

billboard Country Update

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BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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The Grand Ole Opry's Humorous New Development Is Rooted In Its Past



People generally treat history as a serious subject, but when the Grand Ole Opry made history this month, the whole thing was... well... laughable.

Comedians **Henry Cho** and **Gary Mule Deer** were both unveiled on Jan. 6 as new invitees, a dual expansion that shores up one of the Opry's foundational tent poles as the venerable **WSM-AM** Nashville show draws ever nearer to its 100th anniversary.

The Opry had not inducted a full-time comedian since **Jerry Clower** joined the ranks in October 1973 — nearly 50 years ago — and adding two comics is a clear pronouncement that management is reclaiming the show's past. Founded in 1925, the Opry grew from a vaudevillian variety-show format, and humor was as essential to the radio show's original character as it would be to variety TV programs that followed, including *Laugh-In*, *Hee-Haw* and *The Carol Burnett Show*.

"The Opry is full of all these different styles of music and these different generations of artists," Opry GM **Dan Rogers** says. "But then you put a comedian out there for 10 or 12 minutes, and that's something completely different from everything else they've already seen, but also something that brings people together as much as an incredible performance

does. It changes the whole trajectory of the show, when 4,400 people are out there laughing."

Even though it has been decades since a full-time comic came aboard, it's not as if the Opry has been a dour place. Many of the artists affiliated with it — including **Brad Paisley**, **Marty**

Stuart, **Mike Snider** and **Bill Anderson** — bring their own brand of humor to the proceedings. And for a long time, the Opry still counted comedian **Minnie Pearl** and musical funnymen **Bill Carlisle**, **Porter Wagoner** and **Little Jimmy Dickens** among its membership. They have, unfortunately, all died, leaving a bit of a hole.

"Comedy became more important to us over the past few years with the loss

of Jimmy Dickens and folks of that ilk," Rogers notes.

"I don't think that gets recognized enough," says Opry member **Chris Young**. "I mean, all the shows that I got a chance to go to as a kid, there was [usually] at least one comedian. Little Jimmy Dickens would stand up there and tell [jokes]. I think that's part of the legacy."

The Opry isn't the only entity paying attention to the institution's humorous history. Belmont University hosted the premiere of *Facing the Laughter: Minnie Pearl* on Jan. 19. The documentary — featuring **Amy Grant**, **Garth Brooks**, **Dwight**



CHO (left) and MULE DEER



PEARL

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Yoakam and **Reba McEntire**, among others — will appear in theaters on Feb. 6 for one day only through Fathom Events and Nashville Public Television.

At the end of the '90s, a research study found that Pearl was the individual most closely associated with the Opry, surpassing the musicians who dominate the show's membership rolls. Her frumpy, dated outfits and bonnet with the dangling price tag made the character instantly recognizable. It also made Pearl — the stage persona of **Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon** — accessible to Opry fans.

"She didn't try to be a beauty queen," says *Facing the Laughter* producer **Barb Hall**. "We didn't look up to her and say, 'Man, there's no way we can ever look that beautiful or be that glamorous.' And so we could relate to that. She was all over television, all over Hollywood, and yet she was, you know, kind of average. That's a big part of why we related to her and why she is the person at the Opry that everybody wanted to see and connect with."

Pearl was, it appears, perfectly timed. After her debut at Nashville's War Memorial Auditorium in November 1940, she received piles of fan mail and was quickly added to the cast. As a rare female comic in a paternalistic society, she stood out from the Opry's male comedians, including **Rod Brasfield**, **Stringbean** and **Whitey Ford**. She also survived cultural shifts. The Opry featured some blackface performers — particularly **Jamup & Honey** — during its first three decades. That style of comedy, now recognized as racially offensive, was prominent across American stages when the country was segregated, and its practitioners ultimately faded.

"When I teach the history of the recording industry, I've got to cover minstrel shows," says Belmont professor of music business **Don Cusic**, who also wrote a theatrical production, *Minnie Pearl: The Musical*, that played briefly in Nashville before the pandemic ended its run. "You're not supposed to mention them, but they're key to understanding the evolving industry."

Cho, as the first Korean American member of the Opry, demonstrates a more progressive attitude among the institution's management, though his addition is neither an apology for past mistakes nor a token appointment.

"It's what he brings to the show in terms of talent," Rogers says. "Anytime the Opry can take steps toward embracing someone who looks different than I do, or than **Vince Gill** does, or than **Jeannie Seely** does, I think that's a step in the right direction. But Henry Cho will become an Opry member because he's such a funny person."

Cho and Mule Deer, in fact, bring a different energy to the backstage vibe at the Opry, according to Rogers. And they also attract side-of-stage gawkers from the cast, who need a dose of humor as much as the audience does.

"Vince Gill and **Connie Smith** and **Ricky Skaggs** enjoy laughing just as much as the rest of them," notes Rogers.

Expect the Opry to retell its history in the coming years. Rogers hints that the 100th-anniversary events could include an international tour, multiple network TV specials, wider distribution and a few more new members. Music remains the core, but with Cho and Mule Deer, the Opry will still be good for a laugh.

"And," Rogers adds, "with more legendary, contemporary and new artists to come." ●



STEVE LOWRY

Jelly Roll celebrated his first No. 1 country single, "Son of a Sinner," during a Jan. 19 party at BMI in Nashville. From left: songwriter David Ray Stevens, producer Ilya Toshinskiy, Jelly Roll and songwriter-producer Ernest K. Smith.



HARDY visited Kelleigh Bannen to discuss his album *the mockingbird & THE CROW* for the Jan. 20 edition of Apple Music Country's *Today's Country Radio With Kelleigh Bannen*.



NOAH NEEDLEMAN

Singer-songwriter Troy Cartwright signed a publishing deal with Big Machine Music, announced Jan. 18. From left: BMM vp of publishing Tim Hunze, Cartwright and BMM director of publishing Michelle Attardi and GM Mike Molinar.

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billboard Country Airplay

 AIRPLAY
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 ON THE CHARTS JIM ASKER jim.asker@billboard.com

Luke Combs Scores Sweet 16th Country Airplay Top 10 With 'Going, Going, Gone'

Luke Combs' "Going, Going, Gone" (River House/Columbia Nashville) reaches the top 10 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart (dated Jan. 28) as the single rises 11-8. In the tracking week ending Jan. 19, the song increased by 12% to 21.2 audience impressions, according to Luminate.



Combs co-authored the track with Ray Fulcher and James McNair. It's the third single from Combs' LP *Growin' Up*, which opened at No. 1 on Top Country Albums in July 2022, marking his fourth leader.

On the streaming-, airplay- and sales-based Hot Country Songs survey, "Going" ranks at No. 7 on the most recently published list (dated Jan. 21), after reaching No. 6 one week earlier. It drew 9.9 million official U.S. streams and sold 2,000 downloads in the Jan. 6-12 tracking week.

"Going" follows Combs' "The Kind of Love We Make," which reached No. 2 on Country Airplay last September.

Before that, he racked up a record 14 consecutive career-opening No. 1s, starting with his first entry, "Hurricane," which led for two weeks beginning in May 2017.

On Jan. 4, Combs took to social media to announce that he'll release a new (as yet untitled) studio album, sporting 18 songs, on March 24. He will kick off a worldwide tour — set to encompass 35 shows in 16 countries on three continents — on March 25 at AT&T stadium in Arlington, Texas.

MORE 'SPINS': Jordan Davis' "What My World Spins Around" (MCA Nashville) dominates Country Airplay for a second week (31 million impressions, up 4%). It's his fourth No. 1 among six career-opening top 10s. ●

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
PICK ME UP Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Gabby Barrett	+2.847
GOING, GOING, GONE River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+2.314
THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+2.210
THANK GOD Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown With Katelyn Brown	+2.184
ROCK AND A HARD PLACE Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	+1.989
WHAT HE DIDN'T DO Big Machine	Carly Pearce	+1.774
HANDLE ON YOU MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	+1.441
HEART LIKE A TRUCK Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	+1.285
WAIT IN THE TRUCK Broken Bow/Big Loud	HARDY Featuring Lainey Wilson	+1.195
WHAT MY WORLD SPINS AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	+1.166

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
PICK ME UP Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Gabby Barrett	+834
THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+716
ROCK AND A HARD PLACE Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	+557
THANK GOD Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown With Katelyn Brown	+483
LOOKING FOR YOU RCA Nashville	Chris Young	+400
GOING, GOING, GONE River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+362
WHAT HE DIDN'T DO Big Machine	Carly Pearce	+336
MEMORY LANE Arista Nashville	Old Dominion	+332
HEART LIKE A TRUCK Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	+308
HANDLE ON YOU MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	+295

RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	DOWN HOME Stoney Creek	Jimmie Allen	19.168
2	THE KIND OF LOVE WE MAKE River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	18.778
3	HALF OF ME Valory/BMLG	Thomas Rhett Featuring Riley Green	17.652
4	5 FOOT 9 Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	15.169
5	TAKE MY NAME Stoney Creek	Parmalee	13.889
6	OUT IN THE MIDDLE Home Grown/Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Zac Brown Band	13.873
7	WISHFUL DRINKING Atlantic/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Ingrid Andress With Sam Hunt	11.947
8	WASTED ON YOU Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	11.436
9	FALL IN LOVE Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	11.079
10	'TIL YOU CAN'T CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson	10.424



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING JANUARY 15, 2023

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/-	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/-
1	2	23	HALF TO DEATH (Little Red Truck) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Deryl Dodd	1709	90	11	14	16	COWGIRL (Independent)	Jake Bush	1340	180
2	4	17	DON'T IT MAKE YOU WANNA DANCE (Independent)	Josh Abbott/Flatland Cavalry	1666	86	12	16	12	MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE I'VE EVER BEEN (Independent)	Case Hardin	1319	270
3	7	16	ANDERSON COUNTY (King Hall Music)	Chad Cooke Band	1573	181	13	17	18	JACKSON (Independent)	Kaitlin Butts	1277	288
4	9	13	STARTS IN A BAR (Independent)	Casey Donahew	1558	230	14	12	23	NOTHING GOOD HAPPENS AFTER MIDNIGHT (Independent)	Scotty Alexander	1271	101
5	6	18	DIE RUNNIN' (Independent)	Mike Ryan	1532	55	15	15	20	PICKET FENCES (Independent)	The Wilder Blue	1203	137
6	8	17	LONELY GIRL (Independent)	Cody Canada & The Departed	1460	78	16	18	16	GOOD SIDE (Independent)	The Great Divide	1162	215
7	11	21	THREE PEOPLE (ME, JIM BEAM AND YOU) (Independent)	Sundance Head	1378	207	17	21	13	MOUNTAIN SONG (Independent)	Flatland Cavalry	1024	152
8	3	20	THE OLD MAN SAID (Independent)	Aaron Watson	1369	-227	18	27	7	FAST CAR (Independent)	Randy Rogers Band	1010	327
9	13	13	BEERS WE AIN'T DRANK YET (Fool Hearted)	Jon Wolfe	1360	192	19	19	22	BREAKIN' IN THESE BOOTS (Independent)	Holly Tucker	1001	77
10	10	19	BAD MEDICINE (Independent)	Whiskey Myers	1358	70	20	20	15	DAMN THIS HEART OF MINE (Independent)	William Beckmann	982	70

Texas Regional Radio Report Top 100 is compiled from weekly online playlist reports from 86 radio stations located in Texas and surrounding states, including reports from specialty shows, internet and satellite radio outlets. Songs are ranked by total plays. For tracking, complete chart methodology and more information, visit www.texasregionalradio.com, or contact Dave Smith at 972-252-8777. Copyright 2023, Texas Regional Radio Report

billboard Country Airplay

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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
1	1	35	WHAT MY WORLD SPINS AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	31.036	+1.166	7532	99	1
2	4	20	THANK GOD Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown With Katelyn Brown	28.895	+2.184	7149	483	2
3	2	32	WHISKEY ON YOU Arista Nashville	Nate Smith	28.462	+0.622	7100	222	3
4	3	32	YOU PROOF Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	26.249	-0.667	5762	-117	6
5	5	33	SHE HAD ME AT HEADS CAROLINA Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	24.818	-1.482	5490	-382	7
6	8	50	PICK ME UP Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Gabby Barrett	24.763	+2.847	6652	834	4
7	9	12	THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	23.709	+2.210	6068	716	5
8	11	14	GOING, GOING, GONE River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	21.187	+2.314	5241	362	9
9	6	47	SON OF A SINNER Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	20.198	-4.618	5086	-1149	10
10	10	27	THAT'S WHAT TEQUILA DOES Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	19.591	+0.451	5328	84	8
11	12	36	HEART LIKE A TRUCK Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	17.733	+1.285	4972	308	11
12	13	22	WAIT IN THE TRUCK Broken Bow/Big Loud	HARDY Featuring Lainey Wilson	16.529	+1.195	4382	242	13
13	15	31	WHAT HE DIDN'T DO Big Machine	Carly Pearce	16.432	+1.774	4595	336	12
14	16	24	HANDLE ON YOU MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	15.660	+1.441	4095	295	14
15	18	15	ROCK AND A HARD PLACE Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	14.584	+1.989	3804	557	16
16	17	61	YOU DIDN'T BMLG	Brett Young	14.258	+0.040	3944	42	15
17	19	26	GOLD Capitol Nashville	Dierks Bentley	12.991	+0.486	3514	83	17
18	20	25	WILD AS HER Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	11.322	+0.392	3390	90	18
19	21	23	NO BODY Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Blake Shelton	9.023	+0.282	2783	80	19
20	23	31	WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	8.962	+0.519	2682	142	21
21	22	28	BROWN EYES BABY Hit Red/Capitol Nashville	Keith Urban	8.877	+0.270	2648	52	22
22	24	33	HUMAN CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson	8.860	+0.949	2779	214	20
23	25	20	HOW IT OUGHTA BE Harpeth 60/BMLG	Shane Profitt	6.820	+0.560	2399	198	23
24	26	27	YOU Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	5.639	+0.082	1955	95	25
25	27	43	GOOD DAY FOR LIVING Quartz Hill	Joe Nichols	5.429	+0.415	2163	108	24
26	28	19	IT MATTERS TO HER Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery	4.652	+0.659	1899	233	26
27	32	29	SOMETHING IN THE ORANGE Belting Bronco/WAR	Zach Bryan	4.000	+0.435	1429	104	30
28	30	12	HATE MY HEART Capitol Nashville	Carrie Underwood	3.908	+0.178	1392	232	31
29	31	26	Y'ALL LIFE Monument	Walker Hayes	3.751	+0.060	1589	-17	27
30	33	21	GIRL IN MINE Stoney Creek	Parmalee	3.610	+0.400	1389	68	32

COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART LEGEND

RANKINGS

Country Airplay is ranked by total audience impressions for the week ending Sunday based on monitored airplay by Mediabase of 145 stations by Luminate. Audience totals on the chart are derived, in part, using certain Nielsen Audio-copyrighted Persons 12+ audience estimates (under license © 2023, Nielsen Audio). The list of all Country Airplay chart reporters can be viewed in Luminate's online platform.

TIES

On Country Airplay, if two songs are tied in audience, the song with the larger increase in audience is placed first.

BULLETS

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles gaining audience or remaining flat from the previous week. A song will also receive a bullet if its percentage loss in audience does not exceed the percentage of monitored station downtime for the format. Titles that decline in audience but increase in detections will also receive a bullet if the total audience erosion for the week does not exceed 3%.

RECURRENTS

On Country Airplay, descending titles below No. 10 in either audience or detections are moved to recurrent after 20 weeks, provided that they are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or if they rank below No. 10 and post a third consecutive week of (non-bulletheaded) audience decline, regardless of total chart weeks. Plus, songs that ascend to a peak between Nos. 1 and 5 will remain on the chart for one additional week even if dropping below No. 10.

HOT SHOT DEBUT

Awarded to the highest-ranking new entry on Country Airplay.

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

Most Increased Audience on Country Airplay lists the songs with the greatest week-to-week increases in total audience.

AIRPOWER

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles ranking inside top 20 in plays and audience rankings for the first time, with increases in both plays and audience.

BREAKER

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles achieving airplay (at least one detection) at 60% of reporting stations for the first time.

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billboard Country Airplay

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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	39	8	DANCIN' IN THE COUNTRY Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	3.384	+0.704	1189	261	36
32	35	38	EVERYTHING SHE AIN'T Songs & Daughters/Pegasus/Big Loud	Hailey Whitters	3.310	+0.325	1360	136	33
33	34	43	NOT TO SELF Magnolia Music	Randy Houser	3.184	+0.077	1558	14	28
34	36	51	SON OF A Riser House	Dillon Carmichael	3.083	+0.181	1546	62	29
35	38	27	DOING LIFE WITH ME EMI Nashville	Eric Church	2.969	+0.282	1330	97	35
36	40	16	YOUR HEART OR MINE Capitol Nashville	Jon Pardi	2.747	+0.424	872	46	39
37	41	9	TENNESSEE ORANGE Megan Moroney/Columbia/Arista Nashville	Megan Moroney	2.713	+0.426	829	84	40
38	42	3	MEMORY LANE Arista Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	Old Dominion	2.679	+0.637	743	332	41
39	37	31	MAN MADE RECORDS Nashville	Matt Stell	2.649	-0.139	1346	-25	34
40	44	16	SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING I'D DO Stoney Creek	Drake Milligan	1.953	+0.060	664	0	43
41	43	18	EXCUSES Combustion/Wheelhouse	Kolby Cooper	1.937	-0.051	887	-49	38
42	45	18	CAN'T HAVE MINE Curb	Dylan Scott	1.863	+0.050	915	44	37
43	47	11	YOU, ME, & WHISKEY Valory	Justin Moore & Priscilla Block	1.734	+0.315	705	85	42
44	49	7	WE GOT HISTORY Riser House/Columbia Nashville	Mitchell Tenpenny	1.522	+0.261	502	85	49
45	46	11	HEAVEN BY THEN Valory	Brantley Gilbert And Blake Shelton Featuring Vince Gill	1.495	+0.052	617	19	44
46	50	21	WORTH A SHOT RCA/Columbia Nashville	Elle King Featuring Dierks Bentley	1.331	+0.111	613	30	45
47	NEW		NEED A FAVOR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek ★★ Hot Shot Debut ★★	Jelly Roll	1.218	+0.864	354	241	57
48	NEW		LOOKING FOR YOU RCA Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	Chris Young	1.034	+1.034	400	400	53
49	51	3	UP THERE DOWN HERE Big Loud	Jake Owen	1.014	+0.016	404	24	52
50	55	10	IF HE WANTED TO HE WOULD EMI Nashville	Kylie Morgan	1.004	+0.127	455	6	50
51	52	3	IF YOU GO DOWN (I'M GOING DOWNTOO) Black River	Kelsea Ballerini	0.921	-0.020	514	17	46
52	57	7	TAKE IT SLOW Valory	Conner Smith	0.879	+0.059	506	49	47
53	48	13	OVER FOR YOU Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Morgan Evans	0.867	-0.462	331	-133	60
54	53	10	I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE Columbia Nashville	Maren Morris	0.860	-0.076	318	20	-
55	RE-ENTRY		OKLAHOMA BREAKDOWN Show Dog Nashville	Toby Keith	0.850	+0.162	503	55	48
56	56	6	HOW YOU MAKE A MAN Broken Bow	Craig Morgan	0.745	-0.080	331	-25	59
57	NEW		GOD GAVE ME A GIRL Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	0.741	+0.152	426	68	51
58	60	2	FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH Bad Realm/Atlantic	BRELAND	0.722	+0.024	335	-4	58
59	58	24	NEVERTIL NOW Back Blocks/BMLG/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke + Brett Young	0.652	-0.151	384	-64	55
60	59	7	TRY LOSING ONE Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Tyler Braden	0.645	-0.118	278	-45	-



Blake Shelton and Ryman Hospitality broke ground on Jan. 19 for Ole Red Las Vegas, which is projected to open in late 2023 at the corner of Las Vegas Boulevard and Flamingo Road. Celebrating from left: Shelton and former contestants from NBC's *The Voice*, Colton Swon and Zach Swon of The Swon Brothers and Wendy Moten.



Ingrid Andress (left) hung out with fellow artists Julie Williams (center) and Brittney Spencer during a CMT Next Women of Country unveiling on Jan. 17 at City Winery Nashville.

DENISE TRUSCELLO

CATHERINE POWELL/GETTY IMAGES



WOMEN IN MUSIC

On February 25th, *Billboard* will publish its highly anticipated Women in Music special issue, featuring top women in the music industry who are creating excitement and making their mark across labels, publishing and touring.

Coinciding with the issue, *Billboard's* Women in Music awards ceremony will be held March 1st. This event will bring together music's most prominent female artists and the industry's top female business executives to recognize and celebrate their achievements.

Take this opportunity to congratulate the most powerful and talented women in music and wish them continued success.

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NASHVILLE & NATIONAL TOM ROLAND



Lady A's Hillary Scott walked the red carpet at a Jan. 19 Grammy nominees party at Nashville's Hutton Hotel with for King & Country — Joel Smallbone (left) and Luke Smallbone — after qualifying for best contemporary Christian music performance/song for their collaboration on "For God Is With Us."

LIZ ROSE IS HALL-BOUND

Nashville composer **Liz Rose** ("Girl Crush," "You Belong With Me") was named a 2023 inductee in the Songwriters Hall of Fame on Jan. 18, part of a contingent that includes **Snoop Dogg**, **Gloria Estefan** and **ELO** founder **Jeff Lynne**.

Rose joins a number of country-centric full-time writers who already occupy a place in the New York-based Hall, including **Harlan Howard** ("Busted," "Why Not Me"), **Bobby Braddock** ("He Stopped Loving Her Today," "People Are Crazy"), **Don Schlitz** ("The Gambler," "On the Other Hand") and **Felice and Boudleaux Bryant** ("Rocky Top," "Bye Bye Love").

Country singer-songwriters with membership in the Hall include **Willie Nelson**, **Dolly Parton**, **Toby Keith**, **Loretta Lynn**, **Kris Kristofferson**, **Alan Jackson**, **Bill Anderson** and **Tom T. Hall**.

When Rose is officially inducted on June 15 in New York, she'll be accompanied in the class by two others who have earned country hits as writers, even though the genre is not their primary field. Lynne co-wrote the **Roy Orbison** single "You Got It," and **Glen Ballard**—whose hit list includes **Alanis Morissette**'s "Ironic," **Wilson Phillips**' "Hold On" and **Michael Jackson**'s "Man in the Mirror"—also authored **George Strait**'s "You Look So Good in Love."

RADIO & RECORDS®

River House hired **Lauren Branson** as vp of publicity after eight years as BMI Nashville senior director of media relations. Reach her [here](#) beginning Jan. 23... Warner Music Nashville co-presidents **Ben Kline** and **Cris Lacy** officially added co-chair to their titles... Dreamcatcher Artists hired promotion manager **Annie Brooks**. She previously held the same title with Triple Tigers. Reach her [here](#)... Singer-songwriter **Ryan Larkins** signed a recording contract with **Jay DeMarcus**' Red Street Country... Singer-songwriter **Brei Carter** joined the roster at Brown Lee Entertainment, with distribution through The Orchard... **John Coinman**, band leader for **Kevin Costner & Modern West**, signed as a recording artist with Creative and Dreams Music Network... **WKML** Fayetteville, N.C., promoted **Sarah Weaver** to PD from assistant PD... **Renee Castle** joined the morning team at **WGKX** Memphis. She arrives from **WKLB** Boston, where she handled the night shift... **Rick Thomas** started Jan. 17 as Beasley/Tampa-St. Petersburg (Fla.) brand manager. The post includes the PD role at country **WQYK**. Thomas was previously PD for top 40 **WWST** Knoxville, Tenn... Beasley/Philadelphia welcomed web presence director **Jim Antes**, with country **WXTU** among his responsibilities. The job also entails station manager for top 40 **WJBR** Wilmington, Del. Antes spent the last three years as Townsquare/Monmouth-Ocean County, N.J., market president/content officer... Cumulus/Tucson, Ariz., flipped midday personalities at two of its stations, with **Bobbi Pereyda** taking the role at country **KIIM**. Former KIIM midday talent **Krystal Pino** fills Pereyda's previous midday position at classic hip-hop **KSZR**... Beasley Media/Charlotte (N.C.) appointed **Suzanne Carroll** as general sales manager, with country **WSOC** among her portfolio. She arrives from the Audacy corporate sales acceleration team... United Stations added

chief revenue officer **Eric Romero**, RadioInk.com reported. He had operated as Futbol de Primera senior director of network sales... **Scott Langley** claimed the **WQIK** Jacksonville, Fla., PD position, according to RadioInsight.com. He will remain a member of the syndicated **Elvis Duran** morning team... **Duane Shannon** and **Abby Summers** were hired as afternoon hosts for **WLFP** Memphis, RadioInsight.com reported. It marks a return to the market, where they used to host mornings for **WGKX**. In the interim, the husband-and-wife team appeared in mornings at **WIXY** Champaign-Urbana, Ill., a shift they will continue to maintain... Country Radio Broadcasters has instituted a reduced \$199 unemployment rate to attend the Country Radio Seminar March 13-15 in Nashville. Student passes are discounted to \$149.

'ROUND THE ROW

Krista Farmer-Dykes will conclude an eight-year stint as Country Music Association manager of media relations on Feb. 24 to launch her *Secret Mom Hacks* podcast and focus on her voiceover career. Reach her [here](#)... Jody Williams Songs hired creative coordinator **Tenasie Courtwright**. She transitions from Simple Logistics Solutions, where she served as a brand ambassador. Reach her [here](#)... The Neal Agency welcomed **Adi Sharma** as co-head. He was formerly a music agent for WME. Concurrently, Neal added four acts to its booking roster, including **Bailey Zimmerman**... **Trisha Yearwood**'s eponymous company appointed **Mandy McCormack** executive vp of marketing and partner strategy, segueing from Pearl Records/Team TY senior vp of radio promotion and marketing. Reach McCormack [here](#)... The Canadian Country Music Association added four members to its board of directors: **Melissa Cameron-Passley** (Kilometre Music Group), **Madelaine Napoleone** (Warner Music Canada), **Joelle Proulx** (Agence Ranch) and **Julia Rambeau Smith** (MRG Group)... Warner Chappell Nashville signed a new deal with **Missi Gallimore**'s Truth or Dare Publishing, partnering in the process with a number of writers represented by her company, including **Sam Williams**, **Abbey Cone** and **Track45**'s **KK Johnson**... Former Warner Music Nashville singer-songwriter **Troy Cartwright** agreed to a co-publishing contract with Big Machine Music... Riser House act **Meghan Patrick** tabbed Make Wake Artists for management and pacted with WME for concert booking... CAA Music Nashville co-founder **John Huie** was named a recipient of the CMA touring lifetime achievement award. **Keith Urban** will present the trophy during a Jan. 30 awards event... Five established musicians who formed **Cimarron 615** signed to KZZ Music, with Jan. 27 set for the release of the band's debut single, "High Lonesome Stranger." The lineup consists of **Tom Hampton** (**Marshall Tucker Band**), **Bill Lloyd** (**Foster & Lloyd**, **Ringo Starr**), **Rick Lonow** (**Loretta Lynn**, **The Flying Burrito Brothers**), **Jack Sundrud** (**Vince Gill**, **Great Plains**) and **Michael Webb** (**Hank Williams Jr.**, **John Fogerty**)... PickleJar donated \$5,000 to the Randy Travis Foundation during a Jan. 17 performance at the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum that was headlined by **Thompson Square**... Former Belmont University Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business dean **Doug Howard** donated \$100,000 to establish an endowed scholarship program to assist a student with a minimum 3.0 GPA... The SOURCE Hall of Fame Awards recognizing women in Nashville's music community will host its annual trophy ceremony on Aug. 29 at the Musicians Hall of Fame and Museum. ●



Tucker Wetmore agreed to a publishing and artist development deal with Back Blocks Music, announced Jan. 11. He's flanked by BMI Nashville executive director/writer/publisher relations **Leslie Roberts** (left) and Back Blocks founder **Rakiyah Marshall**.

MAKIN' TRACKS TOM ROLAND tom.roland@billboard.com

Expect The Unexpected In New Chris Young Single 'Looking For You'

Surprise!

Chris Young's "Looking for You" — which RCA Nashville released to country radio via PlayMPE on Jan. 12 — traverses familiar subject matter for the singer, set in the same sort of nightclub that has provided the focal point for "Lonely Eyes," "Neon" and the **Mitchell Tenpenny** duet "At the End of a Bar." But the results are not what one would expect.

For starters, despite a widespread belief that lasting relationships can't be found in a bar, "Looking" celebrates a guy who discovered a longtime love when he wasn't actually seeking one in a night spot. Additionally, the song takes a surprising turn at the end of the chorus, injecting a chord that normally wouldn't work and stamping it with a decidedly unusual melodic twist.

"It feels unexpected," Young says. "And it's one of the reasons I love the song so much."

"Looking for You" got started while his co-writers were waiting for Young on May 22, 2022, at the Middle Tennessee home studio of songwriter-producer **Chris DeStefano** ("From the Ground Up," "Something in the Water"). **James McNair** ("Lovin' On You," "Going, Going, Gone") had the "Looking for You" title, accompanied by a plot that contrasts with the similar-sounding title of **Johnny Lee's** "Lookin' for Love." Where the guy in Lee's *Urban Cowboy* classic had spent much of his life searching for romance "in all the wrong places," the protagonist in McNair's idea wasn't looking at all.

"I remember him kind of disclaiming it," says **Emily Weisband** ("Jealous of Myself," "All for You"). "It's not going to blow your mind," she recalls McNair saying. "But it could be a great, uptempo country vibe. I think it might be something."

They fashioned it primarily as a two-chord country song, building off the "Looking for You" title with a series of single-guy pursuits, including "looking for a feeling," "looking for an up-all-night-long" and "looking for a sunrise leading to a sunset."

The chorus was half finished when Young arrived. That part of the melody relied on syncopated waterfall intervals to cast a sense of adventure, but it needed a change in direction to bring it home. After mostly alternating between the tonic chord and the four chord up to that point, DeStefano took a risk. He lobbed a hit-or-miss four-minor chord, one that would either be a musical goldmine or a sonic train wreck.

"It's a little bit of a one-bullet gun," he says. "Sometimes I'll just kind of throw it out there and see if it feels right, if everybody in the room is digging it, because it's a commitment. In that situation, everybody was like, 'Oh, we've got to do that.' So it was like, 'OK, I trust y'all. Let's do it.'"

The minor chord changed what would typically be an E note to an E-flat — only a half-step difference, but that small alteration created a significant misdirection. Young fitted a melody to the new section, landing directly on that E-flat, the very note that changed the song's course. It created an enormous amount of musical tension.

But it also arrived at the perfect time for the song's message, following a "right out of the blue" lyric with an out-of-the-blue sonic flow.

"A lot of songs will end on a 'ta-da,' you know — a major chord, and you're like, 'Oh, there's the hook. There it is,'" says McNair. "But this one ends on

kind of a half 'ta-da,' where you're kind of hanging on the edge."

They had said pretty much everything that needed to be said with that maneuver — the words and the music both yelled, "Surprise!" — so they kept the song's lyrics to a minimum. When they reached the bridge, instead of introducing any new vocabulary, they borrowed two lines from the pre-chorus near the beginning of the song and paired them with one more four-minor chord, repeating the tension caused by that simple E-flat.

"You do something once, it could be an accident," DeStefano says. "You do it twice, it's intentional."

The song was mostly written before DeStefano started building a track to support it, but that happened quickly. He didn't just develop a demo: He created almost the entire final master before his co-writers left.

"People don't realize just how good he is unless you've been in a room with him," says Young. "He's probably top five — one of the fastest editors on ProTools that I've ever seen. Just on the fly, he's laying stuff down, so by the time that we're done writing it, it is done. And that's not to say that he's just sitting there building the track. He's coming up with melodies, coming up with guitar parts, interjecting lyrics. He's an all-around [talent]."

DeStefano established a pulsing foundation, alternating — sometimes combining — guitar, programmed keyboards and/or banjo to evolve the sound underneath the melody even as the beat moved forward. He also played a short guitar solo that used a series of flatted notes, complementing the attitude from the four-minor chord.

Weisband tossed in harmonies and some ad-libs to support Young's lead vocal, with one of those off-the-cuff ideas forming what became a key musical hook. DeStefano pitch-shifted that phrase into a higher octave,

generating a sort of electronic **Mariah Carey** sound.

"I sound like a little alien on there," Weisband jokes.

Juxtaposed with Young's lead vocal, the effect brings contrasting elements together in a unique way.

"She's got an amazing voice, and she has a lot of pop sensibility," says McNair. "His tone is such a rich, country, smooth tone. Mixed with her, the blend of those was really cool."

The waterfall chorus melody and the tense E-flat in the four-minor chord are unusual enough that they'll likely challenge fans who sing along with "Looking for You," though in Young's experience, repetition solves that issue.

"I ended up singing the song the entire day of the video shoot over and over and over," he says. "So it's just ingrained in my head."

The song's inherent surprises invariably won over Young and his associates, and RCA Nashville made it the lead single from his forthcoming project. "Looking for You" will go for adds on Jan. 23.

"I loved it, and then the label loved it and other songwriter friends of mine that I played it for loved it," says Young. "It was like the same response every time because when they got to the end of that chorus, everybody was like, 'Ah, that's cool.'"

Not a shock, since most people like surprises. But it confirmed for Young that the risks in "Looking for You" were likely to pay off: "That's what I needed to hear." ●



YOUNG

billboard Country Airplay Index

TITLE Publishing-Licensing Org.
(Songwriter) **Chart Position**

B

BROWN EYES BABY WC Music Corp., ASCAP/
Music Of The Corn, ASCAP/Warner-Tamela Publishing
Corp., BMI/Speakers Go Boom Music, SOCAN/Quivira
Road Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/NVZ Music,
BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Big Loud Mountain,
BMI/Bo Wallace Publishing, BMI (W.Bundy, R.Clawson,
J.Thompson, M.Wallen) **21**

C

CAN'T HAVE MINE Curb Songs, ASCAP/
Curb Congregation Songs, SESAC/Good Vibes, Good
Times Music, SESAC/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/
EbachEntertainmentFam, BMI/Songs Of Riser House,
BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI (D.Scott, M.Alderman, J.Melton,
D.Wilson) **42**

D

DANCIN' IN THE COUNTRY T Tree Music, BMI/
Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/EMI Blackwood
Music Inc., BMI/Iris In The Sky With Diamonds, BMI/
Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Cuts Like A Nite Music,
SESAC/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/MAROMA Music, BMI
(T.R.Hubbard, R.Copperman, J.M.Nite, K.Urban) **31**

DOING LIFE WITH ME Sony Tree Publishing,
BMI/Longer And Louder Music, BMI/Seven Ring Circus
Songs, BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/Speakers Go Boom
Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Jeffrey Steele Music,
BMI (E.Church, C.Beathard, Jeffrey Steele) **35**

E

EVERYTHING SHE AIN'T WC Music Corp.,
ASCAP/Pegasus, ASCAP/Cockeyed Hat Music, BMI/Harolds
Purple Heart Music, BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs
Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (H.Whitters,
B.Simpson, R.Jynedell) **32**

EXCUSES Songs Of Combustion Five, ASCAP/
Me Gusta Music, ASCAP/Hell Write Songs, BMI/Sony Tree
Publishing, BMI/940 Songs, BMI (K.Cooper, Brett Tyler,
J.Walker) **41**

F

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH Pen Point Guard
Music, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/Big Loud Mountain,
BMI/Round Hill Works, BMI/Mustaine Music, BMI/
Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy,
Can I Get A Number, BMI/Songs Of Universal,
Inc., BMI/Jimmy Sad Publishing, BMI/Long And Curly
Entertainment, BMI (D.G.Breland, R.H.Block, J.R.Durrett,
G.James) **58**

G

GIRL IN MINE 33 Creative, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/
Sony Countryside, BMI/My Time Was Music, BMI/Sony
Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain
Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Concord Copyrights,
BMI/These Are Pulse Songs, BMI/Creative Pulse Music,
BMI/Track & Feels Publishing, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp.,
SESAC/Tape Room Publishing, SESAC (D.Fanning, M.Thomas,
A.G.Gorley, T.Wood, C.Brown) **30**

GOD GAVE ME A GIRL Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/
Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Michael Scott
Paper Company Publishing Company, ASCAP/Songs
Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Music, BMI/Round
Hill Songs III, ASCAP/Foxwood Entertainment Group
Music Division, ASCAP/Big Loud Mountain Music, ASCAP (R.
Dickerson, A.G.Gorley, C.McGill, L.Crowell) **51**

GOING, GOING, GONE Songs Of Universal, Inc.,
BMI/Booted Lyrics, BMI/Keep Choppin Publishing, BMI/
Exit 183 Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Young
Man Publishing, BMI (L.Combs, R.Fulcher, J.McNair) **8**

GOLD EMI Blackwood Music Inc., BMI/Iris In The Sky
With Diamonds, BMI/Emileon Songs, BMI/Little Louder
Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America,
Inc., BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Caleb's
College Fund, ASCAP/Daytime, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs
Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP (R.Copperman, C.L.Dick,
A.G.Gorley, D.Bentley) **17**

GOOD DAY FOR LIVING Spirit Two Nashville,
ASCAP/Spirit Vault Songs, ASCAP/Yes/Yes/All, BMI/Mason
Gannon Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing
America, Inc., BMI/Revelry Music, BMI (D.Cohen, B.Harrick,
N.Mason) **25**

H

HANDLE ON YOU Warner-Tamela Publishing
Corp., BMI/Parkmac Publishing, BMI/Spirit Nashville
One Crescendo, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid, BMI/Rust And
Chrome Music, BMI (P.McCollum, M.Criswell) **14**

HATE MY HEART Carrie-Okie Music, BMI/Spirit
Two Nashville, ASCAP/4TheKidz Music, ASCAP/Spirit
Vault Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative
Music Group, BMI/Redneck Music, BMI/Concord
Sounds, ASCAP/410 Music, ASCAP (C.Underwood, D.A.Garcia,
M.W.Hardy, H.Lindsey) **28**

HEART LIKE A TRUCK Sony Accent, ASCAP/
Sony Countryside, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/
Songs Of Wild Cat Well Music, BMI (L.Wilson, D.Wilson,
T.Anderson) **11**

HEAVEN BY THEN Warner-Tamela Publishing
Corp., BMI/Indiana Angel Music, BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy,
BMI/Sullivan S Guns Music, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/
Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing,
BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Redneck Music, BMI/
Reservoir 416, BMI/Wake And Jake Music, BMI/Big
Digger Songs, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Nontypical
Music, ASCAP/Who Wants To Buy My Publishing, ASCAP
(G.Berlynt, B.Berryhill, M.W.Hardy, J.Mitchell, R.Montana, H.Phelps,
I.Phillips) **45**

HOW IT OUGHTA BE Anthem Music Publishing
BMI/Old Town Music Publishing, BMI/Tennessee
Backwoods Music, BMI/Fraser Made Music, BMI/WC
Music Corp., ASCAP/KIM Music Publishing, ASCAP/
Mitchell Marlow Music, ASCAP (S.Proffit, D.Frasier, Mitch
Oglesby) **23**

HOW YOU MAKE A MAN Torches And
Pitchforks Music, BMI/Dandy Lines Music, BMI/Shore
Hits Music, BMI/Big Write Play, BMI/Hipnosis Beats,
BMI/Angry Mob Music, ASCAP/DAG Demolition Music
Publishing, ASCAP (M.Conner, S.Black, M.Walton) **56**

HUMAN BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Heytone Music,
ASCAP/She And I, LLC, BMI/Songs Of Mighty Isis Music,
BMI/It's Killer Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music
Publishing America, Inc., BMI (T.Lane, J.Meadows) **22**

I

I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE Songs Of
Universal, Inc., BMI/Heroes And Halos Music, BMI/Big
Music Machine, BMI/The Buffalo Catalogue, BMI/Kurstin
Music, ASCAP/EMI April Music, Inc., ASCAP (M.Morris,
R.Hurd, G.Kurstin) **54**

IF HE WANTED TO HE WOULD Songs Of
Smack Blue, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing
America, Inc., BMI/Bad Angel Entertainment, BMI/Ben
There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing
Group, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Round Hill
Compositions, BMI (K.Morgan, S.Holup, B.Johnson) **50**

**IF YOU GO DOWN (I'M GOING DOWN
TOO)** Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Feel Your
Way, Through Publishing, ASCAP/Music Of Big Family,
BMI/Dragon Bunny Music, BMI/Smackwood Music, GMR/
Tempo Investments-Smack Hits, GMR/Warner Geo Met
Ric Music, GMR (K.Balmer, J.C.Bunetta, S.McAnally) **51**

IT MATTERS TO HER Songs Of Universal, Inc.,
BMI/Dagum Music, BMI/Songs With Words, That Rhyme
With Tricky, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp.,
BMI/Little Brocephus Music, BMI (S.C.McCreery, L.T.Miller,
R.Akins) **26**

L

LOOKING FOR YOU Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/
Sir Reginald The Fifth, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing,
ASCAP/Monsters Hate Puppies Publishing, ASCAP/
Young Man Publishing, BMI/WersOwl, ASCAP (C.Young, C.
DeStefano, J.McNair, E.L.Weisband) **48**

M

MAN MADE Melodies Of Sea Gayle Music, SESAC/
Brett Shero Publishing, SESAC/Still Working For The
Woman, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC,
ASCAP (B.Shero, I.Christian) **39**

MEMORY LANE WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Bird And
Bean Music, ASCAP/Iwelveag dogwood, ASCAP/Trevor's
Advocate Publishing, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp.,
ASCAP/Jurs And Chorus, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/
Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI (R.Ramsey, T.Rosen,
B.F.Tursi, J.J.Dillon) **38**

N

NEED A FAVOR Austin Nivarel Publishing, ASCAP/
BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing,
ASCAP/Rob Ragosta Publishing Designee, BMI/Bailee's
Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI (A.A.Ware,
J.Ragosta, R.Ragosta, J.B.DeFord) **47**

NEVER TILL NOW Big Loud Mountain, BMI/
Back Block Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/
Rounding Third Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela
Publishing Corp., BMI (A.Cooke, M.Roy) **59**

NO BODY Big Loud Proud Songs, ASCAP/Ertie Bird
Expressions, ASCAP/Ford Drives A Chevy, BMI/ikigai
Music, ASCAP/Round Hill Compositions, BMI/Round Hill
Songs BLS JV, ASCAP/Shirt At Work, BMI/Sony Cross Keys
Publishing, ASCAP (C.Tompkins, J.Kear, R.Clawson) **19**

NOTE TO SELF EMI Blackwood Music Inc., BMI/Iris
In The Sky With Diamonds, BMI/Little Britches Music,
BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/Seven Ring Circus Songs,
BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc.,
BMI/Sea Gayle Tavern Houses Music, BMI/Songs Of Ole I
Paso, BMI (R.Houser, R.Copperman, C.Beathard, B.Pinson) **33**

O

OKLAHOMA BREAKDOWN Hosstone Music,
ASCAP (M.Hosty) **55**

OVER FOR YOU Artist Publishing Group West,
ASCAP/LiveMadLove, ASCAP/SongsbyME, BMI/Sony
Ballad, BMI/Tim Sommers Publishing Designee, BMI/
Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (G.Warburton,
M.E.Love, M.Evans, T.Sommers) **53**

P

PICK ME UP Iris In The Sky With Diamonds, BMI/
EMI Blackwood Music Inc., BMI/GBF Music Global, BMI/
Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Sony Timber Publishing,
SESAC/Cuts Like A Nite Music, SESAC (G.Barrett, J.M.Nite,
R.Copperman) **6**

R

ROCK AND A HARD PLACE Songs In The Key
Of Black, BMI/ivill Music, BMI/Vacant Heart Publishing,
BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Speakers
Go Boom Music, SOCAN/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI (H.
Warren, J.Hackworth, J.Harvey) **15**

S

SHE HAD ME AT HEADS CAROLINA Be
A Light Publishing, BMI/Colleen Rainey Music, BMI/EMI
Blackwood Music Inc., BMI/Roc Nation WC Publishing
Designee, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Telemityr
Rhythm House Music, BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/
WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Warner-Tamela Publishing
Corp., BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Michael
Scott Paper Company Publishing Company, ASCAP
(A.G.Gorley, C.Swindell, J.Frasier, M.D.Sanders, Thomas Rhett,
T.Nichols) **5**

SOMETHING IN THE ORANGE Zach Lane
Bryan Publishing Designee, BMI/Warner-Tamela
Publishing Corp., BMI (Z.L.Bryan) **27**

SON OF A Riser House Tunes, SESAC/Sony Lakeview,
SESAC/Pamblily Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela
Publishing Corp., BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/
Seven Ring Circus Songs, BMI (D.Carmichael, P.O'Donnell,
C.Beathard) **34**

SON OF A SINNER Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG
Platinum Songs US, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/
Big Loud Mountain, BMI/Ern Dog Music, BMI/Melody
Market, BMI (J.B.DeFord, E.K.Smith, D.R.Stevens) **9**

SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING I'D DO Sony
Countryside, BMI/Marzia Music, BMI/DESTON SONG
JAYCE, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Stalefish
Music, BMI/Music Of Big Deal, BMI/HonkAndHouse
Of Hits, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI (D.Milligan, B.Beavers,
T.A.McBride) **40**

T

TAKE IT SLOW Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/
Songs Of Miller Crow, BMI/Someowners Music, BMI/
Rounding Hill Compositions, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/
The Buffalo Catalogue, BMI/Mark Trussell Music, ASCAP/
Future Heartbeat Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp.,
ASCAP (C.Smith, R.Hurd, M.Trussell) **52**

TENNESSEE ORANGE Georgiamo Music, SESAC/
Reservoir 416, BMI/33 Creative, BMI/Bone Bone Creative,
BMI/Major Bob Music, Inc., ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing,
BMI (M.Moroney, D.Fanning, P.Jenkins, B.Williams) **37**

THANK GOD Feels Like Friday Music, SESAC/
Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Kyle Fishman
Music, BMI/Play It Again Entertainment, BMI/Goat Island
Palms, LLC, BMI/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Chorus
2 Music, SESAC/Blunts And Bonfires Music, SESAC/Songs
Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Jaded
Muffins Music, BMI/Dead Aim Music, BMI (C.D.Stalenecker,
K.A.Hisman, J.Free, J.Hoge, J.Mullins) **2**

THAT'S WHAT TEQUILA DOES Triple Play
Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/
Songs Of Double Down Music, BMI/High Noon Yellow
Stars Music, BMI/Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/BMG Gold
Songs, ASCAP/rtsncomusic, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs
US, BMI/Cona Blue Music, BMI (J.Morgan, J.Edwards,
T.Kennedy, K.M.Allison) **10**

THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW Big
Loud Mountain, BMI/Bo Wallace Publishing, BMI/A Boy
Named Ford, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp.,
BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing, BMI
(M.Wallen, N.Galjon, M.Lambert) **7**

TRY LOSING ONE Anthem Music Publishing I,
BMI/Mike Curb Music, BMI/Pump House Anthem, BMI/Hit
Songs Of 50 Egg Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/
Twangville Music, BMI/Tyler Braden Music, BMI (A.Wood,
B.Davis, T.Braden) **60**

U

UP THERE DOWN HERE Warner-Tamela
Publishing Corp., BMI/NATIVE CREATIVE MUSIC, ASCAP/
WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Concord Copyrights, BMI/These
Are Pulse Songs, BMI/Creative Pulse Music, BMI (Z.Dyer,
S.Overstreet, T.Wood) **49**

W

WAIT IN THE TRUCK Sony Tree Publishing,
BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Redneck Music, BMI/
Humerus Publishing Global, BMI/Round Hill Verses
Publishing, BMI/Who Wants To Buy My Publishing,
ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Nontypical Music, ASCAP/
Sony Accent, ASCAP/Pile Of Schmidt Songs, ASCAP/The
Money Tree Vibeaz, ASCAP (M.W.Hardy, H.Phelps, J.M.Schmidt,
R.Blair) **12**

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE Universal Music
Corp., ASCAP/Between the Pines, LLC, ASCAP/Concord
Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC/Hand Your
Hat Hits, SESAC/Miller Crow Music, ASCAP/Round Hill
Songs III, ASCAP/Tempo Investments-Smack Hits, GMR/
Smackwood Music, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music,
GMR/Sony Accent, ASCAP/Smackborne Music, ASCAP
(S.L.Hunt, C.La Corte, S.McAnally, J.Osborne) **20**

WE GOT HISTORY Sony Countryside, BMI/Riser
Ten Music, BMI/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Tackiebox
Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp.,
BMI/Black Jeans Music, BMI/Neon Cross Music, BMI/
Sony Accent, ASCAP/The Money Tree Vibeaz, ASCAP/Pile
Of Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (M.Tenpenny, A.Alibert, D.Dawson,
J.M.Schmidt) **44**

WHAT HE DIDN'T DO Caleb's College Fund,
ASCAP/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP/Songs Of Yellow
Platinum Songs US, BMI/Redfeather Publishing, ASCAP/
For The Kids Gold, ASCAP/BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Sony
Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain
Music, ASCAP (C.Pearce, A.G.Gorley, E.M.Shackleton) **13**

WHAT MY WORLD SPINS AROUND
Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Jordan Davis Music,
ASCAP/Matt Drag Music, ASCAP/Round Hill Songs BLS JV,
ASCAP/Big Loud Proud Songs, ASCAP/Big Music Machine,
BMI/The Buffalo Catalogue, BMI (J.Davis, M.Dragstrom,
R.Huro) **1**

WHISKEY ON YOU Sony Cross Keys Publishing,
ASCAP/Greent Music, ASCAP/EMI Blackwood Music
Inc., BMI/Kcala Tunes, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/
Droptime Music, BMI (M.Smith, L.Rimes, R.Sutton) **3**

WILD AS HER Combustion Music, BMI/Anthem
Music Publishing I, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing
Corp., BMI/Red Creative, BMI/Downtown BMP Songs,
BMI/Big Loud Brett Songs, BMI/Round Hill Compositions,
BMI/Sonorogroceries Music, BMI (M.Wallen, Brett Tyler,
K.Archer) **18**

WORTH A SHOT Tempo Investments-Smack Hits,
GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/EMI Blackwood
Music Inc., BMI/Iris In The Sky With Diamonds, BMI/
Smackwood Music, GMR/Sony Accent, ASCAP/
Smackborne Music, ASCAP (S.McAnally, R.Copperman,
J.Osborne) **46**

Y

Y'ALL LIFE Songs Of Smack, BMI/Spark In Your
Pocket, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Smackworks Music,
SESAC/Follow Me Where I Go, SESAC/Kobalt Music
Publishing America, SESAC/Universal Music Corp.,
ASCAP/Universal Music - MGB Songs, ASCAP/D2 Pro
Publishing, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/King Pen
Songs, SESAC (W.Hayes, P.Good, J.Jenkins, C.Haynes, Jr.,
J.Epperson) **29**

YOU BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/
Buckeye26, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/revnmusic,
ASCAP/Lawtrawrangers, ASCAP (D.Smyers, D.M.Barnes,
J.Reynolds) **24**

YOU DIDN'T Super Big Music, ASCAP/Calville
Publishing, ASCAP/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP/Caleb's
College Fund, ASCAP/IRMS, ASCAP/Pulse Magic, ASCAP/
EMI Foray Music, SESAC/Sony Cross Keys Publishing,
ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP (B.Young,
A.G.Gorley, J.M.Nite, J.Robbins) **16**

YOU, ME, & WHISKEY WC Music Corp., ASCAP/
Where I Started Music Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-
Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy,
BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Anthem Cold Mining
Songs, BMI/Randolph County Music, BMI/Taylor Made
By The Red White And Blue, BMI (J.L.Alexander, B.Berryhill,
C.Taylor) **43**

YOU PROOF Big Loud Mountain, BMI/Bo Wallace
Publishing, BMI/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP/Caleb's
College Fund, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Ern
Dog Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sony Cross Keys
Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp.,
BMI (M.Wallen, A.G.Gorley, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **4**

YOUR HEART OR MINE Songs Of Universal,
Inc., BMI/Honkytonkaholic Music Publishing, BMI/
Universal Tunes, SESAC/Phat Racon, SESAC/Universal
Music Corp., ASCAP/Brumby Cooper Otis Music, ASCAP
(B.Butter, J.Ebach, J.Pierce) **36**

C
O
D
AREWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS35 Years Ago
Kathy Mattea
Went To
No. 1 With
'Gone'In 1988, she scored her first of
four Hot Country Songs leaders

On Jan. 30, 1988, **Kathy Mattea** achieved her first Hot Country Songs No. 1 with "Goin' Gone."

Pat Alger, Bill Dale and Fred Koller co-wrote the song, which was released as the first single from Mattea's LP *Untasted Honey*.

Born June 21, 1959, in Cross Lanes, W. Va., Mattea clearly knew what she was after. In 1978, she set out for Nashville in her '75 Volvo station wagon with a mattress strapped to its roof. She signed her first recording contract in June 1983 with Mercury Nashville, which released her debut single, "Street Talk," shortly after. It hit

No. 25 on Hot Country Songs, while Mattea notched her first of 16 top 10s with "Love at the Five and Dime" in 1986. She added three more leaders in 1988-89 and won the Country Music Association's female vocalist of the year award in 1989 and 1990.

Mattea has been wed to songwriter **Jon Vezner** since 1988, and they reside in Nashville. She has hosted the popular NPR show *Mountain Stage* since September 2021. She is currently touring with co-headliner **Suzy Bogguss**; they will perform in Weirsdale, Fla., on Jan. 28.

—JIM ASKER

Mattea at the 1989
Academy of Country
Music Awards in
Burbank, Calif.

TR	W	LA	2 W	WK	TITLE	ARTIST
W	W	AG	CH	PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	LABEL & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	
1	2	3	16	GOIN' GONE A. REYNOLDS (P. ALGER, B. DALE, F. KOLLER)	★ ★ No. 1 ★ ★ 1 week at No. One	KATHY MATTEA MERCURY 888 874-7/POLYGRAM
2	3	4	14	WHEELS T. DUBOIS, S. HENDRICKS, RESTLESS HEART (D. LOGGINS)		RESTLESS HEART RCA 5280-7
3	6	10	12	TENNESSEE FLAT TOP BOX R. CROWELL (J. CASH)		◆ ROSANNE CASH COLUMBIA 38-07624
4	8	12	14	ONE STEP FORWARD P. WORLEY (C. HILLMAN, B. WILDES)		THE DESERT ROSE BAND MCA/CURB 53201/MCA
5	7	9	16	I'LL PIN A NOTE ON YOUR PILLOW N. LARKIN (C. BERZAS, D. GOODMAN, N. LARKIN)		◆ BILLY JOE ROYAL ATLANTIC AMERICA 7-99404/ATLANTIC
				CRYING SHAME		MICHAEL JOHNSON