anthems and electrifying live shows have cemented the multi-platinum band at the forefront of country music. With the release of their sixth studio album *Barbara* (2025) and the completion of their massive *How Good Is That – World Tour*, they continue to define the genre. Hailed as "country music's premiere craftsmen" (*Rolling Stone*), they are the 8x reigning ACM Group of the Year.

OLD DOMINION



RASCAL FLATTS

Hailed as one of the most influential groups in modern country history, Rascal Flatts has racked up 17 No. 1 hits with more than 23.4 million albums sold and more than 12 billion total lifetime streams. Making their historic return to the stage last year, the trio recently capped its 2026 *Life Is A Highway Tour*, following the release of *Life Is A Highway: Refueled Duets* album featuring Kelly Clarkson, Jonas Brothers, Backstreet Boys, Blake Shelton and more.



THE RED CLAY STRAYS

"One of country music's most exciting breakout acts." –*Grammy.com*

"A musicality so intimate that it can't help but sweep you along with it." –*Holler*

"The band's undeniable stage presence and genre-bending sound have positioned them as a rising force." –*MusicRow*

"One of the most buzzworthy bands in the land" –*American Songwriter*

"Has the potential to define impassioned, top-tier musical creativity for decades to come." –*Tennessean*



FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

NEW FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

*Mackenzie
Carpenter*



**BIG
MACHINE**
RECORDS

CAROLINE JONES

for your acm consideration

NEW FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR



NASHVILLE
Harbor
RECORDS &
ENTERTAINMENT

AVERY ANNA

Exciting newcomer Avery Anna is on an undeniable trajectory as a defining voice in modern country music, attracting attention from *Rolling Stone*, *Billboard*, *American Songwriter* and more. Her sophomore album, *let go letters*, was named one of *Billboard*'s "50 Best of 2025," and her Platinum-selling viral hit "Indigo" with Sam Barber reached top 10 on Hot Country. She has earned multiple Artist To Watch nods, garnered over 1.7 billion streams, and is currently headlining tour dates and major festival appearances worldwide.



MACKENZIE CARPENTER

Named one of 2025's most promising artists by *Grammy.com*, a *Music Row Next Big Thing*, *Spotify Hot Country Artist to Watch* and more, Carpenter is a rising country star. Praised for her "honeyed" vocals (*Billboard*) and "ability to write a killer melody" (*American Songwriter*), she blends humor with heartfelt sincerity. In 2026, she'll tour with Riley Green and Jason Aldean while playing major festivals.



DASHA

Dasha always believed she was destined for music, breaking through with her 55x platinum hit "Austin (Boots Stop Workin')," one of 2024's most-streamed country songs. The success sparked major festival slots, a sold-out global Dashville tour, and performances on *Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade* and *New Year's Rockin' Eve*. In 2025, she released her *Anna EP*, toured with Thomas Rhett and Kane Brown, and joined *Spotify's Billions Club* as she gears up for her sophomore album in 2026.



CAROLINE JONES

Balancing her solo career while performing as a member of Grammy Award-winning Zac Brown Band, Jones is lauded as "an ambitious, entrepreneurial guitar heroine primed to bring back the pop-country glory of the Nineties" (*Rolling Stone*). Her new album, *Good Omen*, was praised as a "roadmap to personal freedom" by *Billboard*, and she is touring across the U.S. on her headlining *Good Omen Tour*.



EMILY ANN ROBERTS

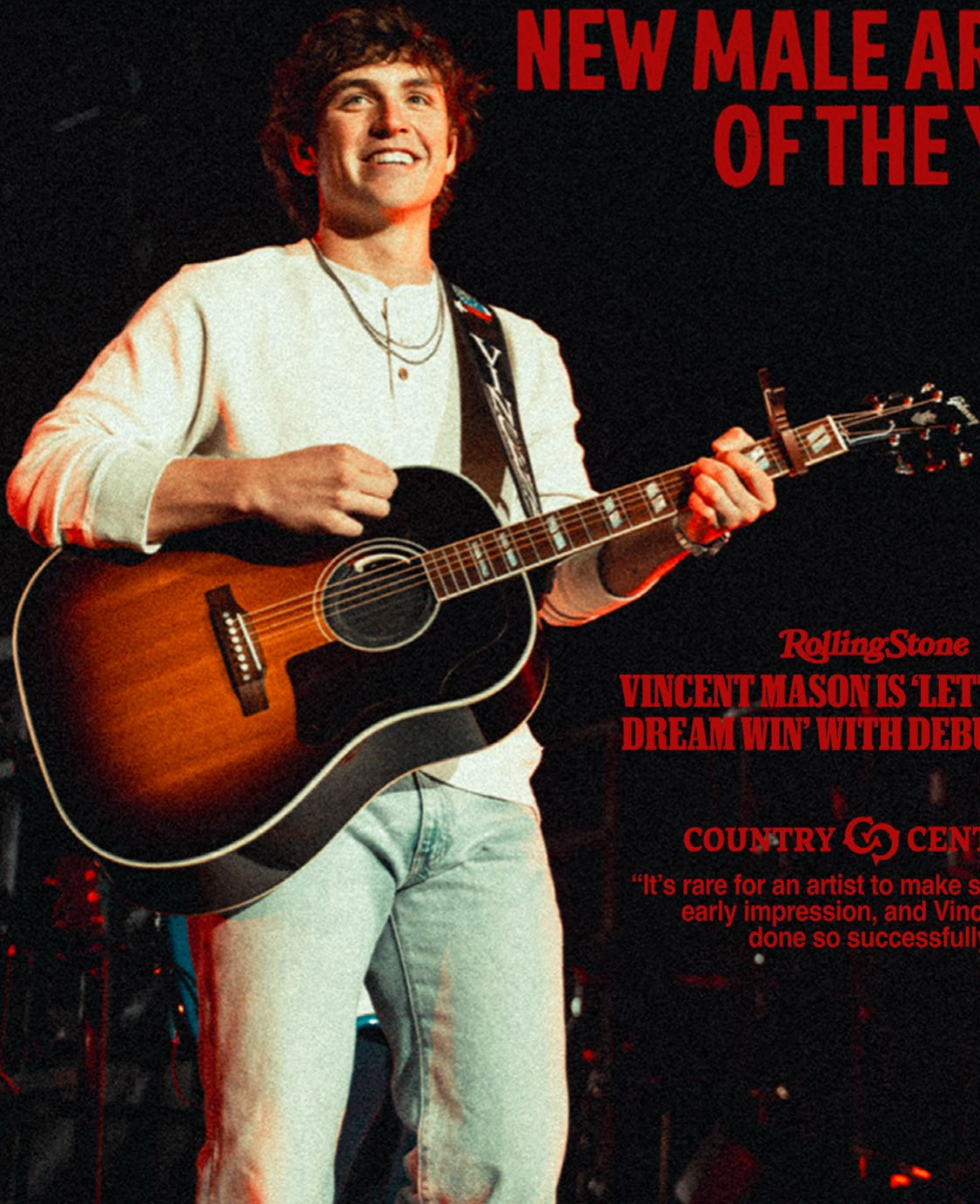
"With every new release Emily Ann Roberts proves she's got the country bona fides, heartfelt songwriting, an enchanting vocal, and plenty of charm." – *Billboard*
135 million global streams; *Opry NextStage* and *Music Row Next Big Thing* classes of 2026, *CMT Next Women of Country*, *Nashville Briefing Artist to Watch*; touring this year with Thomas Rhett and Niall Horan, Cody Johnson, and more. Brand new song "My Future" is out now.



FOR YOUR ACM AWARDS CONSIDERATION

VINCENT MASON

NEW MALE ARTIST
OF THE YEAR



Rolling Stone

VINCENT MASON IS 'LETTING THE
DREAM WIN' WITH DEBUT ALBUM

COUNTRY  CENTRAL

"It's rare for an artist to make such a strong
early impression, and Vincent has
done so successfully."



51ST ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

Shaboozey



NEW MALE ARTIST
OF THE YEAR

• **AMEN**
MUSIC EVENT OF THE YEAR

AD



TUCKER WETMORE

"WITH HIS FAMILY TO
GROUND HIM AND A
CAREER THAT'S
SKYROCKETING, IT
SEEMS WETMORE, IN
FACT, KNOWS EXACTLY
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— PEOPLE

"DISPLAYING AN EASE
AND CHARISMA AS AN
ENTERTAINER."

— BILLBOARD

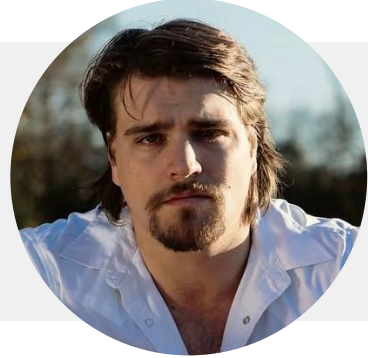
"COUNTRY MUSIC'S
MOST PROMISING
NEWCOMER"

— NYLON

**FOR YOUR ACM
CONSIDERATION**

**NEW MALE ARTIST
OF THE YEAR**





GAVIN ADCOCK

Gavin Adcock's 2025 album, *Own Worst Enemy*, debuted as the top new country album on the *Billboard* 200 Country Chart (No. 4), and the top streaming new album on the *Billboard* 200 All-Genre Chart (No. 14). Collectively, his music has surpassed 1.5 billion global streams. Since 2024, Adcock's own headline tours have sold out venues across the country and Canada, where his 2025 headline tour sold out within one week.

"One of country music's most buzzed-about artists" –*Billboard*



VINCENT MASON

"It's rare for an artist to make such a strong early impression, and Vincent has done so successfully." –*Country Central*

Mason enters 2026 as one of country music's most undeniable breakout acts. A Spotify 2026 Artist to Watch, he's surpassed 500m streams, with "Hell Is A Dance Floor" certified gold and "Wish You Well" climbing radio. After touring with Riley Green, Jordan Davis and Luke Bryan, he's now headlining his *There I Go* tour before joining Morgan Wallen's *Still The Problem* stadium run.



SHABOOZEY

Hailed by the *New York Times* as "the most striking new country star of the past few years," Shaboozey has also been praised by NPR as "the future of country music" and by *Rolling Stone* for "honoring country tradition while moving it forward." Fresh off his first GRAMMY win, he scored a rare multiweek No. 1 hit at Country radio this year with "Amen," following the chart-topping success of "Good News," cementing his place at the forefront of the genre.



HUDSON WESTBROOK

"Country music's next breakout star" –*American Songwriter*

"Poised to continue his ascendant trajectory" –*Billboard*

"Westbrook's rise shows potential to lead a new generation of artists" –*Country Central*

"On the cusp of bona fide country music stardom" –*Rolling Stone*

Appearances on *CBS Mornings*, *The Drew Barrymore Show*, *The Kelly Clarkson Show*, *TODAY*, and more.



TUCKER WETMORE

"Displaying an ease and charisma as an entertainer" –*Billboard*

"Country music's most promising newcomer" –*Nylon*

"Each song has a self-awareness and vulnerability that makes his music as relatable as it is intriguing" –*Grammy.com*

"With his family to ground him and a career that's skyrocketing, it seems Wetmore, in fact, knows exactly what to do." –*People*

"ONE OF THE BEST COUNTRY DEBUTS IN RECENT MEMORY."

RollingStone

Carter Faith

**FOR YOUR ACM
CONSIDERATION**



**ALBUM OF THE YEAR
CHERRY VALLEY**



**"[CHERRY VALLEY] IS THE
FIRST DEBUT ALBUM TO
BE NOMINATED IN THAT
CATEGORY SINCE
STAPLETON'S TRAVELLER
10 YEARS AGO."**

billboard

**THE 100 BEST
ALBUMS OF 2025**
RollingStone



**10 BEST COUNTRY
ALBUMS OF 2025**
billboard



**BREAKTHROUGH
ARTIST 2026**
amazon



**OPRY NEXT STAGE
CLASS OF 2026**



**ON TOUR WITH
POST MALONE
+ JELLY ROLL**



**HEADLINE TOUR
SOLD OUT**



PARKER MCCOLLUM

*"HIS RAWEST
RECORD YET"*

- BILLBOARD

*"...MCCOLLUM
IS FIXING
TO BECOME
A MODERN
COUNTRY
ICON IN HIS
OWN RIGHT."*

*- AMERICAN
SONGWRITER*

*"FOR ALL HIS
PLATINUM
HITS, SOLD-OUT
ARENA SHOWS
AND BACK-TO-
BACK RADIO
SUCCESSES,
PARKER
MCCOLLUM
HAS NEVER
SOUNDED MORE
LIKE HIMSELF
THAN HE DOES
ON HIS FIFTH
STUDIO ALBUM,
APPROPRIATELY
SELF-TITLED..."*

- MUSICROW

For Your ACM Consideration

ALBUM OF THE YEAR - Parker McCollum

MCA
NASHVILLE

AIN'T IN IT FOR MY HEALTH, ZACH TOP

"Top's immaculate new album, *Ain't In It For My Health*, offers traditionalism without regression – an effortless gesture that feels mysterious and tricky to figure out." – *Washington Post*

"As crisp as country music gets" – *Los Angeles Times*

"Adds to his already top-shelf catalog of songs" – *Billboard*

"Zach Top holds his own with the country greats ... Top's vocals soar with the confidence of a seasoned storyteller" – *Rolling Stone*



CHERRY VALLEY, CARTER FAITH

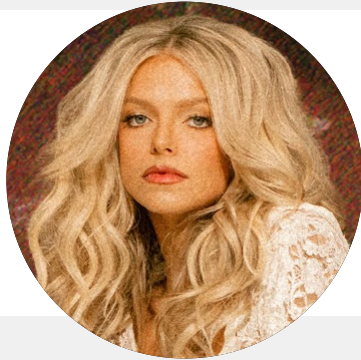
"One of the best country debuts in recent memory" – *Rolling Stone*

"The best old-school country revivalist to emerge on Nashville's music row this year" – *NPR Music*

"A masterful collection of songs navigating heartbreak, fresh romance, relational drama and a devotion to country music ... the entire project feels like an instant classic" – *Billboard*

"Cherry Valley is a triumph." – *Nashville Scene*

"A storytelling marvel." – *American Songwriter*



DON'T MIND IF I DO (DELUXE), RILEY GREEN

"The cracks in his burly voice draw out the nuances in the unexpected twists and turns of the lyrics." – *Billboard*

"A lovelorn ballad that aches with yearning ... sublime listening" – *Music Row*

"Proves his ability to shoot for the heart" – *Holler*



I'M THE PROBLEM, MORGAN WALLEN.

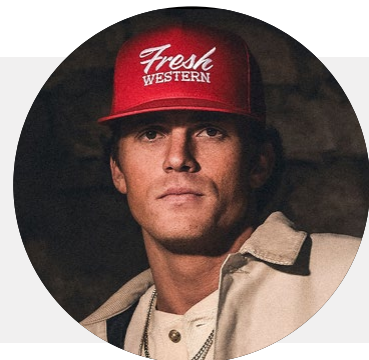


PARKER MCCOLLUM, PARKER MCCOLLUM

"His deep vocal style is something that has been all but lost in today's country scene. His songwriting style evokes artists from Strait's generation, with his simple but catchy choruses and anthemic melodies." – *American Songwriter*

"For all his platinum hits, sold-out arena shows and back-to-back radio successes, Parker McCollum has never sounded more like himself than he does on his fifth studio album, appropriately self-titled..." – *Music Row*

"...permeated with Lone Star State soul and grit..." – *Billboard*



"6 MONTHS LATER," MEGAN MORONEY

Hailed by *The New York Times* as work from "the reigning queen of sad-girl country," "6 Months Later" spotlights Moroney's "conversational delivery, husky drawl and dryly cutting lyrics." The single reached No. 1 at Country radio, earned platinum certification and surpassed 270 million worldwide streams. With its sharp emotional turn and lived-in storytelling, "6 Months Later" became a defining country single of the year.



"CHOOSIN' TEXAS," ELLA LANGLEY

The platinum-certified hit has accumulated over half a billion global streams to date and is the longest-running No. 1 by a female country artist on the *Billboard* Hot 100. Named in Best Songs of 2025 by *Billboard*, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Fader* and more.

"An undeniable hit, a perfect mesh of a catchy melody, Ella's rich, husky voice, a relatable heartbreak story and a vibe that is both fresh and traditional-leaning" –*Billboard*



"I NEVER LIE," ZACH TOP

"Top's spin on this iconic sort of country song setup is almost divine in its execution" –*Bluegrass Situation*

"Dripping in sarcasm and Top's cool charisma, it's the country crooner at his very best." –*Holler*

"Top leans on the strength of the writing and the emotion behind every note, a move that feels both bold and timeless" –*All Country News*



"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO," LAINEY WILSON

"One of her most commanding, dynamic vocal performances to date, crescendoing from a soft-focus, tender vocal, before gradually reaching into her upper register for powerful moments that heighten the song's emotional acuity" –*Billboard*

"Wilson's rapturous country ballad puts a new spin on the rainbow with keen storytelling and a spellbinding vocal." –*Hits Daily Double*

"Captures that distinct blend of old soul and new spirit that continues to make Lainey Wilson one of country music's most compelling voices" –*All Country News*



"THE FALL," CODY JOHNSON

"Philosophical, moody and super compelling. A superb song in the throat of a master stylist. Essential." –*Bob Oermann, Music Row*

"['The Fall'] established a home on the airwaves, seemingly fulfilling its destiny." –*Billboard*

"'The Fall' he refers to throughout the tune is ultimately a celebration of life's imperfection and enounces one to cherish the journey that comes, no matter how many obstacles get in the way." –*Country Now*



"A SONG TO SING," MIRANDA LAMBERT AND CHRIS STAPLETON
Writers: Stapleton, Lambert, Jenee Fleenor, Jesse Frasure

"Two of the most respected country songwriters of the past decade" –*Rolling Stone*

"The voices blended beautifully, highlighting the song's slow-burn feel." –*Billboard*

"Miranda Lambert and Chris Stapleton are true rarities." –*Stereogum*

"Two of country music's most compelling voices" –*Country Now*

"At a time when country is so many things, Lambert and Stapleton seem both a true north and a hinge for the future of the same Outlaw culture Waylon and Willie conjured." –*Pollstar*



"AM I OKAY?" MEGAN MORONEY
Writers: Moroney, Luke Laird, Jessie Jo Dillon

A career-defining statement, "Am I Okay?" cemented Moroney as one of country music's most resonant voices. The song has garnered nearly 500 million worldwide streams, hit No. 1 at Country radio and is now certified 2x platinum. Anchoring her gold-certified sophomore album and fueling a record-breaking sold-out tour, the track turned raw vulnerability into a generational anthem – one that continues to define Moroney's emotional and commercial peak.



"CHOOSIN' TEXAS," ELLA LANGLEY
writers: Langley, Luke Dick, Miranda Lambert, Joybeth Taylor

"Gorgeously melancholy lament" –*New York Times*

"'Choosin' Texas' is not only a terrific showcase for Langley's wistful storytelling and subtle tenderness, but now it's a bonafide crossover smash that will clue in tons of unfamiliar listeners and grow her overall platform." –*Billboard*

"Langley's singing has never sounded better than it does on this delightful two stepper. Park this on your playlist right next to Strait." –*Music Row*



"I NEVER LIE," ZACH TOP
Writers: Top, Carson Chamberlain, Tim Nichols

"Top's spin on this iconic sort of country song setup is almost divine in its execution" –*Bluegrass Situation*

"Dripping in sarcasm and Top's cool charisma, it's the country crooner at his very best." –*Holler*

"Top leans on the strength of the writing and the emotion behind every note, a move that feels both bold and timeless" –*All Country News*



"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO," LAINEY WILSON
Writers: Wilson, Trannie Anderson, Dallas Wilson, Andy Albert, Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg

"One of her most commanding, dynamic vocal performances to date, crescendoing from a soft-focus, tender vocal, before gradually reaching into her upper register for powerful moments that heighten the song's emotional acuity" –*Billboard*

"Wilson's rapturous country ballad puts a new spin on the rainbow with keen storytelling and a spellbinding vocal." –*Hits Daily Double*



"A SONG TO SING," MIRANDA LAMBERT, CHRIS STAPLETON

"With its dreamy disco groove and lovestruck devotion, 'A Song to Sing' feels almost like an homage to one of country's great duets, Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers' 1983 gem, 'Islands in the Stream.'" –*Rolling Stone*

"The voices blended beautifully, highlighting the song's slow-burn feel." –*Billboard*

"Miranda Lambert and Chris Stapleton are true rarities." –*Stereogum*

"Two of country music's most compelling voices" –*Country Now*



"AMEN," SHABOOZEY, JELLY ROLL

Winner of the 2026 Grammy for Best Country Duo/Group Performance, "Amen" was praised by *Rolling Stone* as "a big, foot-stomping country rave-up." The collaboration went on to earn a rare multi-week No. 1 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart, underscoring its impact across the genre and a standout partnership between two of the genre's most compelling voices.



"DON'T MIND IF I DO," RILEY GREEN, ELLA LANGLEY

"The cracks in his burly voice draw out the nuances in the unexpected twists and turns of the lyrics." –*Billboard*

"A lovelorn ballad that aches with yearning ... sublime listening" –*Music Row*

"Proves his ability to shoot for the heart" –*Holler*



TRAILBLAZER

REBA MCENTIRE
MIRANDA LAMBERT
LAINIEY WILSON

"TRAILBLAZER," REBA MCENTIRE, MIRANDA LAMBERT, LAINIEY WILSON

"Wilson is just about in arguably the best thing to happen to country music since Miranda Lambert, who in turn was one of the best things to happen since Reba. So it felt intuitively natural – but by no means commercially inevitable – when those three teamed up" –*Variety*

"Proof that three generations of country women are continuing to lead the charge" –*Parade*

"A heartfelt tribute to the pioneering women of country music" –*Country Now*



"YOU HAD TO BE THERE," MEGAN MORONEY, KENNY CHESNEY

"You Had to Be There" marks a full-circle moment between Kenny Chesney and Megan Moroney, written as a gift celebrating their friendship and Moroney's time opening the 2024 *Sun Goes Down Tour*. With more than 98 million streams, *Billboard* notes the song "reminisces on a summer filled with music and magic," capturing Moroney's journey from fan to artist alongside Chesney.



FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

STEPHEN
WILSON
WJ.R.

VISUAL MEDIA OF THE YEAR
"CUCKOO"

BIG LOUD

"6 MONTHS LATER," MEGAN MORONEY

Megan Moroney showcases her creative voice in the self-directed music video for "6 Months Later," delivering a fun, kitschy visual packed with rom-com nods and playful charm. The platinum-certified track has earned 3.6 million YouTube views, and her hands-on direction adds a confident, personality-driven layer that reinforces her growth as a multidimensional artist.



"A SONG TO SING," MIRANDA LAMBERT, CHRIS STAPLETON

"Two of the most respected country songwriters of the past decade" –*Rolling Stone*

"Miranda Lambert and Chris Stapleton are true rarities." –*Stereogum*

"two of country music's most compelling voices" –*Country Now*

"A groovy nod to the '70s ... With its blend of retro visuals and classic country sound, the project marks another standout collaboration between two of the genre's most respected voices." –*Parade*



"CUCKOO," STEPHEN WILSON, JR.

Co-directed by Stephen Wilson Jr. and longtime collaborator Tim Cofield, the video paints a psychedelic portrait of life in an Indiana holler, capturing what Wilson Jr. describes as "a kaleidoscope of humans living and being. These are not actors." Blending real people alongside surreal moments, such as Hardy & Wilson Jr. playing catch with a ball of fire, *All Country News* proclaimed "every frame oozes with raw storytelling and a healthy dose of eerie, small-town mystique."



"SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO," LAINIE WILSON

"Blends dreamlike visuals with Wilson's signature storytelling" –*Country Now*

"Charming and whimsical" –*Whiskey Riff*

"One of her most commanding, dynamic vocal performances to date, crescendoing from a soft-focus, tender vocal, before gradually reaching into her upper register for powerful moments that heighten the song's emotional acuity" –*Billboard*

"Wilson's rapturous country ballad puts a new spin on the rainbow with keen storytelling and a spellbinding vocal." –*Hits Daily Double*



"THE FALL," CODY JOHNSON

"Cody Johnson's worlds collide in the new music video for his current hit single, 'The Fall.' Tapping into his passion for professional bull riding, his country music career and his gift for storytelling, the CMA Entertainer of the Year nominee delivers a cinematic experience that brings to life the song's reflective, bittersweet journey through life's highs and lows. –*Country Now*



FOR YOUR ACM CONSIDERATION

BLAKE PENDERGRASS
SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

**"PENDERGRASS IS CURRENTLY ON
A STUNNING RUN"**

THE TENNESSEAN



**2026 AIMP
SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR
NOMINEE**

**2026 CMA
TRIPLE PLAY AWARD
RECIPIENT**

**#1 MUSICROW
TOP SONGWRITER
CHART**

**COUNTRY CREDIT'S
2025 SONGWRITER OF THE
YEAR**

ARTIST = SONGWRITER

LUKE COMBS

"One of the most reliable hitmakers around" –NPR Music
"Powerhouse vocalist and songwriter" –Rolling Stone
"He's a legend in the making, already pushing past simple stardom" –American Songwriter
"An expert sense of craft" –Pitchfork



RILEY GREEN

One of country music's most powerful creative forces, Green capped a monumental 2025 with his sixth No. 1, "Don't Mind If I Do (feat. Ella Langley)," while also becoming the first country artist since Taylor Swift to earn consecutive solo-written No. 1s on the *Billboard* Country Airplay chart with "Worst Way." He stepped into 2026 with his headlining *Cowboy As It Gets Tour*, including a stop at Stagecoach.



ELLA LANGLEY

"Ella Langley and her spunky new traditionalist country have left their mark on Nashville." –Rolling Stone
"Ella Langley isn't just part of country music's next wave, she's reshaping the tide. She's not here to fit the mold. She's here to break it." –All Country News
"Langley's voice, a smoky instrument that can pivot from a serrated growl to a fragile whisper within a single song" –Flood



MEGAN MORONEY

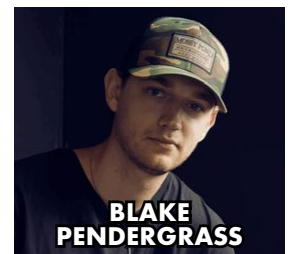
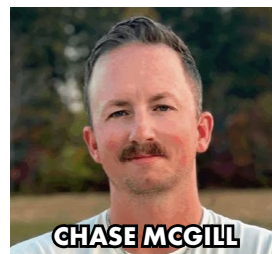
At the core of Megan Moroney's rise is her songwriting. She was honored as *Variety's* 2025 Storyteller of the Year as well as *Billboard* and NMPA's Country Music Songwriter of the Year in 2026, received the Rulebreaker Award at *Billboard Women in Music*, and earned two 2025 SESAC awards including Song of the Year for "Am I Okay?," which she wrote, performed and published, and Songwriter of the Year – recognition that underscores her pen as the engine of her success.



MORGAN WALLEN



..... SONGWRITER



ARENA OF THE YEAR NOMINEE



Arena
FORT WORTH

WHERE THE WEST BEGINS
AND THE PARTY NEVER ENDS!



HUMBLY ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE



ADDITIONAL

NOMINEES

Note: Voting in the following categories is not open to the full Academy membership.

STUDIO RECORDING + INDUSTRY AWARDS

BASS

Eli Beaird • Tony Lucido • Steve Mackey • Mike Rinne • Jimmie Lee Sloas

Fred Eltringham • Evan Hutchings • Chris McHugh • Nir Z • Jerry Roe

DRUMMER

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

Kris Donegan • Todd Lombardo • Devin Malone • Bryan Sutton • Ilya Toshinskiy

Dave Cohen • David Dorn • Charlie Judge • Billy Justineau • Gordon Mote

PIANO

SPECIALTY INSTRUMENT

Eleonore Denig • Stuart Duncan • Mike Johnson • Scotty Sanders • Justin Schipper

Kris Donegan • Nathan Keeterle • Rob McNelley • Sol Philcox-Littlefield • Derek Wells

ELECTRIC GUITAR

AUDIO ENGINEER

Dave Clauss • Jim Cooley • Eric Masse • Buckley Miller • Justin Niebank

Will Bundy • Carson Chamberlain • Dann Huff • Chris LaCorte • Ben West

PRODUCER

CASINO, THEATER

Choctaw Grand Theater; Durant, OK • Golden Nugget Lake Charles; Lake Charles, LA • Hard Rock Live (Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood); Davie, FL • Resorts World Theatre at Resorts World Las Vegas; Las Vegas • The Venue at Thunder Valley at Thunder Valley Casino; Lincoln, CA

BECU Live at Northern Quest Casino; Airway Heights, WA • Hard Rock Live at Etess Arena; Atlantic City, NJ • Mohegan Sun Arena; Uncasville, CT • Soaring Eagle; Mount Pleasant, MI • Stir Concert Cove; Council Bluffs, IA

CASINO, ARENA



ADDITIONAL

NOMINEES

Note: Voting in the following categories is not open to the full Academy membership.

INDUSTRY AWARDS

FESTIVAL

C2C: Country to Country Festival; London, England • CMC Rocks; Ipswich, Queensland • Stagecoach; Indio, CA • Tortuga Music Festival; Ft. Lauderdale • Two Step In; Georgetown, TX

Calgary Stampede; Calgary, Alberta • California Mid-State Fair; Paso Robles, CA • Cheyenne Frontier Days; Cheyenne, WY • Florida Strawberry Festival; Plant City, FL • San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo; San Antonio

FAIR/RODEO

CLUB

Billy Bob's Texas; Fort Worth • Brooklyn Bowl; Nashville • Cain's Ballroom; Tulsa • Joe's Live; Rosemont, IL • The Pinnacle; Nashville

Blue Gate Theatre; Shippshewana, IN • Grand Ole Opry House; Nashville • State Theatre; Portland, ME • The Franklin Theatre; Franklin, TN • Ryman Auditorium; Nashville

THEATER

OUTDOOR VENUE

CMAC; Canandaigua, NY • Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre; Denver • Floores Country Store; Helotes, TX • The Orion Amphitheater; Huntsville, AL • Red Rocks Amphitheatre; Morrison, CO • Walmart AMP (Arkansas Music Pavilion); Rogers, AR

BOK Center; Tulsa, OK • Bridgestone Arena; Nashville • Dickies Arena; Ft. Worth • Paycom Center; Oklahoma City • T-Mobile Center; Kansas City

ARENA

DON ROMEO TALENT BUYER

Andrew Fortin, Neste Live! • Susan Heymann, Frontier Touring • Stacy Vee, Goldenvoice Ed Warm, Joe's Concerts • Del Williams, Danny Wimmer Presents

Patrick McDill, Live Nation • Brian O'Connell, Live Nation • Bob Roux, Live Nation • Rich Schaefer, AEG Presents • Adam Weiser, AEG Presents

PROMOTER

