

THE LEGEND SERIES

ROGER MILLER

Roger Miller opened the doors to a new breed of country songwriter as the advent of rock music forced Nashville to develop new sounds in the 60s. He made his first significant mark as the writer of hits such as "In The Summertime" and "When Two Worlds Collide." During the 1960s, the singer/songwriter established himself as a spontaneous and original wit, scoring with non-commercial songs like "Dang Me", "Chug-a-Lug" and "King of the Road" and winning an unprecedented 11 Grammy Awards in 1964 and 1965. Miller was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Association International Hall of Fame and has been honored by the Academy of Country Music with its prestigious Pioneer Award in recognition of his contribution to country music. He is also a Tony award winner for the Broadway musical, "Big River." His widespread acceptance by both pop and country audiences and his natural storytelling abilities make Roger Miller the quintessential choice to host CMA's first Legend Series.

BRENDA LEE

Singer Brenda Lee, a well-established pop star who ushered in the 60s with hits like "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" and "I'm Sorry", was considered a rock 'n roll artist at that time simply because there was no other category to accommodate her innovative singing style. In fact, her manager during that period indignantly denied that Lee was a country singer, although she began her professional career as a protege of country great Red Foley. Lee's string of pop hits, including "Sweet Nothings" and "Too Many Rivers", consistently crossed over to the country charts. Her style today remains the same as it was when she was known as "Little Miss Dynamite." A teenage pop star 30 years ago, Brenda Lee now reigns as one of country music's leading ladies.

DON EVERLY

Don Everly, with his brother Phil, formed one of the most influential pop acts of the late 1950s. Originally classified as country, Don and Phil became members of the Grand Ole Opry early in 1957, then exceeded all expectations for a country harmony duo when "Wake Up Little Susie" hit the number one position on the pop, country and rhythm and blues charts in 1957. By 1960, they were firmly established as a pop act and were a major influence on later country, pop and rock performers. Don's talent as a songwriter is highly recognized by music industry insiders. Fittingly, "Cathy's Clown", a pop hit written by Don and recorded by the Everly Brothers in 1960, was honored this past October as BMI's Most Performed Country Song of the Year, testimony that the pop music of the 50s has become the country music of the 90s.

JACK CLEMENT

Jack Clement began his career at Sun Records in Memphis, where he produced Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash. His move to Nashville brought Music City an approach to producing that was viewed in the 60s as, at best, unconventional, but which today has become a cornerstone of mainstream country music. Clement has had a tremendous influence on generations of Americans, helping to chart the course for both rock 'n roll and country music. During the 1960s, his insistence on the classic combination of melody and beat and his accompanying philosophy of "organic recording" set the trend for the "Outlaw" movement that carried country music into the 70s. Once considered a rebel for his willingness to experiment with new and different sounds, Jack Clement is now regarded as a visionary musical catalyst.

OWEN BRADLEY

A member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, producer Owen Bradley was instrumental in the development of the "Nashville Sound", which was responsible for attracting a more urban audience to country music. Under his guidance, country sentiments were given a pop presentation, resulting in numerous crossover hits for artists like Patsy Cline and Brenda Lee. Bradley drew much criticism for his openness about dispensing with standard country instruments such as the steel guitar and fiddle as he replaced them with strings and hushed background singers, but is now credited with giving country music a more sophisticated sound that appealed to a wider audience. Owen Bradley's leader-

