



Country Music Association of Australia

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45th Country Music Awards of Australia **Judging Process**

Integrity Round

The Judging schedule will be starting on 5th October 2016. There are three rounds of judging, the first being the Integrity Round. This round determines whether the entry complies with the criteria of the category. In other words is this recording eligible for this particular category? It's a purely Yes or No vote and we're making sure the recordings are all in the correct category. We have three expert panels to determine Bush Ballad, Alternative Country and Bluegrass awards. If an entry is considered by a majority of our specialist Integrity Panel Judges for that category to not fall within the guidelines and criteria, the artist is contacted and provided with the opportunity to either select another category in which to transfer to, or withdraw that entry.

VIP Judging Round

VIP Judges are carefully selected from the Industry including artists, record companies, media, broadcasters, and other Industry professionals. This round involves the specially selected judges voting for their top 6 in each category. The numbers are carefully calculated and we end up with 5 Finalists in each category.

Auditing Process

This is a stage where the results of the VIP Judging are verified and audited by our appointed auditor, The Law Company, and the top five Finalists are confirmed in each category.

Announcement of the Finalists

The announcement of the top five Finalists in each category will take place on Tuesday 22nd November in Sydney.

Membership Judging Round

The last Judging round involves every financial CMAA professional member, as well as the VIP Judges. At this point the VIP Judge's vote counts for 2 points and the CMAA Member's votes count for 1 point. We are relying on the judgement and expertise of all CMAA Members to help pick the winners for 2017.

Final Audit Process

The results of CMAA Membership Round are handed over to the Audit committee headed up by Tamworth's The Law Company's Michael McHugh. They will be kept secret until the announcement at the 45th Golden Guitars Awards evening on Saturday 28th January 2017 when the eventual winner or winners receive their Awards.



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45th Country Music Awards of Australia Judging Guidelines- Sections

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

The Album will be judged on all aspects including but not limited to song selection, production, artist's performance and musical performance. An Album of the Year nominee cannot also nominate for Alternative Country Album of the Year in the same awards year. The album must contain a minimum of 70% previously unrecorded, and released for the first time in the relative eligibility period.

ALTERNATIVE COUNTRY MUSIC ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Alternative country is a loosely defined sub-genre of country music that includes acts that differ significantly in style from mainstream country music. It can be used to describe artists who push the boundaries of country music from the inside by incorporating influences ranging from roots rock, blues, bluegrass, rockabilly, honky-tonk, alternative rock and folk rock. It can also include outsiders who love the sound and spirit of country music and reinterpret it in personal, contemporary, and idiosyncratic ways.

This category has passed through an Alternative Album Integrity Panel of experts who have ruled on the eligibility of the entry. The introduction of this award recognises artists who sit stylistically outside the mainstream of country. It serves to recognise fringe artists who operate partially or wholly within the country music community and creates opportunities for artists who may have previously considered themselves too far outside the mainstream to consider nominating.

The Album will be judged on all aspects including but not limited to song selection, production, artist's performance and musical performance. There is a requirement that the album contains 70% previously unrecorded and released for the first time in the relative eligibility period.

Previously unreleased generally means that the songs are unreleased by any artist. An Alternative Country Album of the Year nominee cannot also nominate for Album of the Year in the same awards year.

MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Judged on an Album by the nominee that may be entered in either the Album of the Year or Alternative Country Album of the Year categories and released in the current eligibility period. The Judges for this category may choose to consider an artist's body of work for the period. This could include live work, touring, international work and general stature in the industry.

FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Judged on an Album by the nominee that may be entered in either the Album of the Year or Alternative Country Album of the Year categories and released in the current eligibility period. The Judges for this category may choose to consider an artist's body of work for the period. This could include live work, touring, international work and general stature in the industry.

COUNTRY MUSIC CAPITAL NEWS GROUP OR DUO OF THE YEAR

Judged on an Album by the nominee that may be entered in either the Album of the Year or Alternative Country Album of the Year categories and released in the current eligibility period. A Group or Duo is defined as an act, consisting of two or more people, all of whom normally perform together and none of whom is known primarily as an individual performing artist. No member of the group or duo may have any featured or solo vocal performance in their own right nominated in any category in the current awards year except APRA Song of the Year, Instrumental of the Year or Vocal Collaboration of the Year. The Judges for this category may choose to consider a Group or Duo's body of work for the period. This could include live work, touring, international work and general stature in the industry.

VOCAL COLLABORATION OF THE YEAR

Judged on one nominated track from an eligible commercially released single or album. Under this category, if the nominated track is taken from an album, the album must contain no less than seven (7) songs however the requirement that the album contains 70% previously unreleased songs **does not** apply. The nominated track must be a new recording first released during the current eligibility period. A Vocal Collaboration is defined as a recording by two or more people, each known primarily as a performer in their own right, working together on a 'one off' or occasional vocal collaboration. Each nominee must feature prominently as a lead vocalist, not as a harmony or background singer and must be clearly identified as a featured vocalist on any packaging and label copy.

BUSH BALLAD OF THE YEAR

This category has passed through a Bush Ballad Integrity Panel of experts who have ruled on the eligibility of the entry. A Bush Ballad is a lyrical narrative in song concerned with places, people, events and or attitudes clearly identifiable with Australia. It must be presented in a traditional manner which exhibits an understanding of the genre's musical and cultural values in the style established by Australia's pioneer performers. The Bush Ballad of the Year must be a new composition first released during the current eligibility period but may combine lyrics previously published as poems or ballads with new music or vice versa, creating a substantially new song. Please note: this category is dedicated to traditional bush ballads only. Bush Ballad is defined as: "A bush ballad nomination must be clearly related in lyrics, form, content, musical arrangement, instrumentation and presentation to the traditional roots of Australian country music as exemplified by pioneers and other early performers."

The CMAA would like to stress that this section is based on the song submitted and not whether the performer is a recognised "Bush Balladeer".

TOYOTA HERITAGE SONG OF THE YEAR

Judged on one nominated track from an eligible commercially released single or album that is not also nominated for Bush Ballad of the Year in the same year. The nominated track must be a new recording first released during the current eligibility period. The Toyota Heritage Song of the Year must be a new composition first released during the current eligibility period. A heritage song is a new Australian composition that is defined as a being about Australia, its people, history, geography, attitudes and ideals. The content and presentation must be recognisable as being an Australian song about Australia.

INSTRUMENTAL OF THE YEAR

The nominated track must be a new recording first released during the current eligibility period and cannot include any featured vocal performance. The track does not need to be an original composition.

BLUEGRASS RECORDING OF THE YEAR

This category has passed through a Bluegrass Integrity Panel of experts who have ruled on the eligibility of the entry. A nomination for Bluegrass Recording of the Year can be a vocal or an instrumental track. It must be clearly related in form, musical arrangement, instrumentation, and presentation to the traditional roots of bluegrass music as exemplified by pioneers such as Bill Monroe and Flatt and Scruggs. Nominations are not limited to traditional bluegrass but so called progressive bluegrass styles must exhibit and build on an understanding of the genre. If the nominated Bluegrass Recording is an instrumental only, then it cannot also be nominated in the Instrumental of the Year Category.

QANTASLINK NEW TALENT OF THE YEAR

Judged on one nominated track from an eligible commercially released single OR album. Under this category, if the nominated track is taken from an album, the album must contain no less than seven (7) songs however the requirement that the album contains 70% previously unreleased songs does not apply. An artist who has not previously been a finalist in any category may nominate for New Talent of the Year in up to three awards years. An artist who has previously been a finalist in New Talent of the Year, but has not won New Talent of the Year, may nominate one more time in that category. An artist who has previously won an award in any category or been a finalist in any category other than New Talent of the Year (one time) will not be eligible.

Judged on the Artist's performance on the nominated recording as well as their achievements throughout the year to establish themselves in the country music industry. The individual or group must have demonstrated significant commitment to their career by releasing recorded work of a high standard, performing live and engaging with the media.

APRA AMCOS SONG OF THE YEAR

This Award recognises excellence in songwriting, is awarded to the songwriter(s) and should be judged on the quality of the song. Other considerations such as the success of the recording or popularity of the artist should not be included. The nominated track must be a newly written Australian composition first released during the current eligibility period. Nominations in the category of APRA Song of the Year will only be accepted provided that the artist **and** composer are Australian or New Zealand citizens or permanent residents. Songwriters may nominate a track in the APRA AMCOS Song of the Year provided that (a) the same track has not been nominated by another Artist, (b) the Songwriter must be a financial member of the CMAA, and (c) recording must comply with the eligibility criteria for this category.

VIDEO CLIP OF THE YEAR

Video clips must be first released and available for broadcast or sale in the current awards year and are treated as releases in their own right, not tied to the recording release date. Video clips must be not more than ten minutes in duration, featuring the performance of not more than one song or medley. Judged on all audio and visual elements including but not limited to the artist/s performance, video concept and production.

SINGLE OF THE YEAR

Judged on one nominated track from an eligible commercially released single or Album or solely as a commercially available digital download from CMAA recognised DSP's such as iTunes during the eligibility period. The nominated track must be a new recording first released during the current eligibility period. A copy of the track must have been delivered to radio either digitally or on CD within the eligibility period for the clearly stated purpose of gaining radio play as a single.

This award recognises everything that makes a hit record - the song, the artist, the production and the intangibles that makes a song stand out on the radio and connect with the listening audience.