



2021 AIMP Nashville Awards Winners Announced at 6th Annual Event

April 28, 2021 (Nashville, TN) – The Nashville Chapter of the [Association of Independent Music Publishers \(AIMP\)](#) announced the winners of its 6th Annual AIMP Nashville Awards at a special socially distanced event hosted by Charles Esten at The Listening Room Café in Nashville on April 27th. The ceremony was also livestreamed to AIMP members.

During the ceremony, **Big Machine Music** was named Publisher of the Year, with Songwriter of the Year going to **Hillary Lindsey** (Concord Music Publishing) and Artist-Writer of the Year to **Ashley McBryde** (Jody Williams Songs). In addition, Song of the Year went to Lee Brice’s “**One of Them Girls**” (written by Ashley Gorley, Ben Johnson, Dallas Davidson, and Lee Brice), and HARDY’s “**Give Heaven Some Hell**” (written by Ashley Gorley, Ben Johnson, Hunter Phelps, Michael Hardy) was named Publisher’s Pick. AIMP Nashville also recognized **Matt Alderman** (Curb | Word Music Publishing) as Rising Songwriter of the Year and **Ruston Kelly** (Concord Music Publishing) as Rising Artist-Writer of the Year, with this year’s Song Champion award going to **Ward Guenther** (Whiskey Jam).



The AIMP Nashville Chapter Board of Directors — Back, from left: Mark Brown (Round Hill), Mike Sistad (ASCAP), John Ozier (Reservoir), Michael Martin (Endurance Music Group), ET Brown (SESAC), Chris VanBelkom (Combustion), Courtney Crist, and Alex Heddle (Big Machine). Front, from left: Duff Berschback (Concord), Shannan Hatch, Courtney Kruckeberg (Endurance Music Group), Kendall Lettow (Peer), and Emily Boardman (Hipgnosis). Not Pictured: Robert Carlton, Ree Guyer, Tim Hunze, Leslie Roberts, and Shannon Sanders.

The event also featured live performances of many of the night’s Song of the Year and Publisher’s Pick nominees, including Ashley McBryde performing Jon Pardi’s “Ain’t Always the Cowboy,” Carly Pearce performing Maddie & Tae’s “Die from a Broken Heart,” HARDY performing Jameson Rodgers’ “Some Girls” (which he also co-wrote), Jon Pardi performing Miranda Lambert’s “Bluebird,” Maddie & Tae performing Ashley McBryde’s “One Night Standards” (with McBryde accompanying on Jon Pardi’s guitar), and Tenille Arts & Adam Hambrick performing Carly Pearce & Lee Brice’s “I Hope You’re Happy Now.” Video performances of Lee Brice playing HARDY’s Publisher’s Pick winner “Give Heaven Some

Hell” and Ryan Hurd playing Lee Brice’s Song of the Year winner “One of Them Girls” were also shown at the event.

“Last night was a reaffirmation of the Nashville independent music community and the powerful work they have done to get us through this past year,” said Ree Guyer, Vice President of the AIMP Nashville Chapter and Co-Chair of the AIMP Nashville Awards. “As we approach the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are excited about the return of in-person songwriting sessions, writers’ rounds, and live performances, and know our winners and nominees will continue to create amazing music to soundtrack the hopefully joyous year ahead.”

“Congratulations to all the independent publishers and songwriters who won or were nominated for AIMP Nashville Awards this year!” said John Ozier, AIMP National Chair and President of the AIMP Nashville Chapter. “In an unprecedented and dark time, their songs provided a light for so many. It is a testament to the power of music, which would not exist without those who do the difficult and sometimes unheralded work of songwriting. We are happy to shine a light on them today.”

The full list of winners and nominees by category can be found below.

RISING SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

- Alex Kline (Ziggys Z Music)
- Benjy Davis (Big Machine Music)
- Jake Mitchell (Reservoir Media / Patrick Joseph Music)
- **WINNER** – Matt Alderman (Curb | Word Music Publishing)
- Neil Medley (Mojo Music & Media / Son of a Carl Music)
- Nicolette Hayford (River House / SMACKSongs)
- Steph Jones (Disney Music Publishing / Hipgnosis Song Group)

RISING ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR

- Avenue Beat (Tape Room Music)
- Jameson Rodgers (Combustion Music)
- **WINNER** – Ruston Kelly (Concord Music Publishing)
- Ryan Hurd (Big Machine Music)
- Tenille Arts (Oven Music)
- Tenille Townes (Big Yellow Dog)

ARTIST-WRITER OF THE YEAR

- **WINNER** – Ashley McBryde (Jody Williams Songs)
- Brothers Osborne (King Pen Music)
- Carly Pearce (Altadena)
- Eric Church (Little Louder Music)
- Jon Pardi (Song Factory Music)

SONG CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

- Allison Jones (Big Machine Label Group)
- Ciara Shortridge (Curb | Word Music Publishing)
- Jake Gear (Hang Your Hat Music)
- Laurel Kittleson-Cobb (Curb | Word Entertainment)
- Trina Smith-Dort (Me Gusta Music)

- **WINNER** – Ward Guenther (Whiskey Jam)

PUBLISHER’S PICK

- **“Beautiful Noise”** written by Alicia Keys, Brandi Carlile, Brandy Clark, Hailey Whitters, Hillary Lindsey, Lori McKenna, Linda Perry, Ruby Amanfu
Independently published by Atlas Music Publishing, Big Machine Music, Carnival Music, Concord Music Publishing, Creative Nation, Deep Dark Robot Music, Happy People Music, Like Butta Baby Music, Maps and Records Music, peermusic
Recorded by Brandi Carlile & Alicia Keys
- **“Better Than We Found It”** written by Jessie Jo Dillon, Jimmy Robbins, Laura Veltz, Maren Morris
Independently published by Big Ass Pile of Dimes Music, Big Machine Music, Heroes and Halos Music, Millicent Hill Music, JRM3, Muse Magic, Round Hill Music
Recorded by Maren Morris
- **“Chasing After You”** written by Brinley Addington, Jerry Flowers
Independently published by Adding Tone Music, Combustion Music, Downtown Music Group, Mojo Music & Media, Tape Room Music
Recorded by Maren Morris & Ryan Hurd
- **WINNER – “Give Heaven Some Hell”** written by Ashley Gorley, Ben Johnson, Hunter Phelps, Michael Hardy
Independently published by Big Blue Nation Music, Caleb’s College Fund, Relative Music Group, Round Hill Music, Tape Room Music
Recorded by HARDY
- **“Janice at the Hotel Bar”** written by Hailey Whitters, Lori McKenna
Independently published by Carnival Music, Creative Nation, Concord Music Publishing, Maps and Records Music, Pulse Music Group
Recorded by Hailey Whitters
- **“Things a Man Oughta Know”** written by Jason Nix, Jonathan Singleton, Lainey Wilson
Independently published by Big Machine Music, Spirit Music
Recorded by Lainey Wilson

SONG OF THE YEAR

- **“Ain’t Always the Cowboy”** written by Brandon Kinney, Josh Thompson
Independently published by Big Machine Music, MV2 Music, peermusic, Whiskey Tub Music
Recorded by Jon Pardi
- **“Bluebird”** written by Luke Dick, Miranda Lambert, Natalie Hemby
Independently published by Emileon Songs, Little Louder Songs
Recorded by Miranda Lambert
- **“Die From a Broken Heart”** written by Deric Rutan, Jonathan Singleton, Madison Marlow, Taylor Dye
Independently published by Big Machine Music, Jehovah Nissi Music, Seven Red Birds Publishing, Spirit Music
Recorded by Maddie & Tae
- **“I Hope You’re Happy Now”** written by Carly Pearce, Jonathan Singleton, Luke Combs, Randy Montana
Independently published by 50 Egg Music, Altadena, Big Machine Music, Jett Music, Spirit Music, Straight Dimes Publishing
Recorded by Carly Pearce & Lee Brice

- **WINNER – “One of Them Girls”** written by Ashley Gorley, Ben Johnson, Dallas Davidson, Lee Brice
Independently published by 8Minute Publishing, Artist Publishing Group, Big Blue Nation Music, Caleb’s College Fund, Play It Again Music Group, Natalia’s Music Money, Round Hill Music
Recorded by Lee Brice
- **“One Night Standards”** written by Ashley McBryde, Nicolette Hayford, Shane McAnally
Independently published by Canned Biscuit Songs, River House, SMACKSongs, Smackstreet Music, Tempo Investments
Recorded by Ashley McBryde
- **“Some Girls”** written by CJ Solar, Jake Mitchell, Michael Hardy
Independently published by Harding Road Music, Sea Gayle Music, Relative Music Group, West Pass Music
Recorded by Jameson Rodgers

SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

- Michael Hardy (Relative Music Group)
- Ashley Gorley (Round Hill Music)
- Shane McAnally (Tempo Investments)
- Josh Thompson (MV2 Entertainment)
- Ernest K Smith (Big Loud Music)
- **WINNER –** Hillary Lindsey (Concord Music Publishing)

PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR

- **WINNER –** Big Machine Music
- Downtown Music Publishing
- Kobalt Music
- peermusic
- Round Hill Music
- SMACKSongs

The AIMP Nashville Awards Committee consists of:

Founding Chairman:

Michael McAnally Baum
Ree Guyer

2021 AIMP Nashville Awards Committee:

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About AIMP

The Association of Independent Music Publishers (AIMP) was formed in 1977 and has local chapters in Los Angeles, New York, and Nashville. The organization's primary focus is to educate and inform music publishers about the most current industry trends and practices by providing a forum for the discussion of the issues and problems confronting the music publishing industry. The opportunity to exchange ideas and opinions with others on issues of mutual concern is fostered by the atmosphere at the AIMP's monthly meetings, forums, and workshops, the videos of which can be seen (along with more general info on the organization) at www.aimp.org.

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