2015 Country Music Association of Ontario Awards
"CMAO Awards"
Rules & Regulations

There are currently thirteen (13) CMAO Awards. The description of each award can be found in this document starting on page 4.

Award Category Number Eleven (11), the CMAO Impact Award, is voted on and determined by the Country Music Association of Ontario Board of Directors.

The selection of the remaining twelve (12) Awards goes through a three stage balloting process. Only CMAO members (Individual or Corporate status) in good standing as of January 31, 2015 can participate in the voting process.

The Awards & Balloting Process:

FIRST BALLOT: Each eligible CMAO member (Individual or Corporate status) in good standing as of January 31, 2015 may propose TWO AND ONLY TWO Contenders in each category. The ten (10) Contenders receiving the most mentions in each category will appear on the Second Ballot, providing they meet the eligibility requirements as determined by the CMAO Awards & Balloting Committee. Second Ballot Contenders are not required to be members of the CMAO.

SECOND BALLOT: From the list of Contenders supplied, each eligible CMAO member may vote for TWO AND ONLY TWO Contenders in each category. The six (6) Contenders receiving the most votes in each category will appear on the Third (Final) Ballot as Nominees, providing they meet the eligibility requirements as determined by the CMAO Awards & Balloting Committee.

THIRD (FINAL) BALLOT: From the list of Nominees supplied, each eligible CMAO member may vote for ONE AND ONLY ONE Nominee in each category. The Nominee receiving the most votes will be announced as the winner at the annual Awards Presentation.

Additional Balloting Information:

There must be three (3) Contenders after the First Ballot in any particular category in order for that category to remain in that current year. Categories with three (3) to six (6) Contenders after the First Ballot will move directly to the Third Ballot. If there are less than three (3) Contenders, the category will be placed on hiatus for the current year only. Only those Contenders within a category placed on hiatus may be eligible for the year immediately following the hiatus.

Each Contender must receive a minimum of five (5) votes in any category on the First Ballot in order to be eligible to appear on the Second Ballot.

The CMAO will open each stage of the balloting process with an announcement to members by email or mail containing a voting login user name and password. By sending this announcement to the last address provided to the Association by the member, the Association then considers the member deemed to have received their login information within the specified period of time after the mailing date.

Voting rules are subject to change at the discretion of the CMAO Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of the Contenders to notify the CMAO in writing of changes to ballot information prior to the deadline of the Second Ballot: Wednesday, March 25, 2015. Information as it appears on the Third Ballot is final.

CMAO members have the right, should they so desire, to have their name eliminated from any particular category. Please contact the CMAO Awards & Balloting Committee Chair by email at awards@cmaontario.ca by the closing of the Second Ballot, Wednesday, March 25, 2015 to remove your name if desired.

The Awards Eligibility:

The eligibility period for the 2015 CMAO Awards will be valid from October 1, 2013 through to November 30, 2014. Recordings must have been commercially released and available for consumer purchase during the eligibility period. Commercially released recordings include distribution through digital channels (i.e.: iTunes). Where a Contender/Nominee's eligibility is not based on the commercial release of a recording during the eligibility period, at least one in-person performance by the Contender/Nominee must take place during the eligibility period.

All Contenders/Nominees must meet one (1) of the following criteria of eligibility:

A) Canadian citizen born in the province of Ontario, OR;
B) Canadian citizen maintaining permanent residency in the province of Ontario for a period of two consecutive years, OR;
C) Have landed immigrant status maintaining permanent residency in the province of Ontario for a period of two consecutive years.

Exemption: On a collaboration of work at least one of the contributors must meet one (1) of the criteria of eligibility as stated above.

Exemption: Within a Group or Duo at least 50% of the contributors must meet one (1) of the criteria of eligibility as stated above.

All final Nominees are required to be members of the CMAO (Individual or Corporate status) in good standing. On a collaboration of work at least one of the contributors is required to be a member of the CMAO (Individual or Corporate status) in good standing. Within a Group or Duo at least 50% of the contributing members are required to be members of the CMAO (Individual or Corporate status) in good standing.

The Awards Description:

Below is additional detail on each of the thirteen (13) CMAO Awards:

CATEGORY NO. 1 SINGLE OF THE YEAR
This Award is for individual tracks and album tracks which have been released as singles during the eligibility period. Final Nominees from the previous year are not eligible in the current year. One Award is presented to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group). The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 2 ALBUM OF THE YEAR
This Award is for an album as a whole unit. An Album is defined as a project containing no less than six (6) tracks and can be a special project or commemorative package. The Album must have been released during the eligibility period and had a commercially released recording during the eligibility period. Final Nominees from the previous year are not eligible in the current year. The Album should be judged on all aspects including, but not limited to, artistic performance, musical background, engineering, packaging, design, art, layout and liner notes. One Award is presented to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group). Greatest Hits albums do not qualify. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 3 SONGWRITER(S) OF THE YEAR
This Award is not based on the songwriters' body of work, but rather an individual song released to radio and commercially available during the eligibility period. A song from a Greatest Hits album is eligible if not previously nominated. Final Nominees from the previous year are not eligible in the current year. A songwriter(s) may receive multiple nominations determined by the release of their songs within the eligibility period. Consideration should be given to lyrics, music, and public acceptance of the song. One Award is presented to (each of) the songwriter(s). The songwriter(s) must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 4 FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR
This Award is based upon individual performance, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Artist. The Artist must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 5 MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR
This Award is based upon individual performance, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Artist. The Artist must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 6 GROUP OR DUO OF THE YEAR
A Group or Duo is defined as an Act, composed of two or more people, who normally perform together. The Act may include an individual who has performed, or currently does perform, as a solo artist under a name different than that of the group or duo. A group or duo whose name capitalizes on the name of a solo artist is not permitted to stand for nomination in this category. This Award is based on the performance of the Group or Duo as a unit, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to each core member of the Group/Duo. At least 50% of the Group or Duo must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 7 ROOTS ARTIST OR GROUP OF THE YEAR
This Award is given to a Roots Act (Solo, Duo or Group) whose music is based on traditional country styles, but through innovations and originality, is different from what is considered mainstream country. The Roots category embraces a multitude of musical styles, including, but not limited to: Alternative Country, Bluegrass, Celtic, Country-Blues, Folk, Gospel, Hillbilly, Honky Tonk, Rockabilly and Western Swing. This Award is based on the performance of the Act, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to a Solo Artist or each core member of the Group/Duo. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 8 RISING STAR AWARD
This category is open only to those artists who have never before won the Rising Star Award and who have never before been nominated for the Female Artist of the Year, Male Artist of the Year, Group or Duo of the Year, or Roots Artist or Group of the Year. Nominees in this category are eligible in other categories in the current year. No Act (Solo, Duo or Group) shall be nominated for the Rising Star Award more than twice. This Award is based on the performance of the Act, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Act. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 9 MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR
This Award is for an original audio visual program not more than ten minutes in length featuring the performance of not more than one song or medley. The video should be judged on all audio and video elements, artistic performance, video concept and production. Lyric videos are not eligible. The video must have been first released for viewing by the general public, either on television or online, during the eligibility period. Final Nominees from the previous year are not eligible in the current year. One Award is presented to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group). The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

The Industry Awards Description:

These Awards are presented to honour individuals and organizations from the province of Ontario that have made a significant contribution to country music.

CATEGORY NO. 10 RECORD PRODUCER(S) OF THE YEAR
This Award recognizes excellence in record production. An eligible producer(s) will be recognized for a project(s) released within the eligibility period. In the event of co-production, the co-producer team would stand collectively for the co-production. Final Nominees from the previous year are not eligible in the current year. One Award is presented to (each of) the Producer(s). The Producer(s) must meet all eligibility criteria.

CATEGORY NO. 11 IMPACT AWARD
This Award was established to recognize an Act (Solo, Duo or Group), music industry person, company or organization that has left an enduring and indelibly positive footprint on the landscape of country music in Ontario. The recipient of this award is determined at the sole discretion of the CMAO Board of Directors. The award may not be presented annually.

The Broadcast Awards Description:

For CMAO Award purposes, a major market station is defined as a country music radio station in the province of Ontario that actively and consistently reports to Neilson Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) and/or Mediabase.

CATEGORY NO. 12 RADIO STATION OF THE YEAR (MAJOR MARKET)
CATEGORY NO. 13 RADIO STATION OF THE YEAR (SECONDARY MARKET)
These awards recognize the Ontario country radio stations that exemplify the development of Canadian country talent through the presentation of music on their stations through (but not limited to) community involvement, promotions, leadership and recognition. One Award is presented to the Radio Station in each market. The Radio Station in each market must meet all eligibility criteria.