

CMA PRESENTS INTERNATIONAL ARTIST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO KEITH URBAN DURING RECEPTION AT AUSTRALIAN CONSULATE

CMA Global Focus Includes Presentation of International Country Broadcaster Award to Ray Hadley of Australia

NEW YORK CITY - Multiple CMA Awards nominee and reigning CMA Male Vocalist of the Year Keith Urban didn't have to wait until "The 39th Annual CMA Awards" Tuesday to win an award. Urban was surprised during a reception today at the Australian Consulate General in New York City, with the Association's International Artist Achievement Award.

"Keith has had an outstanding year and is a tremendous ambassador for Country Music around the globe," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "He is very deserving of this award and it was a pleasure to present it to him in the company of his countrymen at the Australian consulate."

Formerly the International Touring Artist Award, the award recognizes outstanding achievement by an artist who contributes to the awareness and development of Country Music outside North America. Previous winners include Dolly Parton, Dixie Chicks, Reba McEntire, Shania Twain and Trisha Yearwood.

Urban headlined a 10-show sell-out tour in Australia this year before visiting England, Germany and Ireland for a promotional tour and showcases. He also opened for Bryan Adams on his UK and Ireland tour and recently completed

his solo UK tour. He is a Country artist with an international focus and is destined to develop a global fan base.

Urban was honored during a reception for Australian Country Music artists today at the Australian Consulate General. Other artists in attendance included Australian rock legend Billy Thorpe, who presented the award to Urban, Sherrie Austin, Catherine Britt, Brian Cadd and Carrie Underwood.

Britt, along with Cowboy Crush, Jace Everett, and Ryan Shupe & The RubberBand, are taking part in the "CMA Global Markets Symposium," Monday as part of "Country Takes NYC" a week of activities leading up to "The 39th Annual CMA Awards," Tuesday at Madison Square Garden.

The main topic of discussion at this year's event will be CMA's continued plan for growing Country Music in a global fashion. Executives from industry advisory groups in Australia, United Kingdom and the U.S., including Jan Cody of CCMA, will be commenting on the status of Country Music in their respective territories.

"Country Music's popularity is global and this

symposium will reflect that,” said Jeff Walker, chairman of the CMA Global Markets Task Force. “With a record number of press and international executives scheduled to attend this is certain to be our most lively and informative session yet.”

Another Australian was recently recognized for his accomplishments, when Ray Hadley of Australia was presented the International Country Broadcaster Award. The award recognizes outstanding achievement by radio broadcasters outside North America who have made important contributions to the development of Country Music in their country.

A longtime supporter of Country Music, Hadley is Sydney’s No. 1 morning personality on Radio 2GB. He routinely interviews domestic and international Country Music artists in support of new album releases and maintains a higher level of Country on his play list than most other commercial broadcasters in metropolitan Australia.

“Country Music is fortunate to have broadcasters like Hadley who deliver our music to their listeners in Australia and around the globe and care so deeply for our artistic community,” Benson said.

Walter C. Miller is the Executive Producer of the CMA Awards. Paul Miller is the Director and David Wild will script the ceremonies. MJJ Programming, a division of Premiere Radio Networks, is the official radio packager of the CMA Awards, which includes Red Carpet coverage and a stereo-radio simulcast of the gala event. Chevy, an American Revolution, is the official

automotive sponsor of the 2005 CMA Awards. American Airlines is the official airline of the 2005 CMA Awards. Additional promotional sponsors include Prilosec OTC®, aolmusic.com, BMG Columbia House, Inc., Chase, Country Weekly, Creme Savers® Candy, Crisco®, Gibson Guitars, Jack Daniel’s, Kellogg’s®, Kmart(sm), Kodak, Lever 2000® and XM Satellite Radio®. Charles Fazzino is the official artist of the 2005 CMA Awards. FilmMagic.com is the Official Photographer of the 2005 CMA Awards.