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## 7 questions with Bailey Bryan ahead of Country LakeShake appearance Sunday



Never heard of Bailey Bryan? You will. The country music newbie will be headlining the Next From Nashville tent at Country LakeShake Festival Sunday at 6:45 p.m.

Here are 7 questions with Bryan:

1. What drew you to country music?

Bryan: I love so many different types of music, but what really drew me to country music is the songwriting. Country music is about storytelling. The songs just make you feel something, and I hope my music does that for people when they listen.

2. Who are your biggest influences?

Bryan: I've really been inspired by so many artists across so many different genres, but some of my biggest influences are The Dixie Chicks, Taylor Swift, Sam Hunt, Chance The Rapper, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Drake...I could keep going.

3. Where does hip hop come into your song process?

Bryan: I really appreciate hip-hop because it's another genre where really honest storytelling happens. When I listen to Chance and Drake, I'm listening for the story just like I am with country. When I write, I don't try to fit

perfectly into any box or specific genre. I just try and learn from the unique way everyone crafts their stories and I draw inspiration from that.

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4. How long have you been writing music and why did you get into it?

Bryan: Well, I wrote my first song when I was four years old. But I would say I got pretty serious about it when I turned 15. That's when I started coming to Nashville and really learned so much about songwriting. I think we all have stories to share, and it's always just been a big way I wanted to share mine.

5. Your video for your single "Own It" is all about technology and social media. What role does that stuff play in your life?

Bryan: Social media obviously plays a huge role in the world today, especially with people my age. I think most of us are super connected to our iPhones and social media, but I just really want to be a positive voice for my generation. It can be so easy to become obsessed with the image we're portraying and feel like we have to be perfect, but I hope when people follow me on Instagram or listen to my music, they're encouraged to just be real and be themselves.

6. What was it like to be nominated by Hillary Scott as Grammy Artist of Tomorrow?

Bryan: It was such a crazy honor. Honestly, I still can't believe that I get to call her a mentor and a friend. I've been really inspired by her for years - Lady Antebellum is one of the reasons I even wanted to be a country artist, so it's just kind of surreal. She's been incredibly kind to me.

7. What are you most excited about at LakeShake?

Bryan: I'm really excited to get to spend time in Chicago - it's just such a cool city. And I'm honored anytime my name is included among such an incredible lineup. Oh, and pizza.