

# The Weeknd, Maluma, CNCO to perform at MTV VMAs

NEW YORK, Aug. 12. (Agencies): Chart-topping Grammy winners The Weeknd and Roddy Ricch are set to perform at the 2020 MTV Video Music Awards this month.

MTV announced Tuesday that Colombian singer Maluma and Latin boy band CNCO will also perform at the Aug. 30 event, which was originally to take place at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn. The awards show will now be held outdoors at various places in New York City in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Previously announced performers include BTS, Doja Cat and J Balvin, while Keke Palmer will host the awards show. This year's VMAs introduces two new categories reflecting the current pandemic times: best music video from home and best quarantine performance.

Lady Gaga and Ariana Grande are the top contenders with nine nominations apiece. They are nominated for the top prize, video of the year, with their No. 1 collaboration "Rain on Me."

The Weeknd and Billie Eilish are the second-most nominated acts with six apiece. They are also up for video of the year with "everything i wanted" and "Blinding Lights," competing with Taylor Swift's "The Man," Future and Drake's "Life Is Good" and Eminem's "Godzilla," which features late rapper Juice WRLD.

Ricch is up for three honors, including song of the year for his No. 1 hit "The Box." CNCO has two nominations, and Maluma scored a single nod.

New York City was one of the first US cities hit hard by the virus, but cases have leveled off and some restrictions are being loosened.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's announcement in June that the VMAs would be held at Barclays surprised many and was a signal of the city's turnaround in its fight against the virus.

A statement by MTV and the Barclays Center promised the show would "pay homage to the incredible resiliency of New York with several outdoor performances around the City with limited or no audience."

The show plans to return to Barclays for its 2021 edition. VMAs is an award presented by the cable channel MTV to honor the best in the music video medium. Originally conceived as an alternative to the Grammy Awards (in the video category), the annual MTV Video Music Awards ceremony has often been called the "Super Bowl for youth", an acknowledgment of the VMA ceremony's ability to draw millions of youth from teens to 20-somethings each year.

One of the biggest tourist draws to South Carolina's Atlantic coast is the latest to succumb to the coronavirus pandemic.

This year's Carolina Country Music Fest in Myrtle Beach has been postponed until 2021 amid concerns about COVID-19. It is now scheduled for June 10-13, 2021, with the current lineup still on tap to perform, news outlets reported. This year's event, originally scheduled for June 4-7, had been postponed to Sept. 17.

Mayor Brenda Bethune said the music festival, which has become a staple in the city since it began in 2015, brings in around \$20 million a year and attracts more than 30,000 country music fans.

Recently, Gov. Henry McMaster's announced that concerts and other entertainment venues can open, as long as they are operating at no more than 50 percent capacity.

Festival organizers said in several social media posts the decision to postpone was a tough one to make but was made for the safety of all.

"The uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 made it increasingly clear that moving CCMF to 2021 was the best decision to protect the health and safety of fans, the community, artists, and CCMF staff," festival organizers said. "We appreciate everyone's patience and support as we worked tirelessly with the obstacles surrounding, yet again, the CCMF postponement."

All previously purchased tickets and parking passes will still be honored for the rescheduled dates. Tickets can be refunded upon request.

The lineup for this year's event was set to feature 30 country bands and artists, including headliners Luke Combs, Darius Rucker, Eric Church and Jake Owen.

Music

## Variety



Country singer Lindsay Ell poses on Aug. 3, in Nashville, Tenn. The Canadian-born singer and guitarist used her own journey through grief and trauma to fill a full album called 'heart theory'. (AP)

Music

'Heart theory' broken down into 7 stages of grief

## Ell confronts her trauma on album

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 12. (AP): Country singer Lindsay Ell lived alone with guilt and shame for years, but it took seeing herself in the story of another young girl to realize that she didn't have to be defined by her trauma.

While listening to teenagers talk about their experiences with sexual abuse at a youth center where Ell helped launch a music program, the Canadian-born singer and guitarist heard a 12-year-old girl explain how her parents had sold her into sex trafficking.

"All I want to do is reach out and tell her it's going to be OK because when I was 13 years old, I would have done anything for someone to hold my hand and tell me that it was going to be OK," said Ell, now 31.

Ell realized she also had a story to share about her journey through grief and trauma, and she eventually wrote enough to fill a full album. It's called "heart theory" and it will be released Friday.

Ell, originally from Calgary, Alberta, said in an interview with People magazine earlier last month that she was raped at age 13 by a man from her church and then again in a separate incident when she was 21. The Associated Press generally does not identify victims of sexual assault unless the victim agrees to be publicly identified.

It was a secret gnawing at her for years before she revealed to her parents what happened to her as a child. And as a songwriter and masterful guitarist who has toured the globe playing in front of thousands, she struggled for years to put the words to paper and let the secret out to the public.

"Shame and grief are such heavy feelings and we cannot deal with them by ignoring them," said Ell. "And I got really good at ignoring those feelings, so much so that it felt like my new normal."

But the meeting at the youth center years ago made her realize she had an opportunity to reach more people like herself, who had felt broken and alone. So she called one of Nashville's most talented

tunesmiths — Brandy Clark — the six-time Grammy nominee who has written hits for Kacey Musgraves ("Follow Your Arrow") and Miranda Lambert ("Mama's Broken Heart"), and toured alongside Ell. They had never written together until the day Ell asked if Clark would help her write the song "make you", which directly addressed her sexual assault.

### Honored

"I felt like my biggest job was to just let her know that it was OK to say her truth," said Clark. "I was really just trying to help her tell her story in her words, not put too many of my own words in it. And I was really honored that she would be that vulnerable with me and also that she would be that vulnerable with the world."

Onstage, Ell comes across as confident and exuberant. She is one of the best lead guitarists in contemporary country music after being schooled in blues and rock guitar from an early age and easily holds her own onstage alongside Keith Urban and Brad Paisley. She is nominated for two Academy of Country Music Awards at its rescheduled awards show to be held on Sept. 16, including new female artist of the year and musical event of the year for her duet with Brantley Gilbert, "What Happens in a Small Town", which became a No. 1 hit at country radio and Ell's first song to crack the all-genre Billboard Hot 100 chart.

Ell's "heart theory" concept album is broken down into the seven stages of grief, starting with shock, denial, anger and depression. She wrote with a wide swath of hit Nashville songwriters, including Tyler Hubbard of Florida Georgia Line, Kane Brown, Jessie Jo Dillon and Nicolle Galyon. The 12-track album ends with an uplifting message of acceptance.

"I'm able to take the hand of my 13-year-old self and take the hand of my 21-year-old self and be like, 'I got you guys. We're in this together,'" said Ell. "And I'm validating those little girls within

me."

Ell started a foundation called the Make You Movement that will provide funds to organizations that focus on disenfranchised youth and survivors of sexual trauma and domestic abuse. And her message has resonated among her fans.

"If I were to open up my DMs right now, I could read you so many incredible stories and so many heartbreaking stories," said Ell. "The fact that fans feel connected enough to me that they want to bare their souls and share these things that some people have not even ever told to anybody before, I feel just such a gratitude to their humility and wanting to share that with me."

Just as she wanted the song "make you" to end on a point of healing and recovery, Ell said she's learning every day how to turn her pain into strength.

"When you fully accept these things, it's going to make you have a deeper appreciation than you ever have," said Ell. "I truly believe that it's the things that bend and stain and break us is what make us who we are."

### Also:

LOS ANGELES: Country superstar Luke Bryan is looking to his roots on his seventh album. The Georgia native's small-town values helped shape "Born Here Live Here Die Here", his new album out last Friday. The album features the hits "Knockin' Boots", "What She Wants Tonight" and "One Margarita". The 10-song set is Bryan's first album since 2017's "What Makes You Country" and its release was delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Meanwhile, multi-platinum rapper Aminé released his sophomore album, "Limbo", last Friday. The album features the singles "Riri", "Shimmy" and the Young Thug-assisted "Compensating". Aminé also turned heads this year, appearing on the fourth season of the hit HBO series "Insecure", which earned eight Emmy nominations last week.

LOS ANGELES: The Fox News and Fox Business channels are going international.

A digital streaming service with the pair will launch in Mexico on Aug. 20, expanding to Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom on Sept. 17, Fox News Media said Tuesday.

Fox News International will be available in 20 countries by the end of 2020, the Fox Corp.-owned company said.

Along with live streams of the news and business channels, the service will include an on-demand catalog of 20-plus shows including top-rated cable news programs "Hannity" and "Tucker Carlson Tonight" and, among business programs, "Maria Bartiromo's Wall Street."

The service, which comes with a \$6.99 monthly price tag, will be available on devices including smart phones and Apple TV, with Amazon Fire TV and Roku to follow. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: "America's Got Talent" topped the ratings last week, but it faces the absence of Simon Cowell, seriously injured in an electric bicycle accident.

Cowell, the NBC talent contest's creator and linchpin of its judging panel, underwent surgery for a broken back last Saturday, just before the show kicked off its live episodes this week.

The entertainment mogul was "doing fine" and remained under observation after the operation at an unidentified hospital, the spokesperson said.

Cowell's partner, Lauren Silverman, accompanied him to the hospital and has been able to see him briefly. Cowell's overnight, six-hour surgery included placement of a metal rod.

Despite the ordeal, he mustered the strength to post a "massive thank you" to doctors and nurses treating him. Cowell, known for his tart-tongued comments about contestants, also shared some advice.

"If you buy an electric trail bike, read the manual before you ride it for the first time," he tweeted Sunday night. The couple's son and Silverman's child by a previous marriage were with Cowell when

the accident happened.

Cowell's injury will force him to miss the beginning of this season's live shows on NBC's "America's Got Talent." The live shows will begin Tuesday and Wednesday without him, the network said.

He created the talent show, now in its 15th season, and serves as a judge. The show's other judges are Heidi Klum, Howie Mandel and



Cowell



Clarkson

Sofia Vergara, with Terry Crews as host.

Cowell also has been a judge on "Britain's Got Talent," "The X Factor" and "American Idol."

Kelly Clarkson, who came to fame as the first "American Idol" winner when Cowell judged the singing contest, was to step in as his temporary replacement.

She took further creative control

for her third album, My December (2007), by becoming the executive producer and co-writing the entire album. However, her label was dissatisfied with her darker rock music and promoted the album reluctantly. Clarkson returned to the top of the charts with her more mainstream-oriented fourth album, All I Ever Wanted (2009). It spawned her third Hot 100 number-one single "Stronger

(What Doesn't Kill You)".

Fox News Channel continued its summer ratings romp, with Tucker Carlson and Sean Hannity's shows combining to hold nine of the top 20 prime-time slots among all viewers. Broadcast networks, mostly relying on scripted reruns with a sprinkling of reality and game shows, were in their usual seasonal slump. (Agencies)