

For Immediate Release

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PULITZER PRIZE BOARD AWARDS SPECIAL CITATION TO HANK WILLIAMS, COUNTRY MUSIC ICON

New York City, April 12 – The Pulitzer Prize Board has awarded a posthumous Special Citation to country music icon Hank Williams for his lifetime achievement as a musician, Columbia University announced today.

The citation praises Williams for “his craftsmanship as a songwriter who expressed universal feelings with poignant simplicity and played a pivotal role in transforming country music into a major musical and cultural force in American life.”

The Board, chaired by Anders Gyllenhaal, executive editor of the Miami Herald, made the award after a confidential survey of experts in popular music.

“The citation, above all, recognizes the lasting impact of Williams as a creative force that influenced a wide range of other musicians and performers,” said Sig Gissler, administrator of the Pulitzer Prizes. “At the same time, the award highlights the Board’s desire to broaden its Music Prize and recognize the full range of musical excellence that might not have been considered in the past.”

In recent years, the Board has awarded several other Special Citations in music: To jazz composers Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane in 2006 and 2007 and to composer and singer Bob Dylan in 2008.

Williams, who died in 1953 at age 29, was noted for writing and singing songs that reflected the hopes and struggles of everyday Americans, and his compositional skill and fusion of genres, experts say, became the measure by which country music is judged. Among his most famous songs are the standards “Your Cheatin’ Heart,” “Cold Cold Heart,” “I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry” and “Jambalaya.”

The Pulitzer Prize Board announced the 2010 Pulitzer Prize Winners and Nominated Finalists on April 9, 2010. For the complete list of the 2010 Pulitzer Prize Award Winners, please visit www.pulitzer.org.

For more information about the Pulitzer Prize Awards, please contact Sig Gissler, administrator, Pulitzer Prizes, at sg138@columbia.edu or 212-854-7327.

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