



## **Grand Ole Opry Inducts Brad Paisley as Newest Member**

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NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 17 /PRNewswire/ -- Arista/Nashville recording artist Brad Paisley was inducted into the world-famous Grand Ole Opry Saturday evening by Opry member and long-time friend and mentor Steve Wariner. Paisley made his Opry debut May 28, 1999 and has played the Opry 43 times since. For his induction, Paisley wore a canary yellow Nudie suit jacket on loan from his friend Buck Owens. The famed jacket was worn by Owens for the cover of Buck Owens and the Buckaroos -- Live From Carnegie Hall and is Owens' favorite jacket.

During the induction Paisley was presented the first Opry Member Award which was designed by renowned sculptor Bill Rains. The award is a 14-inch replica of the Opry's vintage mic stand. It is constructed of bronze and oak wood. A portion of the trophy's wooden base recreates the famed circle of wood taken from the stage of the Ryman Auditorium, home of the Opry from 1943-1974, and moved to the stage of the Opry House. The wood was derived from pews from the Ryman, available following its restoration in 1994. The award will be presented to each artist in the cast of 72 as the Opry continues to celebrate its 75th anniversary by honoring its members.

Wariner, after reading a letter of congratulations from Opry member George Jones, congratulated Paisley on his induction, "Brad respects where we (country music) came from, the heritage. We are in good hands with this guy."

"I don't feel worthy but I hope to earn it. I'll spend my career making this place proud they did this. It means the world to me that my friend Steve Wariner was part of it," said Paisley.

Paisley was the most awarded and most nominated new artist of the year 2000. The new Opry member's list of awards include CMA Horizon Award, ACM Top New Male, TNN/Country Weekly's Discovery Award as well as Song of the Year and Video of the Year for "He Didn't Have to Be". He is currently nominated for his first Grammy for the all genre category of Best New Artist. Since the release of his debut album Who Needs Pictures on June 1, 1999, Paisley has achieved Number One status with two singles -- "He Didn't Have to Be" and "We Danced".

During his induction Paisley performed, "Two People Fell In Love", his debut single from his forthcoming Arista/Nashville release, Part II. To be release May 29th.

Grand Ole Opry is a property of Gaylord Entertainment Company (NYSE: GET), a diversified entertainment company whose business operates in two groups: hospitality and attractions, and music, media and entertainment. Gaylord Entertainment is headquartered in Nashville, Tenn. SOURCE Grand Ole Opry

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