



Rising Country Singer/Songwriter Maren Morris to Receive Breakthrough Artist Award at Music Biz 2017

January 9, 2017 – The Music Business Association (Music Biz) will present a prestigious Breakthrough Artist Award to rising Country star **Maren Morris** at the Music Biz 2017 convention’s Awards Luncheon on Thursday, May 18, at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel. Morris released her debut album for Columbia Nashville, *HERO*, on June 3, 2016, becoming the label’s first artist of the SoundScan era to top the Billboard Country chart with their first album. Fueled by the Platinum-certified single “My Church,” Morris went on to win New Artist of the Year at the CMA Awards, after tying Eric Church and Chris Stapleton for most nominations. She also received the Breakthrough Artist Award at Billboard’s annual Women in Music Gala, and performed on the December 10, 2016, episode of *Saturday Night Live*. She is also nominated for four 2017 GRAMMY Awards, including Best New Artist, Best Country Song and Best Country Solo Performance for “My Church,” and Best Country Album for *HERO*.



Morris, along with Pop and Soul band [Lukas Graham](#), will join the ranks of past Music Biz Breakthrough Artist Award recipients Carrie Underwood, John Legend, The Killers, Nicki Minaj, Emeli Sandé, Ariana Grande, Meghan Trainor, Sam Hunt, and Halsey.

“It’s been a fantastic year for Maren, and we’re happy to recognize her many accomplishments with a Music Biz 2017 Breakthrough Artist Award,” said James Donio, President of Music Biz. “From writing songs for Tim McGraw, Kelly Clarkson, the Brothers Osbourne, and the TV show *Nashville*; to opening shows for Keith Urban, Brett Eldredge, Chris Stapleton, Sam Hunt, Loretta Lynn, and Little Big Town; to achieving massive success as a performer on the back of her new album, *HERO*; Maren has already

accomplished more at the young age of 26 than most artists do in a lifetime. We can't wait to see where she goes from here."

"Thanks to Music Biz for this Award, and thanks to my fans for making this a truly amazing year for me and my music," said Morris. "All I ever wanted to do was write songs, so it's a true gift to see them resonating with so many people. I'll see you all in Nashville!"

Born in Arlington, TX, Morris moved to Nashville at age 20 to pursue a career as a singer/songwriter. There, she fell in with like-minded Country artists the Brothers Osborne, Kacey Musgraves, and Lucie Silvas, who each pushed each other to evolve into unique, game-changing artists. After self-releasing a five-song self-titled EP in August 2015, racking up 2.5 million Spotify streams in only a month, Morris was signed by Columbia Nashville, who re-released the EP with a major push for lead single "My Church."

The song soon set the record for most adds on the Billboard Country Airplay chart for a debut artist's first single at Country radio, eventually being certified Platinum. The full-length album *HERO* followed in 2016, launching at #1 on the Billboard Country Albums chart and #5 on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart. After wrapping an opening stint for Keith Urban and Brett Eldredge on the RipCORD World Tour 2016, Morris will embark on her first headlining tour in February with support from Ryan Hurd and Devin Dawson.

Music Biz 2017, which will return to Nashville from May 15-18, is the music industry's premier event, giving the commerce and content sectors a place to meet with trading partners, network with new companies, and learn about new trends and products impacting the music business. This year's event will cover topics including Touring, Live Streaming, Vinyl, Messaging, International, D2F, Crowdfunding, Tweens & Tech, e-Commerce, Playlisting, A&R, Social Media, Licensing, Publishing, Hi-Res, VR, Management, and Professional Development and feature [a keynote from Troy Carter](#), Global Head of Creator Services at Spotify. Returning favorite sessions will include the Metadata Summit, Brand & Strategic Partnership Summit, and Entertainment & Technology Law Conference, as well as an encore for Music's Leading Ladies Speak Out and various special interest programs and breakout sessions.

In addition, the convention will also include a variety of Live Music Showcases, including the second annual Industry Jam, in which music business execs join big-name musicians onstage for an evening of live music. Music Biz will also present the Presidential Award for Outstanding Executive Achievement to Mike Dungan, Chairman and CEO of Universal Music Group Nashville, and the Independent Spirit Award to Terry Currier, Owner of the iconic Portland, OR-based record store Music Millennium. Discounted early bird registration is now open at www.musicbiz2017.com, and for a full list of currently confirmed programming, visit <https://musicbiz2017.sched.org>.

About the Music Business Association

The Music Business Association (Music Biz) is a membership organization that advances and promotes music commerce — a community committed to the full spectrum of monetization models in the industry. It provides common ground by offering thought leadership, resources and unparalleled networking opportunities, all geared to the specific needs of its membership. Music Biz brings a unique perspective and valuable insight into the trends and changes that innovation brings. Today, we put our collective experience to work across all delivery models: physical, digital, mobile, and more. Music Biz and its members are committed to building the future of music commerce — together.

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