



PRESS RELEASE



COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME® AND MUSEUM TO UNVEIL NEW EXHIBIT, MARTINA MCBRIDE: THE POWER OF HER VOICE

Exhibit opens July 30 with artifacts including her many CMA Female Vocalist of the Year awards and ACM Female Vocalist of the Year awards

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 23, 2021 – The Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum is set to explore the music and legacy of influential vocalist **Martina McBride** in the exhibition *Martina McBride: The Power of Her Voice*. The exhibit encompasses the singer's journey from performing in her family's band as a child to becoming an award-winning country music artist with an enduring career delivering substantive and socially aware hit songs. *Martina McBride: The Power of Her Voice* opens July 30, 2021, and runs through Aug. 7, 2022.

McBride—known for hits including “Independence Day” and “A Broken Wing”—has ranked as one of country music's most powerful voices, owning four CMA Female Vocalist of the Year awards. The Kansas native released her major label debut in 1992 and had her first Top Ten single on *Billboard's* country charts in 1993 with “My Baby Loves Me.” Inspired by forerunners such as Linda Ronstadt and Country Music Hall of Fame members Reba McEntire and Connie Smith, McBride brought her own unique voice and style that helped further modernize the image of female artists in country music, choosing material that often highlighted women's strengths. In 2019, the Academy of Country Music presented her with the Cliffie Stone Icon Award for her contributions to country music.

“Martina McBride has been creating powerful, socially conscious country music for more than 25 years,” said museum CEO Kyle Young. “Her anthems of personal empowerment have addressed the challenges women face and contributed a much-needed perspective to the genre. The empathy at the core of her music informs her life offstage, where she advocates for female artists.”

Born July 29, 1966, Martina Mariea Schiff was raised on a dairy and wheat farm in Sharon, Kansas, population 200. By age seven, she began performing with her family's band, the Schiffers. After moving to Wichita, Kansas, she performed in rock bands in area clubs and met recording engineer John McBride, whom she married in 1988. After

returning home to sing with the Schiffers at a battle of the bands, she decided to move to Nashville and sing country music.

The McBrides moved to Nashville in January 1990, as country music exploded in popularity. John started working as a sound engineer on concert tours and, in 1991, became production manager for Garth Brooks. So that the newlyweds could spend more time together, Martina took a job on Brooks' tour selling T-shirts. She made a demo recording of five songs to pitch to record labels. To get the demo to the talent scouts at RCA Records, she got past the company's strict rules about submitting new material by writing, in large letters, "REQUESTED MATERIAL" on a bright purple package, even though RCA had not asked for the tape. The strategy worked. RCA signed McBride to a recording contract in 1991.

Focusing on traditional country music, McBride's debut album, *The Time Has Come*, was released in May 1992. The album received critical accolades, but it wasn't until the release of her second album, *The Way That I Am*, that she began achieving commercial success, with songs focused on what she described as "melody and message." The song "My Baby Loves Me" reached #2 on *Billboard's* country charts and depicts a woman reveling in her partner's love of the traits that make her different and distinctive. "Independence Day," an anthem portraying an abused wife and mother reaching a breaking point, was named Song of the Year in 1995 and Video of the Year in 1994 by the CMA.

The Way That I Am crossed the million-seller plateau in May 1995 and began a streak of platinum albums stretching into the 2000s. McBride ranked among country music's most acclaimed stars of the era. She won four CMA Female Vocalist of the Year awards, three consecutively (1999, 2002-2004), and three consecutive ACM Top Female Vocalist honors (2001–2003). In November 1995, she became a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

After years of crossover pop success, McBride returned to her roots in traditional country music with her 2005 album, *Timeless*, the first album she produced alone. She has continued as a commercial force: Each of her albums from 2007 to 2016 reached the Top Five on the country album chart. She continued as a cultural force, too: In 2015, she became a lead voice in combatting the dwindling airplay given to female country artists.

Martina McBride, who will mark her thirtieth year as a recording artist in 2022, epitomizes how country artists can find success as they reflect their changing times and address social issues in songs.

"Postponing the exhibit opening last year due to the pandemic was a difficult decision but the right one," said McBride. "It did, however, allow us more time to plan and dig through my archive to find several truly special artifacts. I'm excited to finally be able to let everyone see what we've created. Having an exhibit in the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum is something I've had on my dream list for a long, long time. Being able to share moments and mementos from my life and career with my fans and country music fans from all over the world is both humbling and exciting. I'm so grateful to be a part of country music."

Items featured in *Martina McBride: The Power of Her Voice* include awards, stage wear, handwritten lyrics and personal artifacts. Some highlights:

- Shirt, vest and pants ensemble worn on stage by McBride, when she performed at age seven with her family's band, the Schiffers
- McBride's 1984 Sharon High School yearbook
- The beaded headband and tulle veil worn by Martina at her wedding to John McBride, May 15, 1988
- Songwriter Gretchen Peters' original handwritten manuscript for "Independence Day"
- Letter from Dolly Parton to McBride, congratulating her on being named the Country Music Association's Female Vocalist of the Year in 2003
- Jenny Packham dress—embellished with rhinestones, beads and sequins—worn by McBride on the cover of her 2007 album *Wake Up Laughing*
- CMA Female Vocalist of the Year awards presented to McBride in 1999, 2002-2004
- ACM Female Vocalist of the Year awards presented to McBride in 2001-2003

In support of the exhibition's opening, McBride will participate in a conversation and performance in the museum's CMA Theater on Sunday, Aug. 1, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., discussing her career and sharing personal stories and memories associated with the artifacts included in *Martina McBride: The Power of Her Voice*. Tickets will be available at CountryMusicHallofFame.org on Friday, July 2.

More information about this exhibit can be found at www.CountryMusicHallofFame.org.

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Suggested Tweet: @CountryMusicHOF announces details of *Martina McBride: The Power of Her Voice*. The exhibit will run from July 30, 2021, through Aug. 7, 2022.

Photos of artifacts featured in *Martina McBride: The Power of Her Voice* can be found [here](#).

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About the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum:

The Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum collects, preserves, and interprets country music and its history for the education and entertainment of diverse audiences. In exhibits, publications, and educational programs, the museum explores the cultural importance and enduring beauty of the art form. The museum is operated by the Country Music Foundation, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization chartered by the state of Tennessee in 1964. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, and welcomes over one million patrons each year, placing it among the most visited museums in the U.S. The Country Music Foundation operates Historic RCA Studio B®, Hatch Show Print® poster shop, CMF Records, the Frist Library and Archive, and CMF Press. Museum programs are supported in part by the Metropolitan Nashville Arts Commission and Tennessee Arts Commission.

More information about the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum is available at www.countrymusicHallofFame.org or by calling (615) 416-2001.