



Gala guests, saddle up! Four of country music's top singer-songwriters share the stories behind their #1 hits and Grammy-winning songs in tonight's performance - just for you.

Aaron Raitiere



Grammy-winning songwriter behind "I'll Never Love Again" and "You Look Like You Love Me."

Aaron Raitiere (Ray-Tee-Air) is a lyricist, performer, and visual artist from Central Kentucky known for his distinctive voice and collaborative creativity within the Nashville songwriting community. He earned a Grammy Award for co-writing "I'll Never Love Again," performed by Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper in *A Star Is Born*, and received a 2023 Grammy nomination for his work on Ashley McBryde's acclaimed album *Lindeville*.

Raitiere has collaborated with a wide range of artists including Lainey Wilson ("4x4xU"), Ella Langley ("You Look Like You Love Me" feat. Riley Green and "Country Boy's Dream Girl"), Bob Weir of The Grateful Dead, Anderson East, Midland, Miranda Lambert, Travis Tritt, Ed Sheeran, Avicii, and many others.

Brice Long



Songwriter of chart-topping hits including "Heartache on the Dance Floor" and "Nothing On but the Radio."

Brice Long has enjoyed a successful 25+ year career as one of Nashville's most respected songwriters. His catalog includes more than 150 recorded songs by artists such as Garth Brooks, George Strait, Chris Stapleton, Reba McEntire, Randy Travis, Cody Johnson, Chris Young, and Jon Pardi.

His songwriting credits include the #1 hits "Heartache on the Dance Floor" by Jon Pardi and "Nothing On but the Radio" by Gary Allan, as well as Randy Houser's "Like a Cowboy," which earned a CMA Song of the Year nomination. A native of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, Long is signed to Sony Music Publishing and continues to write and perform throughout Nashville and beyond.



Marla Cannon-Goodman



Hit songwriter behind “The Fool” and “Ten Rounds with José Cuervo.”

Marla Cannon-Goodman grew up in Kingston Springs, Tennessee, surrounded by some of country music’s most influential songwriters, including her father, renowned producer Buddy Cannon. While working as a nurse, her song “The Fool,” recorded by

Lee Ann Womack, reached #1 on the country charts and launched her songwriting career.

She has since written hits recorded by artists including Blake Shelton, Kenny Chesney, Eric Church, George Strait, and Sammy Kershaw. Her additional #1 songs include Tracy Byrd’s “Ten Rounds with José Cuervo” and Rodney Atkins’ “Cleaning This Gun.” Her work also appears on the Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard album *Django and Jimmie*, and her song “Same Devil,” recorded by Brandy Clark featuring Brandi Carlile, earned a Grammy nomination.

Aaron Barker



Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame inductee and writer of multiple #1 hits for George Strait.

Singer-Singer-songwriter Aaron Barker is best known for writing some of George Strait’s most enduring hits, including the #1 songs “Baby Blue,” “Love Without End, Amen,” “Easy Come, Easy Go,” and “I Can Still Make Cheyenne.” His songs have also been

recorded by artists such as Lonestar, Clay Walker, Trace Adkins, Willie Nelson, and The Oak Ridge Boys.

Born in San Antonio, Texas, Barker built his career as both a performer and songwriter before achieving major success in Nashville. In recognition of his lasting contributions to country music, he was inducted into the Texas Heritage Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2007 and the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2016.