

billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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Female Kickstarter Song Suffragettes Grows Its Brand As A Consequential Showcase

When **Lainey Wilson** played Nashville's weekly Song Suffragettes show for the first time in December 2014, the experience was enlightening.

She had moved to Nashville over three years prior, just in time to watch country music shift into the bro-country age, when guys singing about beer parties and bonfires in rural fields made it even more difficult for women to find a place on country radio. Song Suffragettes, a songwriter round specifically for female writer-artists, helped Wilson find a sense of community in a heartbreak town.

"For me, it made me feel like I wasn't alone in Nashville, and it made me feel like there's an army of women who all want the same thing," she recalls. "It's important for us to hold hands and run to the finish line together. That's what it's about. It's about lifting each other up and encouraging each other and telling each other the truth."

The truth is times are still tough for women in music now that bro country is no longer the genre's hot trend. Song Suffragettes, however, is in expansion mode as it celebrates its 10th year as a focused Music City talent showcase. The show launched a monthly London edition in November and will also open a monthly New York version on June 13 at City Winery.

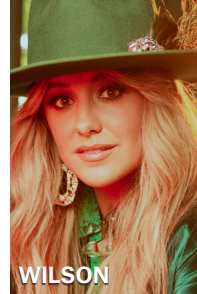
"There has been very little movement in the artistic progress of women in this genre," says Suffragettes president/

founder **Todd Cassetty**. "But you just keep getting up and fighting the fight. I'm always looking for other avenues to expand or to provide opportunities. It's like, can we just grow this so that there are more opportunities [for women], even if the industry is not going to provide them itself?"

It's not like the opportunities are undeserved. Nashville is a magnet for musical talent, and the latest installment — May 22 at The Listening Room, which recently added a second Suffragettes show every Monday night — demonstrated the depth of quality. Six women conveyed their artistic individuality when they performed, with most playing three songs apiece.

Grace Tyler led with a knife-like tone on "Jesus in a Bar," **Ash Ruder** consistently served up original songs with craftsman-like vulnerability — particularly her smart treatment of hand-me-down traits, "Blue Genes" — and first-timer **Audra McLaughlin** impressed even her fellow performers with her **Trisha Yearwood**-like power.

To date, the show has featured over 400 women from among 3,000 applicants. Cassetty says 34 Suffragettes alumna have received recording contracts — including **Carly Pearce**, **Megan Moroney**, **Kelsea Ballerini** and pop artist **GAYLE** — while over 60 have secured publishing deals. Those numbers demonstrate the Suffragettes' value as a launching pad for women.



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WILSON: ALYSSE GAEFKJEN

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“It was one of the first things that I did when I came to town,” **Tenille Arts** notes. “It kind of opened up some doors for me to be able to play. It was really awesome.”

Cassetty’s motivations for starting the Suffragettes are personal. Growing up with ’90s country, he was drawn to the viewpoints expressed by country’s female acts, including **Patty Loveless**, **The Chicks** and **Martina McBride**, and through his production company, HiFi Fusion, he has worked with the likes of **Taylor Swift**, **Carrie Underwood** and **Reba McEntire**. Additionally, he has two daughters and wishes country had a larger swath of feminine role models.

“I don’t feel like they get the same country music female perspective that they would have had and that I enjoyed from the ’90s,” he says. “That’s always been a point of frustration — to see it evolve from songs with real substance to too many beers and trucks.”

Nashville’s music business has taken the issue seriously. CMT celebrates female acts through its Next Women of Country program, and songwriter **Nicolle Galyon** (“Thought You Should Know,” “Beers on Me”) established the female-focused Songs & Daughters label in partnership with Big Loud. Galyon actually signed the first writer to her publishing company, **Tiera Kennedy**, after checking out her performance at Song Suffragettes.

But some old tropes — including the suggestion that female fans don’t want to hear female artists — continue to dog the discussion, even though women were at least as prevalent as men in the Suffragettes audience.

“That’s what the Song Suffragettes are still are trying to prove, is that women want to hear women,” says Arts. “I know that they do. I see it at concerts. I see it in my fans. I see it everywhere. We love it. I mean, men can’t talk about the things that women want to hear about.”

But radio stations still give women short shrift. A *new study* of 29 country stations by **Jan Diehm**, of *The Pudding*, and **Dr. Jada Watson**, found that women were played back-to-back a mere 0.5% of the time.

“I naively thought that if we could curate the best and brightest female singer-songwriters in Nashville that that would bring enough awareness to the level of talent that we have in this town that is female and call the labels, radio and streamers to all embrace more women and do better at the disparity that exists,” Cassetty says.

That leaves an underappreciated talent pool available for other avenues. It’s why Cassetty has established the satellite Suffragettes shows in London and New York, and why he has been in talks to possibly bring the show to cable. There’s a steady current of accomplished songwriters with strong voices ready for a marketplace that simply doesn’t know they exist. And it can be argued that Suffragettes has enabled some of those women to become even stronger at their craft by simply experiencing their competition.

“Song Suffragettes has been a really good metric for girls to get up and go, ‘OK, where do I fit in all of this? How do I see my artistry or my writing sensibilities fitting within all my peers?’” Galyon says. “Getting up onstage and playing a round is a really good way to learn.” ●



Jelly Roll (center) performed May 24 during a WBEE Rochester, N.Y., Guitars and Stars concert. He’s flanked by WBEE assistant PD/music director Billy Kidd and Stoney Creek director of Northeast promotion Lexi Willson.



Jake Owen chatted with Apple Music Country host Kelleigh Bannen about new album *Loose Cannon* on the May 26 edition of *Today’s Country Radio With Kelleigh Bannen*.



Allison Brown was among the performers who used Earl Scruggs’ Gibson RB-Granada Mastertone banjo when the instrument was officially donated to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum on May 22.

JASON KEMPIN/GETTY IMAGES

**TOTAL
IMMERSION**

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DIVE**

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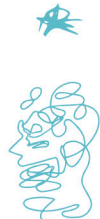
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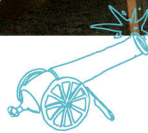
2. GO GETTER
 4. ON THE MOUNTAIN
 6. WHEN IT ALL SHAKES OUT
 8. IT'ROCK ON THE MOUNTAIN AND YOU DO
 10. BOY IN THE BOAT
 12. NOTHING
 14. I'M A MESS
 16. LOOSE CANNON

JAKE OWEN

AND I'LL AS LONG AS YOU'RE MY WHEELS FALL OFF, WITH ROCK I'LL ALL BE YOUR MY RECKLESS ABANDON AS LONG AS YOU'RE MY MY SUNDAY CROSS, I'LL BE ANCHOR BABY, I'LL YOUR BE SATURDAY NIGHT YOUR...



1. YOU'LL BUY BEER
 2. I'M A MESS
 3. HEARTS AND HABITS
 4. FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS
 5. SHIRAZ
 6. I'M A MESS
 7. SHE'S SOULFUL
 8. HEY CAN I BUY YOU A BEER



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BIG LOUD



billboard Country Airplay

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

Old Dominion Finds Its 'Lane' Back To Country Airplay Top 10

Old Dominion banks its 10th top 10 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart as "Memory Lane" (Columbia Nashville) lifts to No. 10 on the June 3-dated list. In the tracking week ending May 25, the single increased by 5% to 17.4 million audience impressions, according to Luminate.

The song was co-penned by the quintet's Matthew Ramsey, Trevor Rosen and Brad Tursi, with Jessie Jo Dillon. (Whit Sellers and Geoff Sprung round out Old Dominion's lineup.) It's from the act's four-song EP *Memory Lane (Sampler)*, which was released in January.

Old Dominion ranks in the Country Airplay top 10 for the first time since "I Was on a Boat That Day" cruised to No. 9 in November 2021. The band's top 10s include seven No. 1s, most recently "One Man Band" for one week in December 2019. The group's second of 17 Country Airplay entries, "Break Up With Him," became its first leader in November 2015.

On the streaming-, airplay- and sales-based Hot Country Songs survey dated May 27, "Memory" rose to a new No. 16 best. It drew 15 million official streams (up 5%) and sold 1,000 (up 3%) in the United States in the May 12-18 tracking week.

On May 11, Old Dominion won group of the year at the Academy of Country Music Awards, which were livestreamed on Amazon Prime. The fivesome will perform at Nashville's Nissan Stadium on June 10 during CMA Fest.

'LAST' STILL FIRST Morgan Wallen's "Last Night" (Mercury/Big Loud/Republic) controls Country Airplay for a fourth week (33.7 million, up 2%). It marks the second of his nine leaders to rule for at least that long, after "You Proof" reigned for 10 frames starting last October, the longest command in the chart's 33-year history. ●



OLD DOMINION'S TURSI (left) and SPRUNG

ALLEN J. SCHABEN/LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
TRY THAT IN A SMALL TOWN Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+6.880
YOU Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	+4.828
FAST CAR River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+3.942
NEXT THING YOU KNOW MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	+1.883
LOVE YOU ANYWAY River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+1.547
YOU, ME, & WHISKEY Valory Justin Moore & Priscilla Block		+1.474
BURY ME IN GEORGIA Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	+1.303
NEED A FAVOR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	+1.254
MEMORY LANE Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	+0.978
DRINKABY Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	+0.939

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
TRY THAT IN A SMALL TOWN Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+1617
YOU Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	+1334
FAST CAR River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+1057
NEXT THING YOU KNOW MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	+430
NEED A FAVOR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	+408
HUMAN CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson	+370
DRINKABY Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	+333
BUT I GOT A BEER IN MY HAND Row Crop/Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	+333
MEMORY LANE Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	+331
LOVE YOU ANYWAY River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+324

RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	18.806
2	SHE HAD ME AT HEADS CAROLINA Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	17.348
3	THANK GOD Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown With Katelyn Brown	17.124
4	GOLD Capitol Nashville	Dierks Bentley	14.185
5	YOU PROOF Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	12.530
6	WILD AS HER Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	12.057
7	THE KIND OF LOVE WE MAKE River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	11.773
8	WHAT MY WORLD SPINS AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	11.571
9	HANDLE ON YOU MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	11.464
10	HEART LIKE A TRUCK Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	10.796



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING MAY 25, 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	16	HONKY TONK ROLL (Independent) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Wade Bowen	1851	34	11	15	12	SIX PACK STATE OF MIND (Independent)	Grant Gilbert f/ Josh Abbott	1069	90
2	4	18	CORAZON (Independent)	Matt Castillo	1695	59	12	13	14	BETTER OFF (Independent)	Saints Eleven	1058	42
3	3	20	SUNNY AND 72 (Independent)	Kin Faux	1646	-67	13	16	14	BACK TO YOU (Little Red Truck)	Deryl Dodd	1057	123
4	5	20	LAKEVIEW GROCERY STORE (Independent)	Jamie Richards	1533	58	14	14	17	WHAT THE WHISKEY GAVE YOU (Independent)	Cynthia Rausch	1035	41
5	8	8	RED DIRT CINDERELLA (Independent)	Kylie Frey	1446	183	15	17	8	MORE THAN FRIENDS (Independent)	Lukas Nelson + POTR feat Lainey Wilson	977	96
6	6	20	IT GOES ON (Independent)	Mark Powell	1419	45	16	18	7	STONED (Independent)	Case Hardin	976	114
7	7	15	WINE, BEER & WHISKEY (Independent)	Cannon Brand	1253	-12	17	19	11	LABEL (Independent)	Ariel Hutchins	956	105
8	10	20	GOIN' GOIN' (Independent)	Donice Morace	1219	37	18	1	20	LOVING ALL NIGHT (Independent)	Jesse Raub Jr.	917	-931
9	11	13	CAN'T STAND LEAVIN' (Independent)	Adam Hood	1174	45	19	9	19	ANYMORE (Bill Grease Rec)	William Clark Green	881	-344
10	12	20	THINKIN' 'BOUT CHEATIN' (Independent)	Brandi Behlen	1111	34	20	20	20	YOU MADE A ROCK (Independent)	Shayne Porter w/ Jordan Rainer	842	-2

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

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	14	LAST NIGHT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	★★ No. 1 (4 Weeks) ★★ Morgan Wallen	33.654	+0.656	8269	240	1
2	2	26	DANCIN' IN THE COUNTRY Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	31.858	-0.530	7990	-265	2
3	6	45	YOU Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	26.220	+4.828	7216	1334	3
4	3	33	ROCK AND A HARD PLACE Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	24.224	-1.083	5320	-323	7
5	4	37	IT MATTERS TO HER Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery	23.402	+0.504	6266	-13	4
6	7	27	TENNESSEE ORANGE Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	20.049	+0.919	5607	270	5
7	10	15	NEXT THING YOU KNOW MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	19.771	+1.883	5396	430	6
8	9	51	HUMAN CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson	18.985	+0.792	5305	370	8
9	8	20	ONE THING AT A TIME Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	18.304	-0.063	4865	90	9
10	11	21	MEMORY LANE Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	17.417	+0.978	4733	331	10
11	12	46	BROWN EYES BABY Hit Red/Capitol Nashville	Keith Urban	14.289	-0.009	4043	134	11
12	14	29	YOU, ME, & WHISKEY Valory	Justin Moore & Priscilla Block	14.202	+1.474	3916	284	12
13	13	34	YOUR HEART OR MINE Capitol Nashville	Jon Pardi	13.795	+0.851	3842	168	13
14	21	6	FAST CAR River House/Columbia Nashville	★★ Airpower ★★ Luke Combs	13.059	+3.942	3260	1057	16
15	15	9	LOVE YOU ANYWAY River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	12.847	+1.547	3277	324	15
16	16	19	NEED A FAVOR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	11.951	+1.254	3576	408	14
17	17	17	ANGELS DON'T ALWAYS HAVE WINGS Valory	Thomas Rhett	10.404	+0.804	3212	317	17
18	19	38	HOW IT OUGHTA BE Harpeth 60/BMLG	Shane Profitt	9.531	+0.191	3060	16	18
19	18	39	GIRL IN MINE Stoney Creek	Pamalee	9.353	-0.158	3048	95	19
20	22	56	EVERYTHING SHE AIN'T Songs & Daughters/Pigasus/Big Loud	Hailey Whitters	8.824	+0.320	2768	74	21
21	23	17	DRINKABY Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	8.758	+0.939	2847	333	20
22	25	14	BURY ME IN GEORGIA Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	7.823	+1.303	2336	253	23
23	26	11	STANDING ROOM ONLY McGraw/Big Machine	Tim McGraw	7.154	+0.758	2504	197	22
24	NEW		TRYTHAT IN A SMALL TOWN Macon/Broken Bow	★★ Hot Shot Debut/Breaker/Most Increased Audience ★★ Jason Aldean	6.880	+6.880	1617	1617	28
25	24	47	SOMETHING IN THE ORANGE Belting Bronco/WAR	Zach Bryan	6.749	+0.129	2296	218	24
26	27	19	LOOKING FOR YOU RCA Nashville	Chris Young	6.301	+0.730	2161	269	25
27	29	9	RELIGIOUSLY Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	4.727	+0.873	1394	320	30
28	28	36	CAN'T HAVE MINE Curb	Dylan Scott	4.164	+0.090	1769	58	26
29	33	3	BUT I GOT A BEER IN MY HAND Row Crop/Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	3.952	+0.789	1148	333	36
30	31	19	GOD GAVE ME A GIRL Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	3.637	+0.059	1391	22	31

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-bulleted) 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.

billboard Country Airplay

AIRPLAY
MONITORED BY
LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	30	25	WE GOT HISTORY Riser House/Columbia Nashville	Mitchell Tenpenny	3.567	-0.057	1199	-30	35
32	36	21	IF YOU GO DOWN (I'M GOING DOWN TOO) Black River	Kelsea Ballerini	3.389	+0.446	1649	140	27
33	35	18	STARS LIKE CONFETTI Broken Bow	Dustin Lynch	3.304	+0.284	1364	111	32
34	32	14	ALL I NEED IS YOU BMLG	Chris Janson	3.290	+0.092	1496	97	29
35	34	11	LIGHT ON IN THE KITCHEN Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Ashley McBryde	3.032	-0.057	1266	37	33
36	37	8	FIRES DON'T START THEMSELVES Capitol Nashville	Darius Rucker	2.698	+0.060	893	46	42
37	39	29	HEAVEN BY THEN Valory	Brantley Gilbert And Blake Shelton Featuring Vince Gill	2.441	+0.020	1107	26	37
38	41	26	MIND ON YOU RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	2.433	+0.149	998	22	41
39	40	28	IF HE WANTED TO HE WOULD EMI Nashville	Kylie Morgan	2.404	-0.011	1072	36	38
40	38	17	FEARLESS (THE ECHO) Big Machine	Jackson Dean	2.371	-0.095	1204	58	34
41	42	7	CREEK WILL RISE Valory	Conner Smith	2.233	-0.014	1046	-5	39
42	43	7	NOBODY'S NOBODY EMI Nashville	Brothers Osborne	2.215	+0.182	1002	94	40
43	44	16	23 19/BMG/Wheelhouse ★★ Breaker ★★	Chayce Beckham	2.059	+0.092	887	53	43
44	46	31	OVER FOR YOU Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Morgan Evans	1.665	+0.059	632	35	46
45	45	3	DIFFERENT 'ROUND HERE BMLG	Riley Green Featuring Luke Combs	1.500	-0.404	630	100	47
46	48	8	DRIVE YOU OUT OF MY MIND Interscope/MCA Nashville	Kassi Ashton	1.313	+0.226	639	43	45
47	47	11	GIVING UP ON THAT Mercury Nashville	Dalton Dover	1.301	-0.087	683	-13	44
48	55	2	TRUCK BED Big Loud	HARDY	1.094	+0.575	494	287	49
49	53	3	THINKIN' BOUT ME Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	0.977	+0.439	276	131	60
50	50	9	MARRY THAT GIRL Stone Country	Easton Corbin	0.838	-0.009	454	8	50
51	51	9	BOUT DAMNTIME Red Street	Neon Union	0.827	+0.097	559	49	48
52	49	3	IF I DIE YOUNG PT. 2 RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Kimberly Perry	0.817	-0.146	407	11	52
53	52	7	SHOOT TEQUILA Monument	Tigirlily Gold	0.787	+0.059	428	22	51
54	54	2	BAD DAY TO BE A COLD BEER Dack Janiels/Broken Bow	Chase Rice	0.733	+0.195	377	82	54
55	NEW		WATERMELON MOONSHINE Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	0.571	+0.330	193	123	-
56	58	2	SOMEBODY ELSE'S WHISKEY Stoney Creek	Frank Ray	0.517	+0.070	361	35	56
57	NEW		LOVE YOU AGAIN Chase Matthew/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Chase Matthew	0.499	+0.208	234	90	-
58	56	5	JEALOUS OF MYSELF Dreamcatcher	Tenille Arts & LeAnn Rimes	0.495	+0.001	368	20	55
59	NEW		LIFE GOES ON Atlantic	Ed Sheeran Featuring Luke Combs	0.484	+0.221	63	31	-
60	57	6	'98 BRAVES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	0.459	-0.030	73	-5	-



Craig Campbell (left) performed "Rise Above," a song he co-wrote with a war veteran through the CreatiVets program, during a May 23 Grand Ole Opry appearance. With him are CreatiVets co-founder/executive director Richard Casper (center) and Opry Entertainment Group vp/executive producer Dan Rogers.



Songwriter-producer Andy Sheridan signed with Tape Room Music in a joint venture with Red Light, the principals announced on May 15. From left: Tape Room senior vp of creative Kelly Bolton, founder Ashley Gorley and president Blain Rhodes; Sheridan; and Tape Room manager of A&R Caroline Hodson.

SONGWRITER'S NIGHT

5TH ANNUAL



JUNE 4 6:00 PM

The Reserve at Fat Bottom Brewing
Benefiting Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee

Featuring:

Chris Housman
Nell Maynard
Chris Sligh
Dakota Striplin

Learn More and Buy Tickets:

gildasclubmiddletn.org/songwriters-night

Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee, is dedicated to providing support, education and hope to all people impacted by cancer, all at not cost to the community



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NASHVILLE & NATIONAL TOM ROLAND



TRAE PATTON

Blake Shelton (left) made his final appearance as a coach on NBC's *The Voice* during the current season's May 23 finale. He's joined by fellow coaches (from left) Kelly Clarkson, Chance the Rapper and Niall Horan.

CMA FEST SCHEDULE BULKS UP

With the start of CMA Fest less than two weeks away, related events continue to fill up the calendar in conjunction with the four-day celebration, centered in Downtown Nashville June 8-11.

The attractions include several concerts, **Craig Campbell's** annual cornhole tournament and the release of a documentary that marks the festival's 50th edition.

In chronological order, here are the latest additions:

- Save the Music and SongFarm.org will honor **Trisha Yearwood**, **Mickey Guyton** and CMT/Paramount senior vp of music strategy and talent **Leslie Fram** during the fourth annual Hometown to Hometown fundraiser on June 5 at City Winery Nashville. Co-hosted by **Cody Alan** and **Rissi Palmer**, the lengthy list of participants includes **Kelsea Ballerini**, **Madeline Edwards**, **Caylee Hammack** and **Brittney Spencer**.

- **WKDF/WSM-FM** Nashville offer their annual Country Kick-Off concert on June 6 at the Skydeck on Broadway with **Brett Young**, **Scotty McCreery**, **Morgan Evans** and **Russell Dickerson**, among others. The show will be recorded and broadcast as a Fourth of July radio special on nearly 60 country stations.

- Campbell's annual Celebrity Cornhole Challenge includes participation by **Charles Esten**, **Jerrod Niemann**, **Mitch Rossell** and **Ashland Craft** on June 6 at 6th & Peabody. Proceeds benefit colorectal cancer nonprofit the Kenny Campbell Foundation.

- Five Tractor Supply Co. contest winners are set to perform on June 7 at Ole Red and on June 9 at **Lainey Wilson's** Bell Bottom Barn Dance. The victors — **Hailey Verhaalen** of Oregon City, Ore.; **Drew Hale** of El Paso, Texas; **Tae Lewis** of Goldsboro, N.C.; **Colette Smith** of Gilbert, Ariz.; and **Austin McNeill**, of Salisbury N.C. — were chosen by a panel that included Wilson, **Ashley McBryde**, **Dustin Lynch**, **Lauren Alaina** and **Kat & Alex**.

- Over 40 acts will play the Spotify House June 8-11 at Ole Red, including **Brad Paisley**, **Dierks Bentley**, **Old Dominion**, **Jordan Davis**, **Lady A**, **Sam Hunt** and **Jon Pardi**.

- The Country Music Association's 75-minute documentary *CMA Fest: 50 Years of Fan Fair* debuts July 5 on Hulu with archival content plus interview material from the likes of **Dolly Parton**, **Vince Gill**, **Reba McEntire**, **Luke Combs**, **Miranda Lambert**, **Patty Loveless** and **Luke Bryan**.

RADIO & RECORDS®

Universal Music Group Nashville hired **Chelsea Blythe** as executive vp of A&R. She arrives from Los Angeles, where she served as Def Jam senior vp of A&R ... River House expanded its staff with three new employees: artist development specialist **Taylor Aretz**, digital coordinator **Liz Scherff** and creative services coordinator **Sydney Riley**. Aretz was most recently Warner Music Nashville manager of artist development, Scherff segues from Black

River promotions coordinator, and Riley is an MTSU music business graduate who interned at Riser House during her senior year ... Former Show Dog Nashville regional promotion executive **Greg Sax** formed Saxis Music Group, a management, label and promotion company. His first management client is Texas act **The Great Divide** ... **LANCO** signed a recording deal with Riser House, tabbing "Sound of a Saturday Night," due June 2, as the first release in the deal ... **Ricochet** joined the roster at Encore Music Group with plans to release its first album in over a decade, *Ricochet Then & Now ... The Hits & More*, on Aug. 18 ... **ONErpm** signed singer-songwriter **Jay Allen** to a recording contract, with next single "Jello Shot" expected June 16 ... **Blake Fulton** was promoted to iHeartMedia/North Alabama market president from regional senior vp of sales, RadioInk.com reported. His district includes three country outlets: **WDXB** Birmingham, **WDRM** Huntsville and **WTXT** Tuscaloosa ... **Audacy/**Buffalo, N.Y., senior vp/market manager **Tim Holly** will retire from the company in July, according to RadioInsight.com. The three-station cluster includes country **WLKK**.

'ROUND THE ROW

Singer-songwriter **Adam Hambrick** ("How Not To," "Somebody Else Will") signed with Sheltered Music Publishing. His next single as an artist, "Built for a Small Town," was scheduled for release May 26 via Empire ... Warner Chappell Nashville added singer-songwriter **Josh Ross** to its publishing roster ... **McCall Chapin** snagged a songwriting deal with Black River Publishing ... **Spencer Crandall** expanded his team by signing a publishing deal with Warner Chappell Nashville and a distribution agreement with Stem ... Morris Higham Management welcomed bluegrass duo **Dailey & Vincent** to its roster ... Singer-songwriter **Keith Anderson** affiliated with Kinkead Entertainment for concert booking ... **Blake Shelton** and *Barmageddon* producer **Lee Metzger** co-founded Lucky Horseshoe Productions ... **Kelsea Ballerini** earned Gold Telly Awards on May 25 as the director-creator of the *Rolling Up the Welcome Mat* short film ... **Toby Keith** acquired the Luck E Strike bait and tackle brand name ... Ryl Tea announced a partnership on May 25 with **Morgan Wallen**, who curated Ryl Sweet Tea, a zero-sugar product expected to land in Kroger stores in July ... **Brothers Osborne**, **BRELAND** and **Blessing Offor** will perform May 31 during the Recording Academy's 22nd annual Nashville Chapter Block Party at 6th & Peabody in Nashville ... **Tanya Tucker**, **Ian Munsick**, **Jelly Roll**, **The Frontmen** and others take part in *Country Music Salutes America's Heroes*, a concert taped outside Billy Bob's Texas for airing as a TV special in numerous markets May 27-July 15. Stations in the mix include **WWOR** New York, **KTVU** San Francisco, **KDFI** Dallas, **WXYZ** Detroit and **WTVF** Nashville ... Houston-based music writer **John Nova Lomax**, 53, died May 22. He wrote during his career for *Texas Monthly*, *Texas Highways* and *The Houston Press*, where he won a Deems Taylor ASCAP Award for an extensive piece about **Doug Supernaw**. His survivors include father **John Lomax III**, a Nashville-based music executive and folk singer. ●



Charley Crockett performed May 18 at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in an event for the museum's Honor Society members. From left: Crockett, Museum CEO **Kyle Young** and trustee **Ken Levitan**, and retired Davidson County judge **Gloria Dumas**.

billboard

2023

INDIE

LABEL POWER PLAYERS

On June 10th, *Billboard* will publish its annual Indie Label Power Players List. This special feature in advance of A2IM Indie Week (6/12-6/15) and the 12th Annual Libera Awards will profile leading executives at top independent record labels, publishing companies and distribution companies. Positioning themselves as the driving force behind the success of independent music, these executives contribute to the independent music sector and to the world of music at large.

Take this opportunity to advertise and congratulate this year's 2023 Indie Label Power Players.

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ISSUE DATE 6/10 | AD CLOSE 5/30 | MATERIALS DUE 6/1

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

Kimberly Perry Launches Her Next Chapter By Revising 'If I Die Young'

One of the tenets of life on planet Earth is that no one knows how much time they have here, although society generally expects that most people should probably live somewhere between, say, 55 to 90 years.

It's tragic when kids don't make it to double digits, but amazing when people reach triple digits. Perspectives about all that change as age accrues.

Thus, when **Kimberly Perry** wrote "If I Die Young" for **The Band Perry** around age 25, she masterfully delved into a touchy, fragile topic with a character who imagines her own premature death and the devastating effect "the sharp knife of a short life" might have on her mother.

Perry was not necessarily anticipating that outcome for herself, though a lot went into that song that she didn't fully understand until she decided to write a sequel last year. She even went to therapy to gain more insight into the emotional genesis of the piece, which brought her song of the year honors from the Country Music Association in 2011.

"Psychologically, there was a bit of hedging of my bets with my dreams," she explains. "I had such huge ideals, and dreams at that moment for a family, and for all the things that I did not see present in my life. I was quite a daydreamer, and I think for whatever reason, death — and a young death — almost felt more romantic than those dreams not coming true."

The message of "If I Die Young" was enhanced by the deft marriage of an artfully mysterious storyline and a melancholy musical foundation, and its singalong chorus

became a point of reference for an entire generation. When AMR Songs acquired select pieces from Perry's songwriting catalog, CEO/partner **Tamara Conniff** queried her about the origins of "If I Die Young" over coffee, then casually asked if Perry had ever considered writing a follow-up about its protagonist, assuming the premature death never came.

"It was like this lightning-bolt moment for me," remembers Perry. "But it was equally terrifying, so I procrastinated for a solid four months before even beginning to think about what that might look like."

She also decided not to address it alone, knowing she could not be subjective about messing with a modern standard. Perry was writing fairly regularly with **Jimmy Robbins** ("The Bones," "half of my hometown") and **Nicolle Galyon** ("Tequila," "Automatic"), and she had several conversations with Robbins about a sequel. It was the last songwriting idea they addressed before she was to record Aug. 27-28, 2022. Galyon didn't know anything about it until they dropped the idea on her during the writing session at Robbins' studio.

"I think had I had more time to think about it, I would have been pretty intimidated by the concept," Galyon says. "But I was like, 'Yeah, let's go.' It honestly just kind of felt like another day of writing a song."

They had some obvious parameters. For starters, "If I Die Young Pt. 2" needed to retain most of the original's iconic chorus. The melody remains the same, and the only line they changed in that section was the finale: "Well, I've had just enough time" became "Now I know there's no such thing as enough time." And where the original opens with that chorus, they needed to start "Pt. 2" with a verse, which would give the singer an opportunity to reframe the current moment and cast the chorus as a song from

the past. They did that with the last line of the pre-chorus: "I'm changing my tune since I said ..."

And Perry literally changed her tune. She altered the melody in the verses, introduced a new chord progression in the bridge and took on the viewpoint of a woman no longer thinking about how her own death would affect everyone else, instead contemplating how her mother's passing would affect her. Her own real-life changes informed their approach.

"She had just gotten married, and so everything was very forward-thinking," recalls Galyon. "It just kind of breathed new life into how to write that narrative."

The new opening verse reflected the wedding — she eloped with husband **Johnny Costello**, driving to Las Vegas from Los Angeles in a black convertible, Perry thrusting her hands in the air in jubilation for much of the trip. In verse two, the singer grapples with issues that accompany aging: She increasingly resembles her mother, thinks about her mom's passing and takes note of the casket in the first iteration of "If I Die Young."

"If it was somebody else, the word 'casket' would have maybe thrown me off," Galyon says, "but what has connected for Kimberly in the past, commercially, has been those kinds of blunt and quirky adjectives and words. There's something about that that works for her that doesn't work for other people."

The new version retains the same final words — "So put on your best, boys/And I'll wear my pearls" — but the clothing is celebratory instead of funereal.

"Instead of ending with a period, it's ending with an ellipsis or an exclamation point," says Robbins.

Robbins produced the demo, then worked with Perry to assemble an appropriate band for the final session, centered on guitarist **Bryan Sutton**, who played on the first "If I Die Young." They recorded it at Backstage in a higher key than the original and at a quicker pace, reflecting the singalong status the song has attained in concert. Drummer **Evan Hutchings** played in a way that emphasized key moments in the melody, and **Jenee Fleenor** came in later to overdub fiddle.

"It's just wild how much space it takes up and how much the track is carried by fiddle," Robbins says. "It kind of shifted everything for us."

While writing the sequel presented a challenge, singing it did not.

"This was a piece of cake for me," says Perry. "My body, and my muscles, my voice know this song so well that I just walked out of the vocal booth, maybe in a half hour, like, 'Guys, I think we killed this.' I like my original version, but my voice has matured and changed so much since then, too. So it was really a cool opportunity to get to document my growth in that way as well."

Perry had several options for a first single with RECORDS Nashville, but ultimately the team settled on "If I Die Young Pt. 2," since it helped tell the story of her transition from lead singer of The Band Perry to solo artist.

Her brothers, **Neil** and **Reid Perry**, reportedly gave their approval to her revision, and RECORDS released "Pt. 2" to country radio on May 4 via PlayMPE. In its third charted week, it ranks at No. 52 on the Country Airplay list dated June 3.

She says she's already feeling a reconnection with the country audience: "I'm finding that people, while they love the original version, they really are coming with me on the journey of 'Hey, I'm so glad we have this version. Like, this is healing all the things for me and healing my inner child.'" ●



billboard Country Airplay Index

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

23 Chayce Beckham Publishing Designee, BMI (C. Beckham) **43**

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ALL I NEED IS YOU Anthem Red Vinyl Music, BMI/Buckkilla Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Murphy The Wolf Music, BMI/Mandy's Favorite Songs, BMI/Round Hill Songs LLC, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Mitchell Marlow Music, ASCAP/KIM Music Publishing, ASCAP/Five Miles West Songs, BMI (C.Janson, B.Clawson, A.G.Gorley, Mitch Oglesby) **34**

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BUT I GOT A BEER IN MY HAND Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Dico Songs, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Range Music, BMI/Warburton Music, BMI (C.McGill, M.Dragstrom, G.Warburton) **29**

C

CAN'T HAVE MINE Curb Songs, ASCAP/Curb Congregation Songs, SESAC/Good Vibes, Good Times Music, SESAC/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/FBach Entertainment/Fant, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/Sony CountrySide, BMI (D.Scott, M.Alderman, J.Melton, D.Wilson) **28**

CREEK WILL RISE Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Home Team Harmonies, BMI/South Lick Creek Songs, BMI/Songs Of Miller Crow, BMI/Tunes By Trailerpark, BMI/Concord Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI (C.McGill, C.Smith, C.La Corte, P.Welling) **41**

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HEAVEN BY THEN Warner-Tamerlane 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/NotVipical Music, ASCAP/Who Wants To Buy My Publishing, ASCAP (B.Gilbert, B.Berryhill, M.W.Hardy, J.Mitchell, R.Montana, H.Pheips, T.Phillips) **37**

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T

TENNESSEE ORANGE Georgiamo Music, SESAC/Limber Publishing, SESAC/Reservoir 416, BMI/35 Creative, BMI/Bone Bonie Creative, BMI/Major Bob Music, Inc., ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (M.Moroney, D.Fanning, P.Jenkins, B.Williams) **6**

THINKIN' 'BOUT ME Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Michael Scott Paper Company Publishing Company, ASCAP/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (J.Byron, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips, Charlie Handsome) **49**

TRUCK BED Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Redneck Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Michael Scott Paper Company Publishing Company, ASCAP/Ben There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Who Wants To Buy My Publishing, ASCAP/NotVipical Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (M.W.Hardy, A.G.Gorley, B.J.Johnson, H.Pheips) **48**

TRY THAT IN A SMALL TOWN BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Makena Love Music, ASCAP/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Irshonmusic, BMI/That's Me! Music Publishing, ASCAP/Songs Of Red Street Country, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Spirit Nashville Two, crescendo, BMI/Thrash Town Music, ASCAP/Spirit Vault Songs, ASCAP (K.M.Allison, T.Kennedy, J.K.Loveless, N.Thresher) **24**

W

WATERMELON MOONSHINE Sony Accent, ASCAP/The Money Tree VibeZ, ASCAP/Pile Of Schmidt Songs, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Ikigai Music, ASCAP (L.Wilson, J.M.Schmidt, J.Kear) **55**

WE GOT HISTORY Sony CountrySide, BMI/Riser Ten Music, BMI/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Tacklebox Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Black Jeans Music, BMI/Neon Cross Music, BMI/Sony Accent, ASCAP/The Money Tree VibeZ, ASCAP/Pile Of Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (M.Tenpenny, A.Albert, D.Dawson, J.M.Schmidt) **31**

Y

YOU BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/Buckeye26, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Treynmusic, ASCAP/Lawyranglers, ASCAP (D.Smyers, D.M.Barnes, J.Reynolds) **3**

YOU, ME, & WHISKEY WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Where I Started Music Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Anthem (Coal Mining) Songs, ASCAP/Randolph County Music, ASCAP/Taylor Made By The Red White And Blue, ASCAP (J.L.Alexander, B.Berryhill, C.Taylor) **12**

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.Each, J.Pierce) **13**



2023

MID-YEAR TOURING REPORT

Join Billboard as we take a mid-year look at the touring industry's top venues, tours and promoters based on Billboard's exclusive Boxscore charts. Charts will include: Top grossing venues, tours and promoters, top Boxscores, top ticket sales, top tours by genre + comedy.

Place your brand in front of booking agents, artists, managers, concert promoters, producers, venue operators, label heads and other key touring executives who are driving the touring business worldwide.

Mid-Year Touring Print edition:

6/10 Billboard. AD CLOSE: 5/30. Materials due 6/1

New this year:

Mid-Year Touring Digital - Special edition of Bulletin:

6/13 Bulletin. AD CLOSE: 6/8. Materials due 6/9

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50 Years Ago
**Jeanne Pruett
Blanketed
Country With
'Satin Sheets'**

In 1973, she scored her lone Hot Country Songs No. 1

On May 26, 1973, **Jeanne Pruett's** "Satin Sheets" topped *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart.

Penning by **John Volinkaty** and produced by **Walter Haynes**, the song was initially recorded in 1972 as a duet between **Bill Anderson** and **Jan Howard**. Pruett's version became the title cut on her 1973 LP, which ruled Top Country Albums for four weeks.

"Satin Sheets" marked the fifth of Pruett's 23 Hot Country Songs appearances. It also reached No. 28 on the all-format *Billboard* Hot 100. While it stands as her lone No. 1

on Hot Country Songs, she earned three additional top 10s, all in 1980: "Back to Back," "Temporarily Yours" and "It's Too Late."

Born **Norma Jean Bowman** on Jan. 30, 1937, in Pell City, Ala., Pruett achieved her first success as a songwriter when **Marty Robbins'** version of her "Count Me Out" hit No. 14 in 1966. She was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry in 1973 and retired in 2006. In March, she was inducted into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame. Now 86, she published her autobiography, *Miss Satin Sheets I Remember*, in 2017. —JIM ASKER

Pruett on the cover of her 1973 album, *Satin Sheets*.

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

	W	T	R	F	S	S	Label & Number (Dist., Catalog, BMI)
★ 1	8	9					SATIN SHEETS Jeanne Pruett, MCA 40015 (Chapion, BMI)
2	1	10					WHAT'S YOUR MAMA'S NAME? Tanya Tucker, Columbia 4-45799 (Altam/Bluecrest, BMI)
★ 3	5	9					BABY'S GONE Conway Twitty, MCA 40027 (Twitty Bird, BMI)
4	2	16					BEHIND CLOSED DOORS Charlie Rich, Epic 5-10950 (Columbia) (House of Gold, BMI)
★ 5	7	9					YOU ALWAYS COME BACK (To Hurting Me) Johnny Rodriguez, Mercury 73368 (Phonogram) (Hallnote, BMI)

billboard

2023

PRIDE ISSUE

On June 10th, *Billboard* will publish its 5th annual Pride issue honoring culturally moving and influential people who have contributed to the community's history and its current landscape. Year-round *Billboard* and *Rolling Stone* celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community through the lens of music, amplifying the culture of the proud LGBTQIA+ community across our editorial channels, including *Billboard* Pride.

Building on this platform, *Billboard* and *Rolling Stone* will be joining together for the entire month of June to celebrate love, acceptance, diversity and what it means to be queer in music. All month long, *Billboard* and *Rolling Stone* will be the go-to destination for music and entertainment Pride content. Leveraging our iconic voices within music and culture, *Billboard* and *Rolling Stone* will curate a mix of engaging video and social content featuring thought-provoking panels, heartfelt performances, and glam tutorials – all fostering a community of consumers and influencers in celebration of LGBTQIA+.

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ISSUE DATE 6/10 | AD CLOSE 5/30 | MATERIALS DUE 6/1