

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays

FROM BIG LABEL RECORDS!



AARON'S FIRST HOLIDAY ALBUM

featuring 8 CHRISTMAS CLASSICS & 2 NEW/ORIGINAL SONGS.

LONELY LONESTAR CHRISTMAS ★ SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN
SHE STARED AT HIM ALL NIGHT ★ CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE
BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE ★ THE CHRISTMAS WALTZ ★ JINGLE BELLS
SILENT NIGHT ★ RUDOLPH THE RED NOSED REINDEER
HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS



AARONWATSON.COM



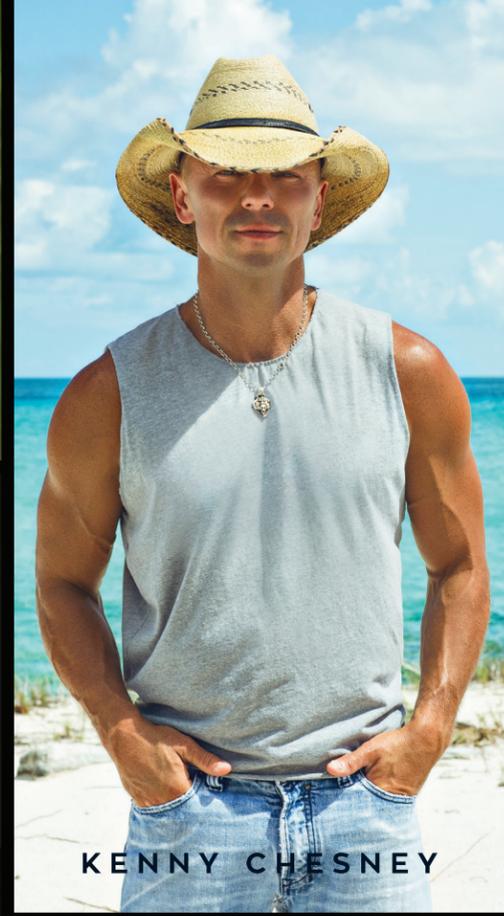
RAE LYNN



DAN + SHAY



TREA LONDON



KENNY CHESNEY



charlie worsham



CALEDODDS



DEVIN DAWSON



Ingrid ANDRESS



WILLIAM MICHAEL MORGAN



ASHLEY MCBRYDE



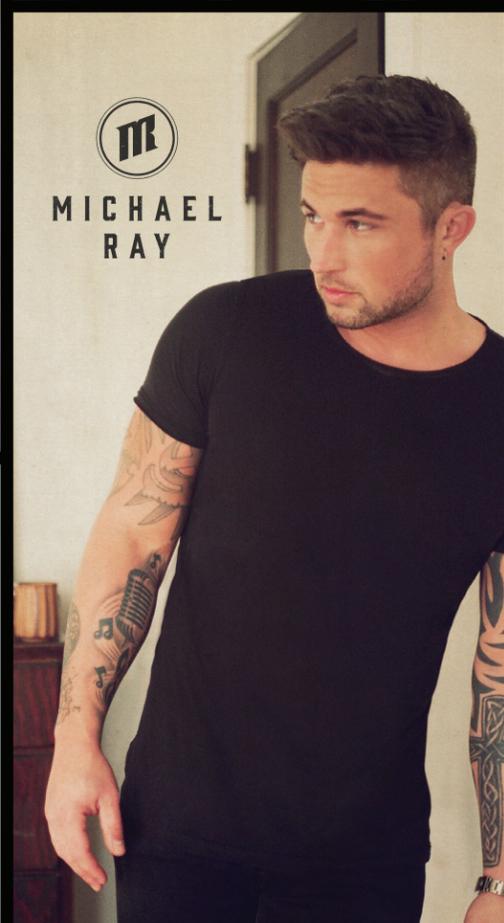
The Wild Feathers



COLE SWINDELL



tm tegan marie



MR MICHAEL RAY



CODY JOHNSON



WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE

WE. ARE. FAMILY.



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THE LAST BANDOLEROS



HUNTER HAYES



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ASHLEY MONROE



TROY CARTWRIGHT



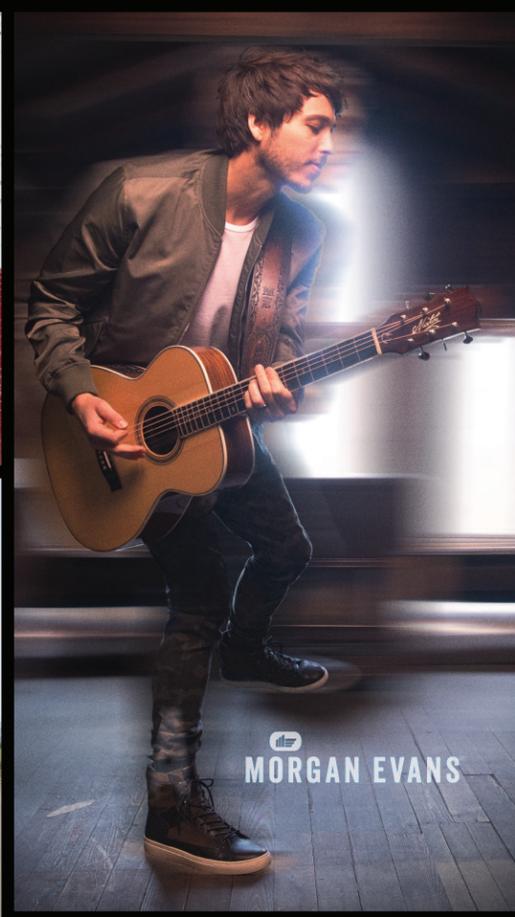
BRETT ELDRIDGE



CHRIS JANSON



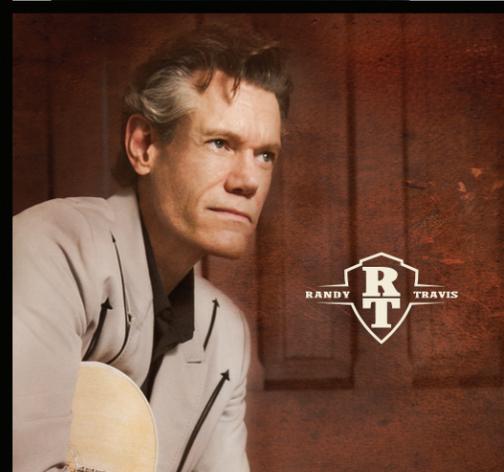
Dee White



MORGAN EVANS



AUBRIE SELLERS



RANDY TRAVIS



HIGH VALLEY



WALKER COUNTY

FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

DAN + SHAY

VOCAL DUO OF THE YEAR

OVER 1 BILLION CAREER STREAMS TO DATE
ONE OF THE TEN MOST STREAMED ARTISTS IN THE COUNTRY FORMAT
#1 BILLBOARD COUNTRY ALBUM
FOUR #1 SINGLES AT COUNTRY RADIO



“TEQUILA”

SINGLE, SONG + MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR

THE NO. 1 MOST STREAMED COUNTRY SONG RELEASED IN 2018

NEARLY 2 MILLION TRACK EQUIVALENTS SOLD

10 MILLION+ WEEKLY ON-DEMAND STREAMS + APPROACHING 250 MILLION TOTAL

WINNER OF THE 2018 CMT DUO VIDEO OF THE YEAR AWARD WITH OVER
40 MILLION VIEWS ON THE CINEMATIC MUSIC VIDEO

THE BREAKOUT STORY OF THE YEAR



SANDBOX
ENTERTAINMENT





Before finding a way into the business and working up to positions esteemed enough for inclusion in this list, they were fans. Country Aircheck's annual reader-voted *Power 31* ranks those with the greatest influence over Airplay decisions, as well as those with the greatest influence in shaping the Artists & Music fueling that airplay. Once upon a time, however, all of them were drawn in just for the love of music, radio, artistry, entertainment or some combination thereof. Below, they recount moments in which they've recaptured that pure joy.



ARTISTS & MUSIC

AIRPLAY

1 JOHN ESPOSITO

Warner Music Nashville Chairman/CEO

"It would, of course, have to be Bruce Springsteen and specifically *Springsteen* on Broadway. Everyone who knows me knows I'm a fanatic for Bruce, and that I've seen him north of 50 times. But this Broadway show has nothing to do with all of the Springsteen concerts I've seen up to this point. It's an intimate look into the soul of a man and what motivated so many of the songs that have become the soundtrack of my life. The two hour show probably only had an hour of music, but the way he introduced it brought new life to songs I've been listening to for 40 years. He takes you through his journey in an incredibly vulnerable way, with images in his head that turn familiar songs into something fresh. The magic and the intimacy of that experience on Broadway, and hearing his stories behind the songs, was beyond mesmerizing."



2 MIKE DUNGAN

UMG/Nashville Chairman/CEO

"The day it came out, after work I went to Target and bought Paul Simon's 2016 album *Stranger To Stranger* on CD. When I heard 'Wristband' I thought, 'My God, this guy is 75 years old!' Our greatest living songwriter."

1 ROD PHILLIPS

**iHeartMedia
EVP/Country Programming Strategy**

"We're surrounded by so many great songs, so for one to stand out and make an impact on me personally was unique. I ran across Scotty McCreery's *Opry* performance of "Five More Minutes" well before he had put together a team to work it to radio. The song spoke to me, my life and my family. As my Dad struggles to beat back cancer, I never want to regret missing those five minutes. I have kids that are at the end of their athletic careers and I know they would love five more minutes on that field. A special song that organically found its way to the public."



Rod (l) with his father and sons

2 CHARLIE COOK

Cumulus VP/Country, Nashville OM, WSM-FM PD

"My daughter Izzy met Garth in December and he engaged her in a conversation about her future. She wants to perform and he was supportive and encouraging along with being a dad and reminding her that she still needed college. He spent 10 minutes in a one-on-one conversation and really cared about her goals. It was also the first time she had seen a Garth show and she since has become a fan of his performance and music. That was a high point for me."



Trisha Yearwood, Izzy, Cook's wife
Susanne, Cook, Brooks



3 SCOTT BORCHETTA
Big Machine Label Group President/CEO

"On the final night of a European vacation in September 2015, Sandi and I went to see U2. What I fully expected to be a normal pre-show meet-and-greet turned into a private conversation with Bono and The Edge. What blows me away to this day is not only how friendly and interested they were, but also how inquisitive they were about what was happening in the



business. Streaming was just beginning to take hold in the States, Apple Music had launched the prior June and we had been off of Spotify for nearly a year. There were all kinds of questions about the unknowns and strategies as to how to slay the dragon. Then, the show. One of the most inspired I've ever seen. What keeps U2 at the top of their game 40-plus years into their career is their amazing musical passion and desire to be in the conversation, whether leading it or following it. Heroes indivisible."

4 RANDY GOODMAN
Sony/Nashville Chairman/CEO

"As my daughter got into her later teen years she became a real portal for me to discover a lot of new music. She wanted to see Father John Misty at the Ryman, which fascinated me because he was just beginning to get some radio play so he was being discovered through streaming. I listened to some music and it was pretty damn wordy for me, but I got tickets and we went. As we're walking in the alley from Fourth to Fifth before the show, we see him and I suggest we speak to him. She says, 'No! We can't do that.' I'm like, 'I do that all the time!' So we met him and talked, but I didn't tell him what I did. He dug the fact I came with my daughter, who had turned me on to his music. Then we went in for the show and I was blown away. It was completely out of my framework, but seeing her excitement level and experiencing music that way was really refreshing."

5 CINDY MABE
UMG/Nashville President

"I grew up in a small farming town in North Carolina. I knew about tobacco fields, sweet potatoes, Jesus, country music and not a whole lot more. At 19 I was attending UNC/Chapel Hill, waitressing and delivering mail at RJ Reynolds, but I was increasingly discouraged about what I was doing with my life. I made a list of everything I was passionate about. Country music was first, but I had no real musical talent or connections. Everything I knew came from listening to my local station, WTQR//Greensboro. I counted on them for The Judds' concert info, Bob Kingsley's countdown (my encyclopedia), Winston Cup racing, bluegrass hours and, of course, Aunt Eloise. "So at 19 years old, a shy kid with no obvious talent called WTQR, got a meeting with the VP/GM and eventually spent more than an hour asking questions about how radio works and why big country artists visit the station. That meeting is where I realized a whole music business world existed on the other side of the Smoky Mountains. He was one of the first people to take the time to answer my questions and tell me my dreams weren't that crazy. He gave me hope that set the course for where I am now."

6 JIMMY HARNEN
BMLG Label Group EVP, BMLG Records President

"Two years ago, Josh Hoge played me a great new song he wrote that Montgomery Gentry were recording called 'A Letter To Me.' I was just getting to know Troy Gentry around about that time, though my wife and children were already friends with his wife Angie and daughter Kaylee. Last September, Troy died in a helicopter crash and our daughter Katie called me from school crying. Our family was devastated. Less than a week later, we were at Troy's funeral service and heard a song he recorded called 'Better Me.' I listened wondering, 'Where have I heard this before?' I realized it was the song Josh had played me years before, but Troy changed the lyrics to reflect where he was in his life. I was blown away with the twist in meaning as well as the sad timing and instantly welled up. Troy brought so much joy to this world, had a great sense of humor, lived life to the fullest and always tried to better himself. I regret I didn't get to know him sooner."



7 JON LOBA
BBR Music Group EVP

"Shortly after graduating with degrees in Finance and Economics, I took a trip to Cookeville, TN to meet some relatives. I planned to spend a week with them, then go home and decide which New York investment banking training programs I wanted to pursue. That plan turned upside down when I spent a day exploring Nashville. I fell in love with Music Row, its energy and the sense of community you could feel just walking around. I began having romantic thoughts of blowing off an assured \$80,000-plus salary to jump into the music business, which I knew nothing about.

"Shortly after my trip, I was mowing with headphones on, riding around like Forrest Gump, trying to decide. My head said New York, my heart said Nashville. I prayed, 'God, I know I'm a hot mess and haven't been to church regularly enough, but I really need your help. And please make the answer is strong and obvious.' Literally 10 seconds later Garth Brooks' 'The River' came through my headphones. I got chills and started crying. I walked into the house and told my parents I was moving to Nashville, which I did three weeks later with \$500 in my pocket. When I told Garth that story, in typical Garth fashion, he deflected credit and said, 'Have you told [songwriter] Victoria Shaw that story? That will mean the world to her.'"



3 ROYCE RISSER
UMG/Nashville SVP/Promotion

"Watching my kids become students and complete lovers of music, which they are fully immersed in now. Musical theatre is where it started and then it escalated with *Hamilton*, which became the only thing they didn't fight over in the car. Taking them to see the actual show in Chicago was incredible.

One of the huge advantages of their participation with live theatre has been the development of a core group of friends who really do see themselves as family. The ability of music to form connections between people is a benefit that repeats itself and, honestly, is one of the main reasons I love what I do."



4 KRISTEN WILLIAMS
SVP/Radio & Streaming

"My last 'stop you in your tracks, tears down your face, soul-jarring' moment was when I watched *The Greatest Showman* with my then 10-year-old daughter. The music was incredible, the message even more so. Everything about the movie and the soundtrack was spectacular and inspiring – but even more so as I watched it with a young girl who is just learning to find her way in a world that seems to have lost its way. The musical is a celebration of humanity – the family unit, the American Dream and the differences that can unite us. I want to believe we can celebrate those things again. Music, no matter when or how it hits you, moves people – it's why I do what I do."

5 MIKE MOORE
Entercom/Portland VP/Programming Dir./Country Programming, KWJJ PD

"Ed Sheeran's Seattle stadium show was amazing. I took my daughter and was simply blown away how a guy with just a guitar, a loop pedal, a keyboard and no one else onstage had a stadium full of people in the palm of his hand. A remarkable talent whose performance showcased the connection people have to well-written songs."

6 STEVE HODGES
Sony/Nashville EVP/Promotion & Artist Development

"My wife Katharine and I went to see Journey and Def Leppard recently at Nashville's Bridgestone Arena. The show was sold out and the crowd was all ages. Neither band has had a major hit in more than 20 years and they've had one or two lineup changes. Still, they were both incredible and it was a testament to their catalogue of hits. The early discovery process that leads to a lifetime of music-memory making is so special – that direct correlation between the emotion of a song, a lyric, a guitar riff, or a drum beat and a particular person, place or time. How lucky I am to be in the business that helps make that discovery process happen, daily, for many. Kudos to the many talented artists who create those moments for us. I'm a fan and reminded daily how blessed I am to be a small part of this amazing music business."



7 KURT JOHNSON
Townsquare SVP/Programming

"The night before high school graduation I saw Bruce Springsteen at Alpine Valley. Twenty-thousand people were springing to their feet or back down again on the electricity of one syllable. Music is still the biggest rush, and now I'm getting to experience that power through the eyes of my daughters as their hearts soar with Taylor's songs at Cowboys Stadium or Eric Church at Bridgestone. We don't have careers, really, we have been given a gift to be in the entertainment business and create those experiences for people."

8 JOHN MARKS
Spotify Global Head of Country Programming

"In elementary school I'd go to the YMCA on weekends to swim, play basketball and goof around. We were standing in the refreshment area and someone put Roy Orbison's 'Oh, Pretty Woman' on the jukebox. The minute I heard that drum part and guitar lick, I fell in love with music. That moment captured me, created a passion and in some way drove me toward the profession I'm in today."



9 BECKY BRENNER
Albright & O'Malley & Brenner Consulting Partner

"David Nail sat down at a piano in the Mother Church of country music during one of Universal's early CRS lunches and sang 'The Sound Of A Million Dreams.' As I listened to those powerful lyrics I thought of every song that had ever touched my heart, and how fortunate I have been my whole life to bring that music to people through the radio. It brought tears to my eyes. There are two reasons I got into radio – to connect the community for charitable causes and to share the music with our listeners. These lyrics captured all of that in one powerful song."

SONY MUSIC NASHVILLE CONGRATULATES OUR 2018 CMA AWARDS NOMINEES

MIRANDA LAMBERT



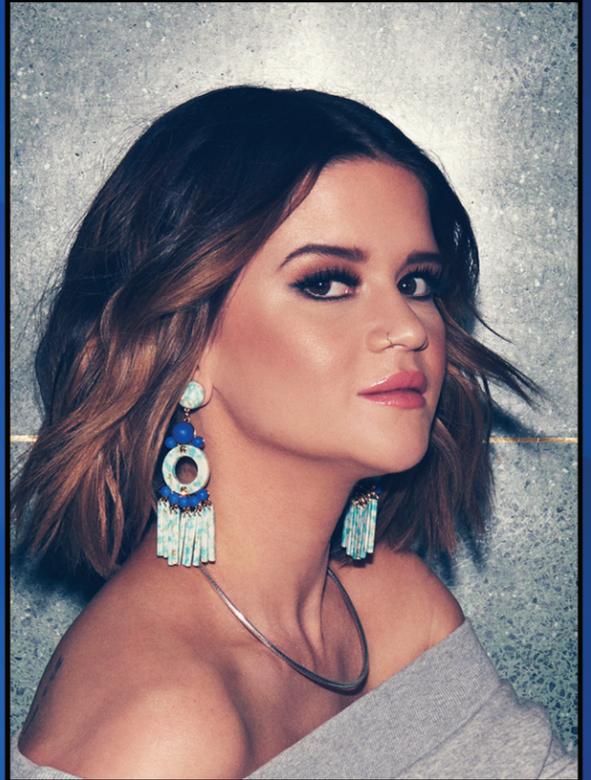
FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
SINGLE OF THE YEAR • SONG OF THE YEAR

LUKE COMBS



MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR

MAREN MORRIS



FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

OLD DOMINION



VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

LANCO



VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

52ND
CMA
AWARDS
LIVE WEDNESDAY
NOV 14 8/7c

 **SONY MUSIC**

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ARTISTS & MUSIC



AIRPLAY

8 CLARENCE SPALDING
Maverick Management President

“Before Jason Aldean’s first show back after the Vegas tragedy, one of the agents for one of the format’s most successful female artists called and said she was going to fly to Tulsa to support Jason. She didn’t want to sing or be acknowledged in any way – just wanted to be there to support him. We flew over, she walked into the dressing room and gave Jason a big hug. I thought to myself, she’s just a great friend.”

9 KERRI EDWARDS
KP Entertainment Owner/President

“I took all the girls in my family – seven of us – to see Dolly Parton play in Florida. I stood and sang every word to every song. Who can sit down when Dolly is singing? Such a fun night, and I got to experience music from the cheap seats.”



Edwards (l) and family with Parton (c).

10 SHANE MCANALLY
SmackSongs Owner, Monument Records Co-President

“Bruce Springsteen on Broadway was a reminder that our stories and memories are almost all rooted in music. He’s from a different generation, a different part of the country and has a different religious and financial background than me, but we are the same. The songs and the stories connected hearts, and the audience became like family. I make music because it is a direct line to human emotion and it brings people together. I witnessed this firsthand sitting 10 feet away from an American legend. Even better, I had this experience with one of my favorite collaborators and friends, Walker Hayes.”



McAnally, Hayes

11 SCOTT HENDRICKS
Warner Music Nashville EVP

“Very rarely do I go to concerts of people I have nothing to do with. I’m literally always working. The last time I saw something that really blew me away must have been several years ago at a NARAS event where Ringo Starr and Paul McCartney were onstage together at the same time. The Beatles are the reason I’m here. I saw them on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, grabbed my broomstick and ran outside to pretend to be them under the streetlight. Those four guys put me on a course that changed my life.”

12 TROY TOMLINSON
Sony/ATV Nashville President/CEO

“Mac Davis opened the funeral service for FAME’s Rick Hall with his classic ‘I Believe In Music’ followed by Shenandoah with ‘Sunday In The South,’ Randy Owen with ‘Angels Among Us,’ Alison Krauss and Jamey Johnson with ‘Go Rest High,’ Randy Houser with ‘Lead Me Home’ and a song written by Billy Lawson about Rick’s legacy titled ‘On Avalon.’ The entire service reminded me once again that words make you think, music makes you feel, and a song makes you feel a thought.”

13 CORAN CAPSHAW
Red Light Management Founder



14 BEN VAUGHN
Warner/Chappell President

“On a random Tuesday night a few years ago, my wife and I slipped over to the *Grand Ole Opry* as civilians. We didn’t even really know who was on the bill. Wanting to simply enjoy the music, we soon realized John Conlee was performing. I freaking love John Conlee. Sitting in mecca for a country fan and watching him get after it while wearing some rose colored glasses brought me back remembering why I pushed so hard for a career in music – country music, specifically.”

15 BRIAN O’CONNELL
Live Nation President/Country

“An artist had just received the final master of their latest single and needed a place to hear it for the first time with a quality audio system. They asked to use the system on my bus. I sat, listened and watched as the artist/co-writer heard their art for the very first time – the same way the public would hear it in perpetuity. Just the artist and me. The excitement and pride this artist expressed was not only genuine, but emotional as well. It makes me want to move mountains for them.”

10 CARSON JAMES
BBR Music Group SVP/Promotion

“In January, my 84-year-old mother fell and broke her neck in two places. Surgery was successful but she crashed in recovery – heart attack, lungs collapsed and a broken sternum and ribs during resuscitation. We were not optimistic, but she made it from a ventilator in Intensive Care to respiratory rehab to an occupational facility. Progress was slow through April. “She’d always had a beautiful singing voice and was in the church choir for more than 60 years. She’d been having a hard time communicating and remembering much of anything until they brought in a musical therapist. Asked what she might like to sing, I suggested ‘Amazing Grace.’ From the beginning of the song she knew every word and even broke into harmony. She went on to sing more songs that day and therapy continued three times a week. She was released to go home May 16 and is there today. The miracle of music was the absolute turning point in her recovery. I saw it happen!”

11 BOBBY YOUNG
Capitol VP/Promotion

“Mile markers go back to seeing The Beatles on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Yes, the original showing. Also, The Kinks up close and personal in Hobart College’s gymnasium. And finally, Emerson Lake and Palmer in 1972. I was still a kid and they completely blew me away with their performance and, of course, the music they made with only three people. Growing up in rural upstate New York, I had an awareness of Country artists and music, but didn’t develop a passion for it until a friend introduced me to the music of Waylon, Willie, Tompall Glaser and Larry Gatlin in the late ‘70s. I soon discovered the songs and lifestyle of Kris Kristofferson and decided Nashville is where I belonged.”

12 JOHNNY CHIANG
Cox/Houston Dir./Ops, KKQB PD

“Fourteen years ago I hired Kevin Kline from an Alternative station to helm our morning show. He was a typical rock guy – edgy, angry. As our first radiothon for Texas Children’s Hospital approached, he pulled me aside to say he wasn’t really into participating. Just not his bag. So I asked him to give me one day and, after that, he could run the board. No problem. That day during the radiothon, a pre-teen girl named Chelsey approached Kevin and started bugging him about his job, what he did and how it worked. She looked perfectly healthy, so he didn’t immediately realize she was one of the hospital’s patients. The next year, Kevin decided to run from Dallas to San Antonio to Houston to raise money and awareness, and to experience hardship at a level that echoed what those sick kids deal with. Chelsey died a few years after that first meeting, but Kevin was forever transformed. He and his wife started the Snowdrop Foundation and he has pushed himself ever harder each year. They’ve raised \$3 million to date and he’s currently training to run the South Pole. Seriously. Treadmill in a walk-in freezer. That’s the power of radio.”



Kline with Chelsey

13 GEORGE BRINER
Valory GM

“‘What A Wonderful World’ was written in 1967 and first recorded by Louis Armstrong. Its impact still rings true 51 years later and, yes, I’m old enough to remember when it came out. I was introduced to it by my father, Jack Briner, who always had jazz on in our home. As the years have gone on, it’s more than a favorite. I’ve celebrated life with this song at weddings, the passing of family and friends, and on days where I feel blessed that someone is sending me a message from above. Some days I start my morning with it, other days I use it to wind down in the evening. Always brings me back to center. Timeless and powerful.”

14 GATOR HARRISON
iHeartCountry Brand. Coord., iHeartMedia/Nashville SVP/Programming

“There are so many, but the one that stands out was Sept. 8, 2017. I was sitting with my family in my absolute favorite church when it happened. I had watched this kid learn how to play his first chords on guitar and craft his first lyrics, bought his first EP, wore his merch, maybe even changed a diaper at some point. But on this night I was witnessing Judah & The Lion’s first of two *sold out* shows at The Ryman Auditorium. I wasn’t a PD, I didn’t go backstage. I bought my own tickets and was just Judah’s uncle and a fan of a kid who had become a true artist with something important to sing and share. It was an unforgettable night reminding me of the power of music and the importance of always dreaming big.”



Gator with Judah

WRAP UP THE YEAR WITH GARTH!

ANTHOLOGY LIVE • VOL III

*256 page book that includes 5 discs with 52 LIVE recordings,
100+ amazing LIVE photos and augmented reality experiences*

TRIPLE LIVE • 3-DISC SET

all new LIVE music recorded at Garth's #1 Tour in North American History

GARTH @ NOTRE DAME STADIUM

*History in the making -- country superstar Garth Brooks,
the first solo artist to perform at Notre Dame Stadium -- October 20th, 2018*

ALL DAY LONG

The first smash-hit single from Garth's anticipated new Studio Album coming in 2019



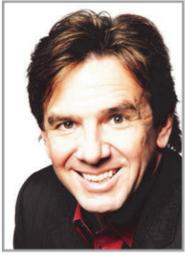
#AllDayLong

PEARL
RECORDS



16 CRAIG WISEMAN
Big Loud Owner/Managing Partner

"I was driving home from work late one night when 'Everything's Gonna Be Alright' came on and totally chilled me out. People ask what my favorite song is and might think it's something deep, but really it's just any song that works. If it transports you somewhere – even if it's to a party, having a drink, talking to girls. I was going a million miles an hour and hearing that song calmed me down, cooled me off. I texted David Lee Murphy, Kenny Chesney and the writers to let them know how good that song is. Job well done."



17 DANN HUFF
Producer

"You do this thing all your life and you tend to become numb to things, but I remember hearing 'Burning House' by Cam the first time. That was a moment. The collision of voice and melody, the simplicity – those took me back to a pure love of sound. Transcends even the song. A combination of elements that makes something magical. At the CMA Awards I asked Randy Goodman if I could meet her. Just a fan moment wanting to speak to someone who made something I love listening to every time it comes on the radio."

18 ROB BECKHAM
William Morris Endeavor Entertainment Partner

19 CLINT HIGHAM
Morris Higham President

"In a world where everyone wonders what's in it for them, Boston radio executive Ginny Brophy is the first to ask, 'How can I help?' But more than lip service, she opens her heart, her rolodex and relationships. When Kenny Chesney wanted to do something for the amputee survivors of the Boston Marathon bombing, Ginny was someone we could trust. She not only knew the city and the community, but how to get us to the people who truly needed the long-term help. She served as a sounding board, cheerleader and connection to the hospital. She helped spread the message for the Spread The Love Foundation as we were figuring out how to do this kind of large-scale, but specific charity endeavor. We were outsiders when Kenny began STL efforts, but the way she loves her city, the people who love country music and the artists who make it sets a very high bar for why we do this. She make me proud to be part of this industry I've loved and studied since I was a child."



20 SALLY WILLIAMS
Opry Entertainment SVP/Programming & Artist Relations
Grand Ole Opry GM

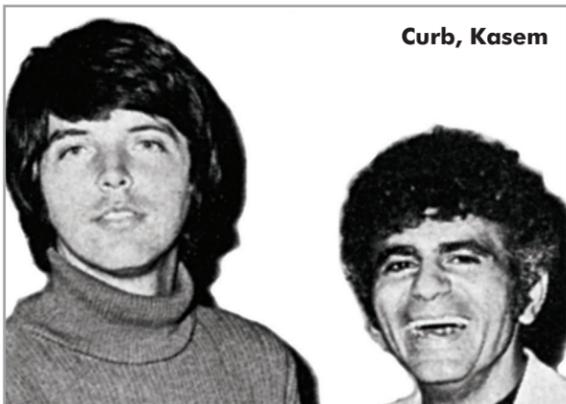
"Visits to our cabin in the redwoods of Santa Cruz, CA remind me in the simplest ways how much I love music and why I feel so fortunate to be working in this business. There's no land line, no internet, no television and cell service only down the road in town. We fill much of the time playing vinyl, most recently ranging from Ray Charles' *Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music* to Herb Albert's *Tijuana Brass Whipped Cream & Other Delights*, and from Merle Haggard *Big Sky Country* to John Coltrane *A Love Supreme*. We also listen to a lot of KPIG/Santa Cruz. They boast 'live, free-range DJs' and in one 24-hour period I heard gems by Lynyrd Skynyrd, Bent Cobb, Dwight Yoakam, Ryan Bingham, Jason Isbell, Mark Knopfler, Joan Baez, Etta James, Robert Earl Keen, Parker Millsap, Jerry Jeff Walker, Lake Street Dive, Guy Clark, Johnny Cash, the Beatles and a slew of little known local and regional artists. I love not knowing what will come next – it's like a music treasure hunt. Both experiences take me back to the beginning – the luxury of simply focusing on the music."



21 ROD ESSIG
CAA Agent

22 MIKE CURB
Curb Word Entertainment Chairman

"My great radio music moment was when my best friend, Casey Kasem, created the *American Top 40* countdown format and we became one of the prime sponsors. *American Top 40* combined the beautiful history of our artists, the producers and other music-related people. Casey had an amazing way to present history and feature Top 40 hits, combining the best of Pop, Country, R&B, Alternative, Gospel and Rock, which is so important now that the industry is digital and global. Our new artists can now reach multiple worldwide formats with their new music and catalogs."



Curb, Kasem

15 JOEL RAAB
Joel Raab
Country
Radio/Media Consulting

"Hearing certain songs for the first time on the radio simply as a listener, not as a professional, have blown me away. As a child hearing 'Hey Jude' for the first time in the family car going to Burger King. Much later hearing 'Picture' by Kid Rock and Sheryl Crow while driving on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Driving home across the railroad tracks near my office I heard 'Remind Me' by Brad Paisley and Carrie Underwood for the first time. I remember because someone had told me it wasn't very good, but I had the complete opposite reaction. I loved it and still do. The magic music and radio create together is just priceless."



16 KATIE DEAN
MCA VP/Promotion

"We moved around constantly during my childhood, and many times the only refuge I had from being the new kid outcast was to retreat to my room, play Heart albums on vinyl, and try to emulate my guitar idol Nancy Wilson. Taking music classes and majoring in 'Undecided' in college, my dad pointed out there is no 'Rock Star' major, so I transferred, studied music business and moved to Nashville after graduation. My job allows me to indulge in guitar lessons and spend a week each year at a rock and roll camp that also funds summer rock camps for the next generation of female rockers. I'm still a hack musician at best, but am so grateful to have a career that fuels my passion, and afforded me the opportunity to check off my life's single biggest bucket list item: Playing guitar alongside Nancy Wilson."



Wilson, Dean

17 BOBBY BONES
The Bobby Bones Show Host
iHeartCountry VP/Creative Dir.

"My first concert at 10 years old was Diamond Rio at Magic Springs Theme Park in Arkansas. That show started my love for both the band and country music, and I still love both today. I recorded Diamond Rio's "Meet In The Middle" on cassette from the radio and listened to it so many times it was practically worn out. I remember singing along to that song at the show, and couldn't believe I was actually hearing it live. I'll never forget that moment."

18 MIKE MCVAY
Cumulus EVP/Programming

"Radio is a great conduit to deliver emotion in an intimate fashion. I'm listening when 'our song' comes on and am suddenly transported to that first date, remembering the birth of our children – all the highs and lows of life. Radio does that for me every day."

19 MATTHEW HARGIS
BMLG Records
SVP/Promotion

"My wife and I welcomed our first child in December 2014 and very early started taking her to a Kindermusik class. I thought it was just a way to burn some energy in hopes she would sleep better at night, as other parents can relate. Much to my surprise, the class has set the table for what seems to be a true love of music in my daughter's life. No matter where we are, she wants to have music playing while she sings and dances along. She's learned the fundamentals of music and has already started piano lessons. Perhaps the best part is nightly dance parties in our kitchen before bedtime. Needless to say, we have now started our second daughter in classes at the age of four months."



Janaki (top) and Nithya

20 GREGG SWEDBERG
iHeartCountry Brand Coord.
Western Great Lakes RSVP
KEEY/Minneapolis OM/PD

"Brad Paisley and Keith Urban were booked on our Fan Jam in 2003, fairly early in their careers. I don't remember who, but one asked the other to join them onstage. Two artists who are just hitting the big time proceed to do an eight-minute version of 'Workin' Man Blues,' of which about six minutes is trading guitar licks. I was standing on the side of the stage watching their faces. They looked like they had blocked out the crowd of 15,000 and were simply entertaining each other, big smiles on their faces. Two brilliant guitar players showing off, and I got to be 20 feet away. Brilliant."

21 TIM ROBERTS
Entercom/Detroit VP/Music
Programming, WYCD PD

"Nothing compares to radio when it comes to the amazing and fascinating people you meet along the way. Not just the big stars. When I first started in radio at WMHW/Mt. Pleasant, MI, I met great radio talent Lori Johnson. Almost 40 years later we are still together with three wonderful children, too. It started with our love of music and radio, and it's still going strong!"





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23 JASON OWEN
Sandbox
Entertainment President/
CEO, Monument Records
Co-President

“Since becoming a dad, I have been reminded about the power of music in how it affects children. Specifically, I am now obsessed with the *Moana* soundtrack. There’s something incredibly moving about music without an agenda, simply bringing happiness and imagination into the world. I see that through my son Leo.”

24 KEN ROBOLD
Sony/Nashville EVP/COO

“Seeing U2’s *The Joshua Tree Tour 2017* at Indianapolis’ Lucas Oil Stadium. In the middle of their set they played the entire album start to finish. That album came out 30 years prior when I was a senior in college and it became one of the seminal albums in my life. I had no idea at that time that I would be in the music business. Thirty years later I was standing about 20 feet from the band and realized how fortunate I am to have the career I have. To be able to work with creators, artists and so many talented people is something I never imagined as a kid, but it is what I was absolutely meant to do.”

25 BRIAN WRIGHT
UMG/Nashville EVP/A&R

“Being in the room for Tom Petty’s 2017 MusiCares Person of the Year acceptance speech. He talked about everyone but himself and, after he spoke, he and The Heartbreakers blew everyone away. I will never forget that night.”



26 JOHN ZARLING
Sony/
Nashville EVP/
Marketing & New
Business

“My daughter Brooklyn took part in a musical theater camp this summer, and as part of the program, the instructor exposed the children to three classic rock and roll anthems: ‘Hound Dog’ by Elvis Presley, ‘Twist And Shout’ by Bill Haley & The Comets and ‘Tutti Frutti’ by Little Richard. Ever since, she has been enthralled with looking up videos of Elvis on YouTube (‘He is so handsome!’ she quips) and asking Google Home to play ‘Tutti Frutti.’ She then proceeds to dance and sing her heart out.

This all reminds me about the joy music can bring to people of any age, and how music from long ago can still have a big impact on the next generation.”

27 SETH ENGLAND
Big Loud Partner

“As a kid I would go to the record store every Tuesday to find out what was new, popular or about to break. I’m that same kid today, sprinting to on-demand streaming apps on Fridays for discovery or to observe instant fan feedback. This has been a *proving ground* for many new artists. At Big Loud, we share our “fresh finds” and “early bets” in A&R meetings. I still remember when someone played Ella Mai’s ‘Boo’d Up,’ Mitchell Tenpenny’s ‘Drunk Me’ and Benny Blanco’s ‘Eastside.’ We looked at each other and had that feeling these songs were special. Then watching them work their way to radio and having explosive reactions is very inspiring. It’s been a great reminder to not overthink and to let myself be that kid who just loved to share new music with friends.”

28 ALLISON JONES
BMLG SVP/A&R

Last year, I took my son Dylan to see Snoop Dogg. Since this was for him, I threw caution to the wind and paid for the VIP meet-and-greet experience. My expectations were minimal, but when we got to the front of the line to meet Snoop, he exceeded my imagination. He was beyond gracious, knelt down to talk to Dylan one-on-one, asked him several questions about music and let us take multiple pictures. He had his road manager bring us some VIP merch and invited us to watch the first part of his show onstage. Not side-stage, on stage right behind him. He had no idea I work in the business. He did this because he could tell Dylan was such a huge fan. The concert was pure entertainment, my son was beyond inspired and it’s a memory neither one of us will ever forget. Snoop has no idea the impact he made on an aspiring hip hop producer/musician. For me, it was a huge reminder of how much I love this crazy wonderful business and the power of music.”



22 LESLIE FRAM
CMT SVP/Music Strategy & Talent

“I don’t remember hearing Bob Dylan’s speaking voice before being in the audience as he accepted MusiCares Person of the Year in 2015. He talked for more than 30 minutes and no topic was off limits, which was rare. He was funny, outspoken and controversial – and it was surreal hearing him talk about the Outlaw Country years, Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson and other musical heroes of mine. He relayed a Sam Cooke comment when someone told Cooke he had a beautiful voice. ‘Well that’s very kind of you, but voices ought not to be measured by how pretty they are. Instead they matter only if they convince you that they are telling the truth.’ Another rock history lesson was seeing Bruce Springsteen give the Keynote Speech at SXSW in 2012. I’ve seen him more than 30 times and his talk on ‘The Meaning Of Music’ was unfiltered and magical. Everyone in the music business should hear it.”

23 JEFF GARRISON
Cox Country Format Leader
San Antonio Dir./Operations, KCYY PD

“Front row for the last stop on Rush’s last tour. They were the first concert I saw in 1979, so it was surreal to be in the front row in Las Vegas with my best friend since 1983. The only thing missing was the pot.”



24 KRIS LAMB
Big Machine VP/Promotion

“One of my first concerts was an outdoor summer show in Scottsdale, AZ. A giant monsoon rolled through the valley as I watched Garth Brooks climb all over the stage with rain and lightning in the background. Surreal and sparked a young child’s imagination. I’ve been chasing that fire ever since. I’m constantly reminded that music is a celebration of life, good and bad. Most recently in a call from a mother who just lost her 16-year-old daughter to cancer. She wasn’t asking for anything, she just wanted to share the story of her child, who was listening to Taylor Swift’s music as she passed. We are privileged to expose music and shape popular culture – and the effects of that can be profound.”

25 DAMON MOBERLY
Mercury VP/Promotion

“A good friend recently lost his grandfather and I shared The Steel Drivers’ song ‘Where Rainbows Never Die’ with him. That song was played at my father’s memorial service and it’s one of my favorite songs ever. A few weeks later, my friend got to meet Chris Stapleton, who had been in that band and sang that song. He was able to tell Chris how much the song had meant to him and his family and, later that evening during his show, Chris played the song for my pal. A simple gesture for someone who needed it in the moment and a reminder of the power of music.”

26 KENNY JAY
WUSN/Chicago PD

“The Brantley Gilbert song ‘One Hell Of An Amen’ took on new meaning when I met my neighbor Heidi in Minnesota. She just had been diagnosed for a second time with cancer, which she nicknamed ‘Charlie.’ Her treatments were brutal, but she lived by the lyric, ‘My heart is right and I believe.’ The story has a happy ending: She ‘kicked Charlie’s ass’ (her words) a second time.”

27 LEE ADAMS
Broken Bow VP/
National Promotion

“In February of last year I randomly asked my parents who their all-time favorite singer was. Without hesitation they both said Neil Diamond. He was coming to Baltimore that June, so my sister and I surprised them with tickets. We had no idea that six months later he would retire due to illness. Seeing my 77-year-old parents on their feet, singing the words to every song is an unforgettable memory. And the concert was amazing.”



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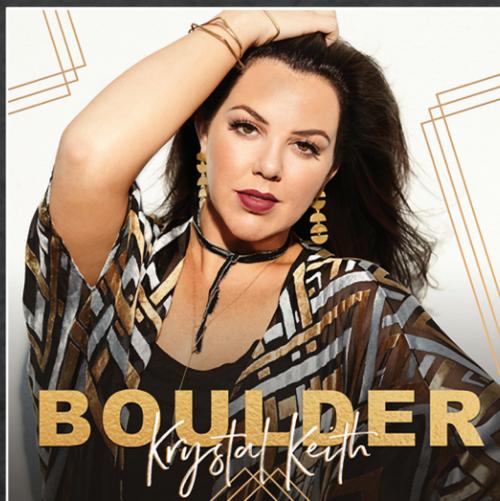
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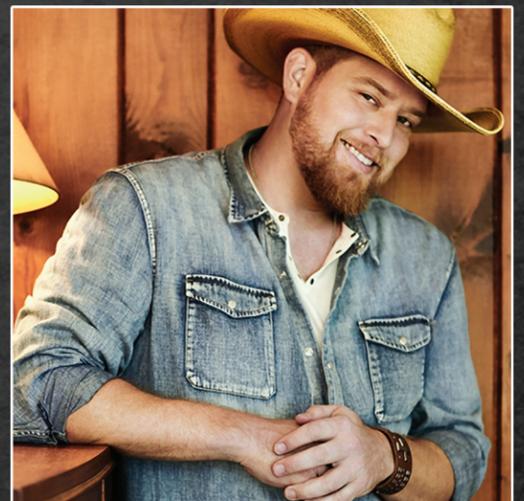
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ARTISTS & MUSIC



AIRPLAY

29 **KOS WEAVER**
BMG EVP

"I often say to myself, 'I can't believe I get paid to do this.' The most recent example being a Ray Wylie Hubbard show. I work with him but, would have been there regardless."



Weaver, Hubbard, Jake Gear

30 **JOHN PEETS**
Q Prime South Founder

"For better or worse, I tend to become bonded to the people I work for, and it is often times difficult to detach from the things that they go through. Recently and in a very short period of time three deaths in my world took people before their time. The punches landed like I was being mugged and I remember hitting my bathroom floor when the third call came – trying to process the pain of those I care for deeply. My job had never brought me to my knees before. I didn't know what to do, so I walked. In silence. Eventually, I turned to music and hit shuffle. John Prine's 'Blue Umbrella' was served up. I didn't remember the song, but the magic and healing power of music came bursting through. 'Just give me one good reason, and I promise I won't ask you any more/just give me one extra season, so I can figure out the other four.' And I wasn't alone. I was thankful for the genius of songwriting, the power of artists. I knew my calling was true and I would continue to do my small part to bring music to people."

31 **KENT EARLS**
Universal Publishing EVP/GM

"Coming home from kindergarten one day, my daughter Avery was excited because she had signed herself and three friends up to perform in the school talent show. What was she performing? Not *Moana* or *The Greatest Showman* like the other kids. No, these four six-year-old girls were adamant about performing "Thunder" by Imagine Dragons. I reached out to the Imagine Dragons team (working in the music business does have perks) and got the tracks. The girls gave a spirited performance that would have made Dan Reynolds proud. Things got a little lost in the bridge, but they brought it back heartily for the final chorus and received a standing ovation."



28 **JOSH EASLER**
Arista VP/Promotion

"Listening to music at dinner with my nine-year-old son Henry as we usually do, he played me a song that took my breath away. I'd never heard it or of the artist – 'Hopeful' by British pop duo Bars and Melody. The song's about bullying and, fortunately, Henry has never experienced that to our knowledge. But he's really aware of it and played me the song a few times. I was amazed by the heaviness of it, as well as Henry's desire to talk about the subject. Truly was an amazing life moment all because of a song."



29 **JR SCHUMANN**
SiriusXM Sr. Dir./Country Programming

"Being at the Meadowlands as Kenny Chesney became the record holder for most concert tickets sold at the stadium, even outselling Bruce Springsteen, followed up by topping 1 million tickets in Foxborough was it for me. All those adoring fans spending their hard-earned money, arriving early and staying late, braving inclement weather and stadium evacuations completely undeterred from their original mission of celebrating country music and their favorite artists – pretty humbling."

30 **NATE DEATON**
Empire KRTY/San Jose GM

"We recently held a songwriters round in a great outdoor venue. After a long week and perhaps some challenges along the way, we can forget how special songs and artists can be. Well, after almost two hours, Ashley McBryde introduced and played her fifth song of the night, 'Bible And A .44.' There were 700 people there and for three-and-a-half minutes not one made a sound. Especially me. In a world of picking singles, looking at chart position and worrying about monthly billing, we sometimes forget how words and melody connect us all. This one song on this one night reminded me how special this thing we call work really is."

31 **STACY BLYTHE**
Big Loud Records VP/Promotion

"The end of 2015 brought multiple personal challenges for me and my husband Tyler. On Jan. 11, 2016 I was driving home from a family funeral feeling like I was getting hit while I was down. I thought, 'What else can possibly go wrong?' A Lauren Daigle album was playing, the song 'Trust In You' came on and I was cut to my core. The song took me to a place of comfort and reminded me that I'm not always in control of my life, but it's okay to sit back and trust God's plan. I played it on repeat for five hours on that drive back to Nashville. When I got home, I found out I was pregnant with my daughter, Frankie. Those prior trials now seemed to make sense. Any time I feel out of control or lost, I return to the power of that song." **CAC**



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