# Kris Kristofferson To Be Inducted Into Country Music Hall of Fame

Country music icon and Oh Boy Records recording artist Kris Kristofferson will be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame this fall. Formal induction will take place during "The 38th Annual CMA Awards," which will be broadcast live on the CBS Television Network, Tuesday, Nov. 9 (8:00–11:00 PM/EST) from the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville.

Kristofferson was surprised today with the news of his induction by CBS News anchor Hannah Storm during a live television appearance on CBS' "The Early Show" after he announced several of this year's CMA Awards final nominees to the nation.

"I always hoped to bring honor and respect to country music, and it is a wonderful thrill to be honored with this Hall of Fame induction," Kristofferson said.

Born in Texas in 1936, Kristofferson was the eldest of three children of a retired Air Force major general. He studied creative writing at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif., graduating Phi Beta Kappa in 1958. Earning a prestigious Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University, Kristofferson moved to England and earned his master's degree in literature in 1960.

After being based in West Germany for a stint in the army, Kristofferson gave up an opportunity to teach at West Point and moved to Nashville in 1965 to pursue a career as a songwriter. He achieved some minor successes, but his big break came in 1969 when Roger Miller recorded three of his songs. One of them, "Me and Bobby McGee," became a country Top-20 hit. Kristofferson also gained the attention and friendship of Johnny Cash, who introduced him at the Newport Folk Festival that summer and featured him on Cash's national television program.

Over the years more than 450 artists recorded Kristofferson compositions, including Bobby Bare, Marianne Faithfull, Waylon Jennings, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ronnie Milsap, Patti Page, Ray Stevens, Faron Young and more. Among the many highlights: Ray Price took "For the Good Times" to No. 1 on the Country charts and Top-20 on the pop charts in 1970. That same year Cash topped the Country charts with "Sunday Morning Coming Down," which was also named CMA Song of the Year. Sammi Smith's version of "Help Me Make It Through The Night" went gold in 1971. Rock legend Janis Joplin's posthumously-released version of "Me and Bobby McGee" topped the pop charts later that year, becoming a million-selling hit single. And Christy Lane topped the Country charts in 1980 with "One Day at a Time," a song that had reached the pop Top-40 in 1974 as recorded by Marilyn Sellars.

Although he released one single in Epic Records in 1967 that never charted, Kristofferson continued in his quest to be a successful recording artist. His released his debut album, *Kristofferson*, on Monument Records in 1970. In 1971 his second album, *The Silver Tongued Devil And I*, was his first to go Gold thanks to the success of his hit single "Loving Her Was Easier (Than Anything I'll Ever Do Again)." Kristofferson topped the Country singles charts in July 1973 with "Why Me," which also crossed over to the pop Top-20. Additional albums and singles followed with varying degrees of success.

In addition to his solo recordings, Kristofferson enjoyed performing with other artists. He recorded three albums with his then-wife Rita Coolidge in the mid-1970's that achieved success on the country, pop and easy listening charts. In 1982 he recorded and released a double album with Brenda Lee, Willie Nelson and Dolly Parton called *The Winning Hand*. He teamed again with Nelson for the movie *Songwriter* and its soundtrack album in 1984. And in 1985, Kristofferson and Nelson expanded their partnership to include Cash and Jennings as the Country Music supergroup The Highwaymen. The quartet released three albums in a 10-year span.

In addition to music, Kristofferson made his mark on film. He debuted with a small role in the 1971 film *The Last Movie* directed by Dennis Hopper. Since then he has appeared in more than 50 feature films and television movies including *A Star Is Born*, *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *Blade*, *Blume In Love, Cisco Pike, Convoy, Fire Down Below, Lone Star, Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid, Payback, Semi-Tough* and more.

Kristofferson remains active in music and movies. In 2003 Oh Boy Records released *Broken Freedom Song: Live From San Francisco*, a collection of 15 songs recorded live during his performance at the Gershwin Theater at San Francisco State University. Earlier in this election year, two of his more politically-charged albums (1986's Repossessed and 1990's Third World Warrior) were re-released in a 2-disc package. *Breakthrough*, a companion documentary spotlighting Kristofferson's work as a human rights activist as well as his performances, was also released on DVD. Kristofferson will appear in three movies this year, *Blade: Trinity*, *Silver City* and *The Wendell Baker Story.*

In addition to being a singer, songwriter, actor and activist, Kristofferson is also a dedicated husband and a father to eight children.