



Contact: Annette Louch-Parker
Director of Marketing & Sales; Rialto Square Theatre

15 E. Van Buren Street
Joliet, IL 60432
Telephone: (815) 726-7171
Fax: (815) 726-0352
www.rialtosquare.com

March 20, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rialto Square Theatre Recognized as One of the Top Concert Venues in the Country

Receives Nomination by Academy of Country Music as Venue of the Year

Joliet, IL: On Wednesday, March 19th, the Academy of Country Music announced nominations for the 43rd Academy of Country Music Awards which will be presented on Sunday, May 18th at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Included in this year's list of nominees is the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet which was nominated in the category of Venue of the Year. The Rialto is one of five nominees which include venues in Michigan, Wisconsin, Virginia and Indiana.

"I was elated when I got a call that we were a nominee," explains Randy Green the Rialto's General Manager. "To be recognized by artists, managers and agents as one of the top country music venues is truly an honor."

The 43rd Academy of Country Music Awards will be aired on Sunday night, May 18th at 7:00pm on CBS television.

This list of country music artists that has played the Rialto over the past three years include legends Loretta Lynn and George Jones; Lee Ann Womack, LeAnn Rimes, Jo Dee Messina, Billy Ray Cyrus, Vince Gill, Sara Evans, Phil Vassar, Lonestar, Rodney Atkins, The Wrights, Jewel and Taylor Swift. In addition, comedian Rodney Carrington and three members of the Blue Collar Comedy Tour, Jeff Foxworthy, Bill Engvall and Ron White performed to sell out audiences.

"Last year I told the Rialto staff that my goal was to make the Rialto the best concert venue in the Chicago area for audiences to experience live entertainment." "I know we try very hard to make our performers feel welcomed, comfortable and that we appreciate that they chose to perform at the Rialto." "The Rialto's stage presents certain challenges because of its size and the age of the facility. But we roll out the red carpet and I think this shows they appreciate what we do to support their performances." explains Green.

The Rialto recently announced that Grammy Award winner Vince Gill will perform as part of the Rialto's 2008-09 season. "I hope people understand how many people play a role in supporting the acts

that play the Rialto.” comments Green. “This nomination recognizes the efforts of stagehands, musicians, Rialto volunteers, caterers, runners and transportation services all of whom are local personnel and services.”

“The Rialto staff and Board are very proud of this recognition.” says David Hacker, Chairman of the Will County Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium Authority, which oversees the operations and programs of the Rialto Square Theatre. “I believe the community should share in this pride because of the support they have given to the Rialto over the years and currently as we work to raise \$5 million for our capital campaign to *Polish the Jewel of Joliet*.”

“Who knows, we just might win. I guess I should prepare some type of acceptance speech. I can’t imagine the feeling of winning this award.” explains Green. “Regardless of the outcome it is an honor to just be nominated.”

###