



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **THE BEACHES OF FORT MYERS & SANIBEL KICKS OFF POPULAR MUSIC FESTIVAL WITH STAR-STUDED PERFORMANCES**

*The fourth annual Island Hopper Songwriter Fest returns Sept. 22-Oct. 1, 2017*

**LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA** – The 2017 Island Hopper Songwriter Fest returns to The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel, Sept. 22-Oct. 1. This showcase, now in its fourth year, is a great way to see singer-songwriters perform in intimate settings on Captiva Island, Fort Myers Beach and historic downtown Fort Myers.

This year's headliners include Lindsay Ell and Brooke Eden. The artists will be performing at Pinchers Crab Shack at The Marina at Edison Ford on Sept. 27. Ell has opened for The Band Perry and Luke Bryan, and is currently on tour with Brad Paisley. The Canadian Country Music Association recently nominated Ell for Female Artist of the Year. Her debut single, "Worth the Wait," was recently released in the U.S.

Eden is a Florida native and graduate of the University of Florida. She has opened for Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, Sugarland and Florida Georgia Line. Billboard Music recognized Eden as a "fiery country star-in-the-making." Some of her accolades include being identified as an Amazon Music Artist to watch. Vogue Magazine called her one of the "10 Country 'It' Girls," and she's one of "CMT's Next Women of Country."

"We look forward to surprising fans with some high-profile acts," said Louis Kaplan, iHeartMedia, senior vice president of programming. "The Island Hopper Songwriter Fest is one of our favorite events of the year."

It's also a favorite of the performers. They are eager to play at this award-winning festival, which includes more than 100 live performances, more than 70 songwriters, and 21 unique venues. Southeast Tourism Society has also taken notice. They named the festival one of their "Top 20 Events" for 2017.

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Sanibel & Captiva Islands Fort Myers Beach Fort Myers Bonita Springs Estero Cape Coral Pine Island Boca Grande & Outer Islands North Fort Myers Lehigh Acres

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This year the music event welcomes a variety of new singer-songwriters, including Natalie Hemby (“White Liar” recorded by Miranda Lambert), Clint Daniels (“Brokenheartsville” recorded by Joe Nichols) and Maggie Rose. Most of the performances are free to the public, but there are select shows that do require a ticket for admission.

The festival brings back talent like Even Stevens (“I Love a Rainy Night” recorded by Eddie Rabbit), Wynn Varble (“I’m a Little More Country” recorded by Easton Corbin), Aaron Barker (“What About Now” recorded by Lonestar) and Karla Davis.

The fourth annual music fest will continue to give fans the opportunity to meet the talented artists who write songs for country superstars including Tim McGraw, Miranda Lambert, Jason Aldean and Tricia Yearwood. Attendees can listen to their favorite songs at live music venues on Captiva Island, including Key Lime Bistro, South Seas Island Resort and Doc Ford’s Rum Bar & Grille. In downtown Fort Myers, performances will take place at The Barrel Room, Twisted Vine Bistro, City Tavern and Pinchers. The festival will wrap up on Fort Myers Beach with artists playing at Nervous Nellies, Yucatan Beach Stand, Matanzas on the Bay and Pierside Grill.

The 2015 Island Hopper Fest is a proud recipient of two SunSational Awards through the Florida Festival & Events Association, and the Southeast Tourism Society named Island Hopper one of their “Top 20 Events” for 2017!

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*Island Hopper is presented by Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau, iHeartMedia, Cat Country 107.1 and BMI, the largest music rights organization in the U.S. For more information visit [www.islandhopperfest.com](http://www.islandhopperfest.com). Follow the festival hashtag #islandhopperfest on Twitter and other social channels.*