MusicRow is pleased to reveal the nominees for the 29th annual MusicRow Awards, with honors being presented for Producer of the Year, Song of the Year, Breakthrough Artist, Breakthrough Songwriter, and Breakthrough Artist-Writer.

Winners will be announced during a private ceremony at SESAC and will be featured in the upcoming print issue of MusicRow magazine.

“It is an honor to shine a much-deserved spotlight on this year’s nominees with this special online publication,” says MusicRow Publisher/Owner Sherod Robertson. “Our subscriber-voted awards are an opportunity for members of the music industry to salute their peers and highlight the undeniable amount of creative talent in Nashville. In fact there is so much rising talent, that this year brings a record number of nominees for Breakthrough Songwriter and the addition of the Breakthrough Artist-Writer category.”

Subscribed members of MusicRow will be emailed a ballot on Wednesday, May 24. Voting closes on Tuesday, May 30 at 5 p.m. To subscribe, click here.

The MusicRow Awards ceremony also provides a platform to continue the annual toast of the Top Ten Album All-Star Musicians, the studio whiz kids who played on the most albums that reached the Top Ten during the eligibility period.

Final nominees for the MusicRow Awards are determined by the publication, with outside nominations being considered for Breakthrough Songwriter and Breakthrough Artist-Writer. Eligible projects were active between May 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017.

(Continued on page 4)
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING NOMINEES

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER
TUCKER BEATHARD

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR
MAREN MORRIS

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR & ARTIST-WRITER
JON PARDI

SONG OF THE YEAR: “LEAVING NASHVILLE” & BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER
ABE STOKLASA

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR & ARTIST-WRITER
BRETT YOUNG

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY AT RED LIGHT
CARNIVAL MUSIC congratulates OUR MUSICROW NOMINEES

FRANK LIDDELL PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

SCOOTER CARUSOE SONG OF THE YEAR "WANNA BE THAT SONG"
SESAC CONGRATULATES
OUR BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER NOMINEES

JUSTIN EBACH

JESSE LEE

AND ALL
THE 2017
MUSICROW
AWARD
NOMINEES!

MICHAEL TYLER
**PRODUCER OF THE YEAR: ABOUT THE NOMINEES**

By Sarah Skates

**Buddy Cannon** continued helping longtime collaborator Kenny Chesney evolve, including producing his hit single featuring pop star Pink, “Setting the World on Fire.” Cannon also re-teamed with Willie Nelson for the acclaimed project *God’s Problem Child*, and took on production duties for a comeback album by revered songstress Alison Krauss (*Windy City*). Cannon was previously named *MusicRow* Producer of the Year in 2004.

**Ross Copperman** led Dierks Bentley, Jake Owen, Brett Eldredge, and many others to radio success this year. He produced No. 1s for Bentley (“Black”) and Owen (“American Country Love Song”). His work with Eldredge yielded the chart-toppers “Drunk On Your Love” and “Wanna Be That Song,” the latter of which is nominated for *MusicRow* Song of the Year. As a songwriter, Copperman co-wrote six No. 1s, including the aforementioned titles, and was named BMI Country Songwriter of the Year.

**Dann Huff**’s lengthy list of credits includes Keith Urban, Thomas Rhett, Brantley Gilbert, Billy Currington, Brett Young, and many more. He received the 2016 CMA Award for Single of the Year for being a producer of Thomas Rhett’s “Die a Happy Man,” which spent 17 weeks at No. 1 on *Billboard’s* Hot Country Songs chart. Huff is a two-time *MusicRow* Magazine Producer of the Year (2006, 2013).

**Jay Joyce** brought his production genius to albums of all genres, ranging from country hitmaker Eric Church to rock band The Wild Feathers. He earned CMA Album of the Year for Church’s *Mr. Misunderstood*, and his work on Brandy Clark’s *Big Day In A Small Town* album helped her earn multiple Grammy nods. In addition, Joyce produced recent hits by Carrie Underwood (“Dirty Laundry”), Little Big Town (“Better Man”), and the Brothers Osborne (“Stay A Little Longer”). He was the 2015 *MusicRow* Producer of the Year.

**Frank Liddell** teamed with longtime collaborator Miranda Lambert to produce her ambitious double album *The Weight Of These Wings*. The project debuted at No.1 on the *Billboard* Country Albums Chart and spawned two Grammy Award nominations for Best Country Solo Performance and Best Country Song for lead single “Vice.” Additionally, “Vice” is in the running for *MusicRow* Song of the Year. Liddell was voted *MusicRow* Producer of the Year in 2014, 2012 and 2010.
WE ARE PROUD TO BE ON YOUR TEAM

2017 MUSICROW AWARDS NOMINEES

JORDAN SCHMIDT | JUSTIN EBACH | STEVEN LEE OLSEN | WILLIAM MICHAEL MORGAN | JASON SEVER
EMILY WEISBAND | JAY JOYCE | JOSH MIRENDA | LAUREN ALAINA | DONOVAN WOODS
BMG / MAGIC MUSTANG MUSIC CONGRATULATES

KURT ALLISON

2017 MUSICROW
BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR NOMINEE

BBR MUSIC GROUP
MAGIC MUSTANG MUSIC
BMG
Congratulations to our Music Row Breakthrough Songwriter Nominees

Andy Albert
“She’s Got A Way With Words,” recorded by Blake Shelton
“If The Boot Fits,” recorded by Granger Smith

Kelly Archer
“Sleep Without You,” recorded by Brett Young

DOWNTOWN
Amsterdam  London  Los Angeles  Nashville  New York  Toyko
CATEGOR Y ONE

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Voted by *MusicRow*’s subscribed members to honor a Nashville producer’s work on albums active during the eligibility period. Achievements may include, but are not limited to, single chart performance and album sales.

**Buddy Cannon**
Kenny Chesney, Alison Krauss, Aaron Lewis, Willie Nelson, Randy Rogers Band

**Ross Copperman**
Dierks Bentley, Brett Eldredge, Trent Harmon, Ryan Kinder, Jake Owen, Darius Rucker, Drake White, Eli Young Band

**Dann Huff**
Kane Brown, Billy Currington, The Cadillac Three, Delta Rae, Ryan Follese, Brantley Gilbert, Hunter Hayes, Martina McBride, Midland, Thomas Rhett, Steven Tyler, Keith Urban, Brett Young

**Jay Joyce**
Brothers Osborne, Brandy Clark, Eric Church, Devin Dawson, LANCO, Little Big Town, Carrie Underwood, The Wild Feathers

**Frank Liddell**
Derik Hultquist, Miranda Lambert, David Nail, Aubrie Sellers, Charlie Worsham

**FINAL NOMINATIONS**
CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR 2017 MUSICROW AWARDS NOMINEES

MAREN MORRIS
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST of the YEAR

ABE STOKLASA
BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER of the YEAR
SONG of the YEAR “LEAVING NASHVILLE”

DANIEL TASHIAN
BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER of the YEAR
CONGRATULATIONS

BRETT YOUNG
2017 MUSICROW BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST
OF THE YEAR NOMINEE

2017 MUSICROW BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER NOMINEES

BRETT YOUNG
LUKE COMBS
TUCKER BEATHARD

JOSH THOMPSON
2017 MUSICROW BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER
OF THE YEAR NOMINEE
WORD COUNTRY CONGRATULATES
JUSTIN EBACH
ON HIS NOMINATION FOR
MusicRow BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER
Andy Albert turned love into a four-letter word with his hit song “She’s Got A Way With Words,” recorded by Blake Shelton. The Georgia native tallied a second hit with Granger Smith’s “If The Boot Fits,” co-written with fellow nominee Jordan Schmidt.

Kurt Allison notched his first No. 1 with Dustin Lynch’s sexy outing, “Seein’ Red.” Allison broke through in the music business as Jason Aldean’s guitar player and a member of the New Voice Entertainment production team.

Kelly Archer has had a lot of activity since moving to Nashville in 2001, but scored her first No. 1 in 2017 with “Sleep Without You.” The song was co-written with fellow nominees Justin Ebach, and Brett Young, who took it to the top of the charts. Archer is originally from Vancouver, Canada.

Thomas Archer’s first hit went all the way to No. 1. He co-wrote the song “Hurricane” with fellow nominees Taylor Phillips and recording artist Luke Combs. Archer is a Georgia native who moved to Nashville in 2012.

Justin Ebach teamed with fellow nominees Kelly Archer and artist Brett Young to pen the upbeat single “Sleep Without You,” which became his first No. 1. The Florida native is also a Dove Award-nominated producer.

Jesse Lee brought her idea for a song called “Peter Pan” to co-writers Kelsea Ballerini and Forest Glen Whitehead. The song about a boy who won’t grow up was released as a single and flew up the charts, earning Lee’s first No. 1.

Josh Mirenda and fellow nominee Michael Tyler are two of the writers of Dierks Bentley’s hit “Somewhere On A Beach.” It was the first No. 1 for both, and they likely celebrated by “sippin’ something strong.” Mirenda is a Music City native.

Jamie Moore earned his first country No. 1 as co-writer of “May We All,” recorded by Florida Georgia Line featuring Tim McGraw. Moore is a four-time Grammy nominee thanks to work with CCM artists including TobyMac. He is originally from Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

Steven Lee Olsen celebrated his first No. 1 as a co-writer of “Blue Ain’t Your Color,” recorded by Keith Urban. The single spent multiple weeks at the top of the charts and earned two Grammy nominations. Olsen is a native of Canada.

(More Breakthrough Songwriter nominees on page 14)
Taylor Phillips brewed up his first No. 1 in 2017, with the hit single “Hurricane.” The North Carolina native co-wrote the song with fellow nominees Thomas Archer and Luke Combs, who recorded the track. The song first charted in July 2015 when Combs was an independent artist.

Jordan Schmidt notched his first two hits as a songwriter during the last year. His co-write "Lights Come On," recorded by Jason Aldean, lit up the No. 1 spot. Additionally, Schmidt kicked up dust on the airwaves with "If The Boot Fits," recorded by Granger Smith and co-written with fellow nominee Andy Albert.

Jason Sever has had numerous cuts by top artists, but his first hit came as co-writer of Dustin Lynch's “Seein’ Red.” Sever penned the No. 1 song with Kurt Allison, who is also nominated in this category.

Abe Stoklasa notched his first two radio hits, getting listeners hooked on his No. 1 "Fix," recorded by Chris Lane. He also co-wrote Ben Rector's "Brand New" which went top-10 on Billboard's Adult Top 40 chart. Stoklasa scored on collaborations with Charles Kelley, as co-writer of the Grammy-nominated song "The Driver," and "Leaving Nashville" which is vying for MusicRow Song of the Year.

Daniel Tashian, a longtime artist and songwriter, broke through on the country charts as co-writer of Josh Turner's No. 1 "Hometown Girl." Tashian is lead singer of The Silver Seas, and has had sync placements in hit television shows including Nashville and Pretty Little Liars.

Josh Thompson, an established songwriter and artist, scored his first No. 1 hit in 2017, as a co-writer of “Any Ol’ Barstool,” recorded by Jason Aldean. The Wisconsin native turned Nashville mainstay previously charted six other singles, the highest reaching No. 15.

Michael Tyler earned his first No. 1 with “Somewhere On A Beach,” co-written with fellow nominee Josh Mirenda and driven to the top of the charts by Dierks Bentley. Tyler is a Missouri native who signed a recording contract with Reviver Records in 2016.

Emily Weisband’s first writing appointment with Hillary Scott resulted in the Grammy-winning song “Thy Will.” Recorded by Hillary Scott and The Scott Family, it was a major CCM hit and marked Weisband’s first No. 1.
**29TH ANNUAL MUSICROW AWARDS**

**FINAL NOMINATIONS**

**JON PARDI**

Breakthrough Artist of the Year
Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year

“Head Over Boots”
#1 most played Billboard Country Song of 2016
#1 most shazamed country song

“Dirt On My Boots”
3 Week #1 Hit • RIAA Certified Gold

“California Sunrise is a triumph of gritty, honky-tonkin’, old-school country with a healthy dose of ballsy guitar rock” — Hits Magazine

UMG Nashville congratulates our MusicRow Award Nominees!

**LAUREN ALAINA**

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR

“There’s a reason Lauren Alaina manages to stay top of mind... and that’s her powerhouse, honey-toned vocals that meld timeless twang with a modern sass.” — Rolling Stone

#1 Single “Road Less Traveled”
BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow’s subscribed members to honor a Nashville songwriter who wrote or co-wrote a Top 10 song for the first time. In addition, the qualifying song was not recorded by the nominated songwriter.

**Kelly Archer**
Stars And Stripes, Maple Leaf Music, Downtown (BMI) “Sleep Without You,” recorded by Brett Young

**Thomas Archer**
MV2 Entertainment (BMI) “Hurricane,” recorded by Luke Combs

**Justin Ebach**
Wordcountry, Warner/Chappell (SESAC) “Sleep Without You,” recorded by Brett Young

**Jesse Lee**
Roster: Parallel (SESAC) Song: ole Purple Cape Music (BMI) “Peter Pan,” recorded by Kelsea Ballerini

**Josh Mirenda**
Corman Music, Warner/Chappell (ASCAP) “Somewhere On A Beach,” recorded by Dierks Bentley

**Jamie Moore**
Big Loud (ASCAP) “May We All,” recorded by Florida Georgia Line ft Tim McGraw

**Steven Lee Olsen**
Corman Music, Warner/Chappell (ASCAP) “Blue Ain’t Your Color,” recorded by Keith Urban

**Taylor Phillips**
InTune Entertainment (BMI) “Hurricane,” recorded by Luke Combs

**Jordan Schmidt**
Tree Vibe, Warner/Chappell (ASCAP) “Lights Come On,” recorded by Jason Aldean; “If The Boot Fits,” recorded by Granger Smith

**Jason Sever**
Little Champion Music, Warner/Chappell (ASCAP) “Seein’ Red,” recorded by Dustin Lynch

**Abe Stoklasa**
Big Yellow Dog (ASCAP) “Fix,” recorded by Chris Lane; “Brand New,” recorded by Ben Rector

**Daniel Tashian**
Big Yellow Dog (BMI) “Hometown Girl,” recorded by Josh Turner

**Josh Thompson**
Big Music Machine, Two Lane Collections (BMI) “Any Ol’ Barstool,” recorded by Jason Aldean

**Michael Tyler**
peermusic (SESAC) “Somewhere On A Beach,” recorded by Dierks Bentley

**Emily Weisband**
THIS Music, Warner/Chappell (ASCAP) “Thy Will,” recorded by Hillary Scott and The Scott Family
Sony/ATV congratulates our MUSICROW AWARD NOMINEES

Breakthrough Artist & Artist-Writer

JON PARDI

Song of the Year

KILL A WORD - ERIC CHURCH
(Eric Church/Jeff Hyde/Luke Dick)

VICE - MIRANDA LAMBERT
(Miranda Lambert/Josh Osborne/Shane McAnally)

WANNA BE THAT SONG - BRETT ELDREDGE
(Brett Eldredge/Ross Copperman/Scooter Caruso)

Producer of the Year

ROSS COPPERMAN
Lauren Alaina’s first No. 1 hit, “Road Less Traveled” is an empowering message of self-acceptance which she co-wrote with Jesse Frasure and Meghan Trainor. The rising star also contributed to all 12 songs on her album, which earned her first ACM nomination for New Female Vocalist of the Year. Alaina’s career received a major jumpstart when she appeared on Season 10 of American Idol. She will spend the summer touring with fellow Georgia native Luke Bryan.

Tucker Beathard broke through with his debut single “Rock On,” which reached No. 1 on MusicRow’s CountryBreakout chart. He co-wrote the song with dad Casey Beathard and Marla Cannon-Goodman. A multi-instrumentalist, Tucker plays lead guitar and drums throughout his Fight Like Hell EP. This summer fans can catch Beathard performing at some of music’s biggest festivals, including Summerfest, Bonnaroo and Lollapalooza.

Luke Combs built his career one show at a time, growing from 3-hour acoustic sets in his native North Carolina to touring this summer with Brantley Gilbert and performing at Bonnaroo and CMA Music Fest. Combs self-released music for years, including the song that would eventually become his debut single and first No. 1, “Hurricane.” The singer co-wrote the song with fellow nominees Thomas Archer and Taylor Phillips. Combs has writing credits on every track on his album This One’s for You, set for release on June 2.

Jon Pardi’s “Head Over Boots” was his first No. 1 song as an artist and songwriter. Co-written with Luke Laird, the track has been certified Platinum and helped the singer secure the title of ACM New Male Vocalist of the Year. He followed that success with another No. 1, “Dirt On My Boots.” Heading into summer, Pardi releases new single “Heartache on the Dance Floor” and hits the road with Dierks Bentley, and Tim McGraw and Faith Hill.

Brett Young co-wrote his first two singles, “Sleep Without You” and “In Case You Didn’t Know,” which also became his first No. 1 hits. In addition, the ACM nominee is a co-writer of “Love Again,” the current single by Nash Next winner Todd O’Neil. Young will tour Canada with Thomas Rhett, before spending the summer on the road with Lady Antebellum. “Sleep Without You” was also the first No. 1 for Young’s co-writers Justin Ebach and Kelly Archer, who are nominated for MusicRow Breakthrough Songwriter.
SONY MUSIC NASHVILLE CONGRATULATES OUR MUSICROW AWARDS NOMINEES!

MIRANDA LAMBERT
VICE
SONG OF THE YEAR

MAREN MORRIS
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR

LUKE COMBS
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow’s subscribed members to honor a Nashville songwriter and artist who for the first time wrote or co-wrote a Top 10 song, which they also recorded.

Lauren Alaina
“Road Less Traveled”
Warner/Chappell (BMI)

Tucker Beathard
“Rock On”
Big Music Machine, Fade 49 Music (BMI)

Luke Combs
“Hurricane”

Jon Pardi
“Head Over Boots”
The Song Factory, admin by Sony/ATV (BMI)

Brett Young
“Sleep Without You” and “In Case You Didn’t Know”
Super Big Music, Caliville Publishing, admin by Big Machine Music (ASCAP)
29th Annual MusicRow Awards

Final Nominations

Sea Gayle

Music

Congratulates

Clint Lagerberg

“Blue Ain’t Your Color”

By Keith Urban

Music Row

Song of the Year

Nominee
“Blue Ain’t Your Color”
The title “Blue Ain’t Your Color” came to Steven Lee Olsen in the middle of the night. He took the idea to co-writer Clint Lagerberg and then recruited Hillary Lindsey. The result was a present-day classic about a woman feeling blue and the suitor trying to paint her bright. Keith Urban was hooked immediately when he heard the demo. MusicRow Producer of the Year nominee Dann Huff added studio finesse and the song went on to earn two Grammy nominations. Meanwhile, Olsen is also nominated for MusicRow Breakthrough Songwriter.

“Kill A Word”
Eric Church, Jeff Hyde and Luke Dick made a profound statement on Church’s hit “Kill A Word.” Dick had the initial idea for the song about stopping negative words—conjuring imagery with lyrics like “poison never,” “shoot goodbye,” “choke lonely” and “hang hate,” with a redeeming chorus that says, “I’d turn lies and hate to love and truth.” The track landed on Church’s album Mr. Misunderstood, which went on to win CMA Album of the Year. It was helmed by MusicRow Producer of the Year nominee Jay Joyce.

“Leaving Nashville”
Penned by Abe Stoklasa and Donovan Woods, this ode to songwriters and their community resonated up and down Music Row. “Leaving Nashville” is a journey through the highs and lows of the trade—where “If it ain’t a single, it don’t mean nothing.” But, ultimately, the song is about dedication to the music, because as Stoklasa and Woods wrote, they “ain’t never leaving Nashville.” The song was recorded by Charles Kelley. Stoklasa is also nominated for MusicRow Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year.

“Vice”
“When it hurts this good you gotta play it twice...” Miranda Lambert served up a cocktail of regret, sadness and escapism in her hit song “Vice.” Together with co-writers Josh Osborne and Shane McAnally, they crafted lyrics of simultaneous heartache and attraction: “All dressed up in a pretty black label/Sweet salvation on a dining room table/Waiting on me/Where the numb meets the lonely.” The song went on to earn a Grammy nomination. Frank Liddell is nominated for MusicRow Producer of the Year.

“Wanna Be That Song”
“Every life has a soundtrack” and Brett Eldredge wants to be yours. He co-wrote these words with Scooter Carusoe and Ross Copperman, and says “Wanna Be That Song” captures who he wants to be as an artist. The poignant song describes lovers together in the “window booth at a bar,” “back pew on a Sunday” and “crowded bleachers,” and evokes emotions that “makes you dance, makes you fall/that melody rewinds years...makes time stall.” Copperman is also nominated for Producer of the Year.

CONGRATULATIONS
BRETT ELDREDGE
ON YOUR
MUSICROW NOMINATION
FOR SONG OF THE YEAR FOR
"WANNA BE THAT SONG"

NEW ALBUM AVAILABLE AUGUST 4TH
Song of the Year

Voted by MusicRow’s subscribed members to honor Nashville writers and publishers on the craft of songwriting, not necessarily chart performance.

“Blue Ain’t Your Color”
Recorded by: Keith Urban
Writers: Steven Lee Olsen, Hillary Lindsey, Clint Lagerberg

“Kill A Word”
Recorded by: Eric Church ft Rhiannon Giddens
Writers: Eric Church, Jeff Hyde, Luke Dick

“Leaving Nashville”
Recorded by: Charlie Kelley
Writers: Abe Stoklasa, Donovan Woods
Publisher: Year of the Dog Music (Big Yellow Dog) administered by Words & Music, Shakapublishing, administered by Downtown DLJ Songs, ASCAP

“Vice”
Recorded by: Miranda Lambert
Writers: Miranda Lambert, Josh Osborne, Shane McAnally

“Wanna Be That Song”
Recorded by: Brett Eldredge
Writers: Brett Eldredge, Ross Copperman, Scooter Carusoe
CONGRATULATIONS
WILLIAM MICHAEL MORGAN
ON YOUR
MUSICROW BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST
OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

NEW SINGLE “MISSING” AVAILABLE NOW

2017 Next Big Thing

The Playlist:
21 Songs from 2016
That Nearly Got Away

2016’s Top 100
Songs – All Genre

40 Best Country Albums
of 2016 & 25 Best Country
Songs of 2016

Best of 2016 Country
Albums & Best of 2016
Country Tracks
Lauren Alaina
Lauren Alaina celebrated her first No. 1 song in April 2017 with “Road Less Traveled.” She had double reason to toast her success because she also co-wrote the song. It took the rising star five singles and six years of hard work to earn the hit, which she says made victory that much sweeter. *Road Less Traveled* is the title of her sophomore studio album, which is also home to her new single, “Doin’ Fine.” She recently wrapped the CMT Next Women of Country Tour with Martina McBride.

William Michael Morgan
William Michael Morgan went straight to the pinnacle of the charts with his debut single, “I Met A Girl,” a love song that showcases his traditional sound. Morgan’s debut album, *Vinyl*, was produced by Scott Hendricks and Jimmy Ritchey. Now the singer is working his follow-up single “Missing.” The Vicksburg, Mississippi native recently wrapped a tour with Lee Brice and Justin Moore.

Maren Morris
Maren Morris’ first major-label album broke through in a major way. *Hero* yielded the Platinum single “My Church,” and the follow-up hit “80s Mercedes.” The Arlington, Texas native racked up trophies including a Grammy for Best Country Solo Performance, CMA New Artist of the Year, and ACM Album and Single Record of the Year. Now she’s singing her new ballad “I Could Use a Love Song.” Morris is busy on her sold-out headlining tour for the rest of the year.

Jon Pardi
Jon Pardi scored back-to-back No. 1 hits during the last year, with the tunes “Dirt On My Boots” and “Head Over Boots,” the latter of which he co-wrote. The songs are representative of his brand of traditional country, drawing influences from ’90s hitmakers and genre icons including George Strait. Pardi’s current album, *California Sunrise*, is named for his home state and opened at No. 1. It is the follow-up to his 2014 debut, *Write You a Song*, which yielded the Top 10 “Up All Night.”

Brett Young
Brett Young notched two No. 1 songs from his self-titled, debut album; the upbeat “Sleep Without You” and the sensitive ballad “In Case You Didn’t Know.” Both of the tracks have been certified Gold by the RIAA. The California native co-wrote these hits and all but one song on his album. The self-titled debut project was helmed by star producer Dann Huff, who is nominated for MusicRow Producer of the Year.
CATEGORY FIVE

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Voted by MusicRow’s subscribed members to honor a Nashville artist who achieved significant career progress for the first time.

Lauren Alaina
UMG Nashville

William Michael Morgan
Warner Music Nashville

Maren Morris
Sony Music Nashville

Jon Pardi
UMG Nashville

Brett Young
Big Machine Label Group

BALLOTS EMAILED TO SUBSCRIBED MEMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 24
PRODUCER OF THE YEAR
To honor a producer’s work on albums active during the awards time period. Can include, but is not limited to, single chart performance and album sales.

2016: Dave Cobb
2015: Jay Joyce
2014: Frank Liddell
2013: Dann Huff
2012: Frank Liddell
2011: Paul Worley
2010: Frank Liddell & Mike Wrucke
2008-09: Frank Rogers
2007: Byron Gallimore
2006: Dann Huff
2005: Frank Rogers
2004: Buddy Cannon
2003: James Stroud
2002: Keith Stegall
2001: Mark Wright
1999-2000: Byron Gallimore

PRODUCER HONOR ROLL
Producer earning the most Top 20 singles and Top 10 albums for each year. Became Producer of the Year in 1999.

1998: No award presented
1997: Wilbur C. Rimes
1996: Tony Brown
1995: Allen Reynolds
1994: James Stroud
1993: Tony Brown
1991-92: Allen Reynolds
1990: Tony Brown
1982-89: Jimmy Bowen

BREAKTHROUGH SONGWRITER
To honor a Nashville songwriter(s) who, for the first time in their career, wrote or co-wrote a Top 10 song.

2016: Marren Morris
2015: Michael Carter
2014: Nicolle Galyon and Cole Swindell (tie)
2013: Kacey Musgraves
2012: Johnny Bulford and Phil Barton
2011: Kimberly Perry
2010: Chris Young
2009: James Otto
2008: Luke Bryan
2007: Chris Tompkins and Josh Kear
2006: Jason Matthews
2005: Vicky McGehee
2004: Jim Brown/Don Rollins
2003: Lee Thomas Miller
2002: Anthony Smith
2001: Troy Verges
2000: Carolyn Dawn Johnson
1999: Phil Vassar
1998: Harley Allen
1997: Cathy Majeski, Sunny Russ, Stephony Smith
1996: Jim Lauderdale

TOP SONGWRITERS
Songwriter earning the most Top 20 singles for each year. Category merged with Breakthrough Songwriter in 1998.

1997: Craig Wiseman
1996: Mark D. Sanders
1995: Tom Shapiro
1994: Gary Burr
1993: Clint Black
1992: Garth Brooks
1991: Pat Alger
1987-90: Don Schlitz
1986: Dave Loggins
1985: Troy Seals

BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST
Voted by readers to honor an artist who achieved significant career progress for the first time.

2016: Old Dominion
2015: Sam Hunt
2014: Brandy Clark
2013: Kacey Musgraves
2012: Eli Young Band
2011: The Band Perry
2010: Zac Brown Band
2009: Jamey Johnson
2008: Lady Antebellum

CRITICS’ PICK/NEW ARTIST
To recognize an outstanding new artist who released their first single in the awards year. Became Breakthrough Artist in 2008.

2007: Taylor Swift
2006: Carrie Underwood
2005: Miranda Lambert
2004: Buddy Jewell
2003: Joe Nichols
2002: Blake Shelton
2001: Mark McGuinn
2000: Eric Heatherly
SONG OF THE YEAR
To honor writers and publishers on the craft of songwriting, not necessarily chart performance.

2016: “Humble and Kind,” written by Lori McKenna; published by Songs of Universal, Hoodie
2015: “Girl Crush,” written by Hillary Lindsey, Lori McKenna, Liz Rose; published by Warner-Tamerlane, Songs of Crazy Girl, Songs of Universal, Hoodie, HillarodyRathbone, BMG
2014: “All Kinds Of Kinds,” written by Phillip Coleman and Don Henry; published by Carnival Music, Warner-Tamerlane
2013: (tie) “I Drive Your Truck,” written by Jessi Alexander, Connie Harrington, Jimmy Yeary; published by Vistaville Music, Happy Tears Music, EMI Blackwood, Watch This Girl Publishing, Great Day At This Time Music, Beattyville Music
“Merry Go ‘Round,” written by Kacey Musgraves, Josh Osborne, Shane McAnally; published by 351 Music, Warner Tamerlane, Crazy Water Music, Little Blue Egg, Universal Music, Want A Fresh One
2011: “If I Die Young,” written by Kimberly Perry; published by Pearfeather, Rio Bravo
2008: “Letter To Me,” written by Brad Paisley; published by EMI April Music, New Sea Gayle Music

2007: “Stealing Kisses,” written by Lori McKenna; published by Melanie Howard Music, Inc.
2000: “He Didn’t Have To Be,” written by Brad Paisley, Kelley Lovelace; published by EMI April Music, Sea Gayle Music, Love Ranch Music
1999: “Don’t Laugh At Me,” written by Allen Shamblin, Steve Seskin; published by Built On Rock Music, David Aaron Music, Love This Town Music
1998: “Something That We Do,” written by Clint Black, Skip Ewing; published by Blackened Music, Opryland Music Group
1997: “Friends,” written by Jerry Holland; published by That’s A Smash Publishing, Mike Curb Music