

BY MELISSA ORSAK

A rush of exhilaration mingles with nervous anticipation as you step out of your car, greeted by the twinkling lights illuminating the iconic red carpet at Billy Bob's in Fort Worth, Texas. The atmosphere is electric, a pulsating blend of excitement and glamour that envelops you in its ritzy allure. This moment, a cherished aspiration for countless dreamers, transformed into a reality for Trey Calloway as he was honored with the 2023 Texas Country Music Association (TCMA) Country Songwriter of the Year Award for his heartfelt original composition "One Tough Job." He also received an Honorable Mention for his moving ballad "You Are." Calloway performed at this prestigious award show, opening doors to vast opportunities far beyond Texas, reaching all the way to the Carolinas and the vibrant heart of Nashville.

This triumph was merely the beginning of Calloway's accolades, as he garnered a nomination for TCMA Christian Songwriter of the Year in 2024, the very next year. The award-winning tracks "Horses In Heaven" and "Backroad Believer" are rich with soul and divine inspiration. Recently, Calloway seized the opportunity to appear on Fox 7's Good Day Austin, a moment that beautifully encapsulated his ascent as a rising star in the vibrant Texas music scene.

In 2024, Calloway traveled extensively across Texas during the spring, summer, and fall, gracing iconic venues nestled in Austin, Houston, and Dallas. The intimate setting of the Saxon Pub and the charming atmosphere of Dosey Doe became the perfect backdrops for his heartfelt performances.

While this country star revels in the thrill of entertaining crowds, there is a profound depth to his artistic mission. He shared, "I had an inspiring moment in 2024 when I played at Chief's Neon Steeple opening for McBride and the Ride. I played a full set of originals,



TCMA Songwriter of the Year

Trey Calloway

and after my show, a biker approached and broke down, telling me how much "Horses In Heaven" meant to him because he had recently lost his father. Seeing this strong, tough, large-stature man so emotionally touched by one of my songs, that he sought me out to share how much it helped him, is an experience that reassured me that what I do has purpose and meaning beyond just fun entertainment."

A few years ago, Calloway was fortunate to perform in Italy, a journey he fondly describes as the "coolest" location he has ever played. During his memorable trip, he found himself in a quaint restaurant in Florence, completely guitar-less, when he spotted a beautifully aged ~100-year-old guitar elegantly displayed on the wall. Driven by intrigue and a yearning to play, he mustered the courage to inquire about the instrument. The owner, a fellow music enthusiast, removed the guitar from its resting place and handed it to Calloway. He vividly recalls, "At first, I was hesitant because the guitar was the owner's family heirloom, and many restaurant patrons didn't speak English. I had to think pretty hard about what to play that people would enjoy. It ended up being so much fun. The patrons and workers were engaged while clapping and singing along. "Country Roads Take Me Home" was a big hit, reinforcing what I already know to be true, that music is a universal language."

One of Calloway's most admirable talents is his heartfelt ability to forge connections with people from all walks of life, easily finding common ground with everyone he meets. He passionately expresses, "I try to give back whenever I can, and I believe I'm blessed to be able to help others through my music. I have three groups that are near to my heart, and those are kids, military, and first responders." In the past year, he has found immense joy in actively participating in various charitable events, including the Hill Country Rally for Kids in Dripping Springs, the festive Christmas 4 Kids Bus Show in Nashville, Vet Fest Carolinas—a heartfelt benefit for Folds of Honor—and Project K-9 Hero's Performers



for Paws. His song, "Forgotten Man," released on Memorial Day 2024, is a salute to those who bravely sacrifice for others and our way of life.

Calloway's team plays an invaluable role in crafting these beautiful experiences, bringing his visions to life. He feels incredibly fortunate to have a supportive family and a remarkable manager, Dominick Sotis, who works tirelessly to elevate his career. Reflecting on their partnership, Calloway shares, "The best part about working with an agent/manager is having someone nearby who I know is always in my corner. Helping with the business side of things and calendars and scheduling is great, but for me, it's the relationship I enjoy the most with someone who's always there to pick me up and believe in me."

Although Calloway currently doesn't have any official sponsors, he remains eager to discover products and brands that resonate with his values and aspirations.

As a child, Calloway was fortunate enough to witness the captivating performance of Charlie Daniels at the Grand Ole Opry, an experience that left a lasting impression on him. He fondly recalls a pivotal moment that sparked a lifelong goal: "I ran to the gift shop to get batteries for my mom's digital camera, and when I opened them in the hall, they spilled and rolled to the elevator. As I scrambled to gather them, the elevator opened, and when I looked up, there was legendary Opry announcer Eddie Stubbs. Without thinking, I blurted out my question, 'How does it feel to be on that stage?' I'll never forget his response: 'There's no better feeling in the world.' I told him I was gonna be there someday, and I've been inspired ever since to make that dream come true." Calloway is passionately pursuing his lifetime dream to perform at the Grand Ole Opry. He continues to succeed as he mesmerizes his audience as a performer, passionately sharing his music with the world.

Calloway is releasing new songs in early 2025. The first is a heartfelt Valentine's anthem titled "Your Love Is Safe With Me". The second is a unique storytelling song called "The Ballad of Righteous and Wrong" that narrates the poignant tale of two twin brothers. This song will be accompanied by a stunning video showcasing meticulously crafted illustrations by a remarkably talented artist—who just happens to be a twin himself. He can hardly contain his enthusiasm for fans to experience both the touching narrative and the visually enchanting collaboration between musician and artist.

As his creative journey unfolds, he

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is also hard at work in the studio alongside esteemed producer Brandon Hood. Together, they are set to create six new tracks in addition to the three already completed songs, showcasing his artistic growth and versatility. Notably, he is thrilled about this upcoming EP, as it will feature songs penned by other talented songwriters for the first time. Fans can eagerly anticipate at least nine fresh tracks this coming year!

To date, Calloway has released an impressive fifty original songs across various music streaming platforms, including Spotify, iTunes/Apple Music, and YouTube. Check out all his original music, especially early titles like his debut album "Carolina Man," as well as emotionally resonant songs like "Heal This Family" and lively "Karaoke Cowboy." His sophomore album "Wanted Man," released in September 2024, has garnered significant attention, accumulating nearly 1.5 million streams.

With each step forward, Calloway continues to carve out a space for himself in the vibrant world of country music, leaving a lasting impact with his authentic sound and passionate lyrics. Calloway's heartfelt artistry inspires those around him to connect with family, faith, and music.



"THE BEST THING ABOUT WINNING THE TCMA AWARDS IS THE GREAT PEOPLE I HAVE MET IN TEXAS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED ME AND MY MUSIC THROUGHOUT THIS PAST YEAR."

