



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Aug. 25, 2016**

**Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau**

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# **The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel announce exciting lineup for third annual Island Hopper Songwriter Fest**

*Maren Morris and Parmalee among more than 70 nationally-acclaimed songwriters performing in Southwest Florida Sept. 23-Oct. 2, 2016*

**LEE COUNTY, FL** – The third annual Island Hopper Songwriter Fest along The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel announces an exciting line up of talent. Performers include breakout Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) artists, Nashville star Maren Morris, and country/rock group Parmalee, made famous by its No.1 smash, “Carolina.”

The festival features more than 140 free performances and six special ticketed events. Island Hopper kicks off on Captiva Island, Sept. 23-25 and wraps up Sept. 30-Oct. 2 on Fort Myers Beach. Historic downtown Fort Myers will once again feature midweek performances.

“This unique event allows fans to meet award-winning songwriters and hear the stories behind their favorite songs,” said Tamara Pigott, executive director of the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB). “We are lucky to have such a talented group of artists play in our piece of paradise.”

Presented by BMI, the largest music rights organization in the U.S., along with partners iHeartMedia, and Cat Country 107.1, performances will take place at popular and intimate island venues.

Headliner Maren Morris will perform Oct. 2, 5-7 p.m., at Pink Shell Beach Resort & Marina poolside on Fort Myers Beach. Morris has soared to the top of the Billboard Country Albums chart with her debut album, HERO. Her fans will hear her smash hit “My Church,” as well as her newly released single, “80s Mercedes.” Check out her video for “My Church” at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouWQ25O-Mcg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouWQ25O-Mcg)

For the first time, Parmalee will perform at the Florida Repertory Theatre in downtown Fort Myers on Sept. 28, 8:30-9:30 p.m. Parmalee recently made history when its multi-week No.1 smash hit “Carolina” became the longest climbing single by a duo or group in the 24-year history of the Billboard Country Airplay chart. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVObozka9YY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVObozka9YY)

“BMI is honored to be a part of what is becoming an annual tradition in Southwest Florida,” said Dan Spears, vice-president industry relations, BMI. “Supporting our BMI-licensed restaurants, bars, and

hotels by bringing talented BMI songwriters in to perform helps increase food and beverage revenue while putting ‘heads in beds.’ This is just one of the ways BMI continues to work with our valued licensees while shining a spotlight on our award-winning songwriters.”

Many of the more than 70 songwriters have written hits, such as chart-topping BMI songwriter Even Stevens, who wrote several No.1's, including Eddie Rabbitt’s “Suspicions” and “I Love a Rainy Night.” Frank Myers wrote “I Swear” performed by John Michael Montgomery. Phillip White wrote the hit “I’m Movin’ On” performed by Rascal Flats. A new country duo that includes Presley Tucker, the daughter of legendary country singer, Tanya Tucker, will also perform.

Check [www.islandhopperfest.com](http://www.islandhopperfest.com) for more information, to book special performance tickets and view the list of artists, schedules and venues. Most shows are free of charge. Special Island Hopper lodging packages are also available. Follow the festival hashtag #islandhopperfest on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel in Southwest Florida includes: Sanibel Island, Captiva Island, Fort Myers Beach, Fort Myers, Bonita Springs, Estero, Cape Coral, Pine Island, Boca Grande & Outer Islands, North Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres. For media assistance on the destination, visit [www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/media-central](http://www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/media-central). Photos available on request.