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Q Casino Announces Todd O'Neill, Michael Ray & LANCO in the Q Showroom!

Dubuque, IA - Q Casino is announcing upcoming shows in the Q Showroom!

Todd O'Neill :: Saturday, September 9

Free Show with the Nashville Next Winner

Country Music singer/songwriter Todd O'Neill has been perfecting his self-described "pure Louisiana soul" sound in countless honky-tonks and dance halls for more than a decade. Todd's whiskey-soaked vocals recently earned him the reigning Champion title of the Nash Next Challenge, further cementing his place in Music City. Hailing from Hammond, Louisiana, Todd applied the homegrown creative philosophy he was raised on when crafting his unique musical recipe: blending Cajun zydeco and New Orleans R&B with Nashville's reflective lyricism. Todd is currently working on his debut single, produced by Jay DeMarcus of Country supergroup, Rascal Flatts which is expected to impact Country radio in 2017 on Nash Next Records under the Big Machine Label Group umbrella.

After besting hundreds of other contestants in a four-month-long competition, Todd O'Neill was named the Nash Next champion in October 2016. The title earned Todd national radio airplay on Cumulus Media radio stations, a recording contract with Big Machine Label Group and having an original song produced by Jay DeMarcus.

Todd dropped his debut single, "Love Again," in April, and now the Louisiana native has released a new video for the tune, which is currently No. 42 on Billboard's Country Airplay chart after 10 weeks.

"The song was written by Jessie Fraser, Cary Barlow, and Brett Young, and as soon as I heard it, I fell in love with it," says Todd. "It's fun, it's upbeat. I think it's got a different message from anything that I have heard on the radio. It's about a guy who was once jaded with relationships and the art of love. And now he has found this new woman that's got him ready to love again."

Michael Ray :: Friday, October 20

#1 Hit "Kiss You In the Morning" and #2 Hit "Think a Little Less"

With Special Guest Six String Crossing

Florida's Michael Ray has a resonant voice and a knack for crafting vibrant, upbeat contemporary country-rock. Although he built a strong grassroots fan base in Southern Florida, Ray also gained prominence as the winner of the CW network's reality television vocal competition *The Next: Fame Is at Your Doorstep* in 2012. A native of Eustis, Florida, Ray was first introduced to music via his grandfather. A local country and gospel musician, Ray's grandfather

taught him how to play guitar and gave him his first performance experience, letting him tag along for shows at various assisted living homes and community centers. Initially inspired by such classic country artists as Porter Wagoner, Merle Haggard, and Waylon Jennings, by his teens Ray was expanding his taste, listening to more modern artists like Garth Brooks, as well as imbibing the eclectic influence of modern radio sounds from rock to hip-hop. By the time Ray graduated high school in 2006, he had decided to pursue his passion for country music.

Forgoing a move to Nashville, Ray instead formed a band and began playing a constant grind of shows all around Southern Florida. He slowly built a loyal following, a fan base that widened considerably after a Lakeland DJ for WPCV-97 Country put his music into regular rotation. Soon, Ray was headlining the Orlando House of Blues and selling out shows all over Florida. In 2010, his independently released debut caught the ear of veteran music industry manager Tony Conway, who began helping Ray take his career to a national audience. In 2012, Ray appeared on the CW talent competition *The Next*, where he was mentored by Big & Rich's John Rich. Ray was an audience favorite on the show and ultimately took home the top prize. After the show, Ray signed a publishing deal with Warner/Chappell Music and in 2014 released the single "Kiss You in the Morning." His full-length major-label debut followed in 2015 on Warner Music Nashville, making it to number four on the country albums chart.

LANCO :: Saturday, November 4

Top Hits "Greatest Love Story" and "Long Live Tonight"

One singer might be a force, but five is a family. It's impossible to deny: there's just something about the power of a band, where songs form a bond thicker than blood, which speaks to so many different corners of the music lover's heart. That experience is at the core of LANCO - singer and lyricist Brandon Lancaster, Chandler Baldwin (bass guitar), Jared Hampton (keyboards), Tripp Howell (drums) and Eric Steedly (guitar) – and their version of modern country that's fit for arenas but sounds equally sweet on the jukebox of a local honkytonk. It's a collective effort from five artists with solid southern roots that rocks and twangs equally, making songs like "Greatest Love Story," their newest single, resonate like few others: one part classic, one part cutting edge and completely honest.

"A song like 'Greatest Love Story' defines the reason we are in country music," says Lancaster. "We all relate to it. Anyone who knows about finding love or losing love, there is a piece of their story in the song. We've already seen how much it impacts people, and it means the world." "Greatest Love Story," is pure LANCO, showcasing Lancaster's smooth vocals alongside the band's infectious melodies. Anchored by lush acoustic guitar, a thumping drumbeat and hints of John Mellencamp-style rock, it's the kind of song that makes the listener optimistic about love – and the future of country music.

In a few short years, LANCO has gone from playing to audiences of thirty to playing festivals like Bonnaroo and Stagecoach, in a story that could have only formed in the south. A native to the Nashville area, Lancaster started writing songs in his early teenage years – and, growing up in Tennessee, country music was as intrinsic to his childhood as skyscrapers are to New York City. "It's weird to say that country is an influence, because it was almost a part of growing up," says Lancaster, whose father made sure to school him on southern rock, too. "It was the most prevalent thing going on." But Lancaster was also a sponge, devouring vinyl as fast as iTunes and listening to everything from Kings of Leon to Keith Urban and Bob Dylan, deconstructing what makes a band great, a lyric powerful and melody unforgettable.

It was in college where Lancaster met his band mates, all on a search to meld their country background with a wide ranging appreciation of music from all genres: from Steedly's taste for Stevie Ray Vaughan to Howell's love of hip-hop. At the root, though, was always country music. "There's a reason we are in country music." Indeed, nothing can get them going like a good Alabama or Willie Nelson song. "We're just five guys with different influences trying to make music the way our heroes did for us," adds Steedly.

It was another hero that helped create one of LANCO's most iconic moments. At a concert one night – where he was working concessions at the hotdog stand – Lancaster mustered up the courage to stop producer Jay Joyce (Eric Church, Brothers Osborne, Cage the Elephant) – not looking for anything but to tell him he was a true fan, still in his uniform and name tag. The encounter led to Lancaster leaving with Joyce's number, but it was weeks later when he

finally threw caution to wind and gave him a call. Joyce asked him what he wanted in life, point blank. “I said, ‘I want to be an artist, I want to be a songwriter, and I’m going to keep working at the hotdog stand until I do.’ He said, ‘OK, come over to my studio tomorrow at 3:30 p.m.’” Lancaster was floored, and the five members of LANCO showed up the next day armed with their instruments and an arsenal of songs.

The result is LANCO’s self-titled four-song debut EP, which Joyce produced. From the classic southern swagger of “Trouble Maker” to the confessional anthem of “We Do,” the band doesn’t see boundaries – just a love for honest songs and music that pushes the genre forward without ever losing sight of where its been. It’s an approach that is even clearer in their live shows, which are some of the most dynamic concert experiences around. “We’re never afraid to make the most of a moment,” says Lancaster. “Other people stand on stage, but we’re going to jump in the crowd, kick a drum set over. We never want to have any boundaries.”

There are no boundaries, either, when it comes to the people they touch: LANCO is short for the band’s original name, “Lancaster & Company,” which was meant to not only include each other, but each and every fan connects to their songs.

“There is a culture to LANCO,” says Hampton. “We do this because we love country music, but also because everything we feel and sing about, someone else does too. That’s the biggest power there is.” “It’s just five guys,” adds Lancaster, “being as honest as we can be.”

Tickets for Michael Ray and LANCO go on sale Monday, July 24 at 5pm. Tickets can be purchased online at QCasinoAndHotel.com or at Guest Services inside Q Casino. Shows will be standing room only. Must be 21 to attend.

Q Casino is an entertainment and gaming complex located in Dubuque, Iowa. The casino is owned by the City of Dubuque, and operated by the non-profit Dubuque Racing Association, its license holder.

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