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## CASTING CROWNS AND MARK HALL LEAD NOMINATIONS FOR THE 39TH ANNUAL GMA DOVE AWARDS

*Multi-Platinum Artist Recognized in Four Major Categories Including Artist of the Year;  
Hall Honored with Six Nods*

(Nashville, Tenn.) February 14, 2008 – With nominations announced today for the 39th Annual GMA Dove Awards by the Gospel Music Association (GMA), multi-platinum artist Casting Crowns once again cements its place as the premiere force in Christian music. The Atlanta-based pop/worship band is recognized with four nominations, including the prestigious **Artist of the Year** award.

Casting Crowns is also nominated for **Group of the Year**, an honor it has won for the last three years. Lead singer/songwriter Mark Hall leads all artists in the extremely diverse Dove field with an additional six individual nominations, including a nod for **Male Vocalist of the Year** and as writer of **Song of the Year** nominee, “East To West,” from Casting Crown’s RIAA Gold-selling *The Altar and the Door* album.

The Atlanta-Journal Constitution spoke with Mark Hall today from Grand Rapids, Mich., where Casting Crowns will play tonight, and asked him if being a perennial nominee ever becomes old hat. Hall answered, “It never gets old, because it’s new music,” the hard-working youth minister from Eagle’s Landing First Baptist Church says. “Can’t coast on what you did in the past. The thing I like about the Doves is that it’s your peers, those people that do what you do recognizing you, telling you, ‘hey, you’re doing a good job, keep it up.’ To me, that’s pretty cool.”

*The Altar and the Door*, produced by country music superstar Mark Miller (Sawyer Brown), is recognized in the **Pop/Contemporary Album** category. The lead single from this project, “East To West,” which topped four Christian radio charts, including 13 weeks at No. 1 on R&R’s AC-Monitored chart and a record-setting 14 weeks at No.1 on R&R’s AC-Indicator chart, is nominated for **Pop/Contemporary Recorded Song**.

Mark Hall is also recognized with two nods for his work on the multi-artist *Glory Revealed* project, in the **Special Event Album** and **Inspirational Recorded Song** (“By His Wounds”) categories. Another of Hall’s nominations is as writer of the No. 1 smash anthem from Casting Crown’s sophomore *Lifesong* project, “Praise You In This Storm,” in the **Worship Song** category. He also receives a nod as writer of “East To West” in the **Pop/Contemporary Recorded Song** category.

2007 was extraordinary for Casting Crowns, securing the top slot as the No. 1 selling Christian music artist of the year, a seventh No. 1 AC radio hit, and the highest-grossing tour in Christian music. “East To West” also garnered multiple GRAMMY nods, with the band and lead singer Mark Hall nominated in three total GRAMMY categories, including best song, best performance and best album. The band took home a win at last November’s fan-voted American Music Awards, picking up the trophy for Favorite Artist in the Contemporary Inspirational category.

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Last year, Casting Crowns also set an RIAA record as the fastest Christian music artist in its career to have its first two albums certified Platinum, and only the second in RIAA history ever to achieve it. All four of the band's previous projects, including two Live DVDs, are now certified platinum.

Casting Crowns' lead singer and songwriter is full-time Youth Pastor Mark Hall, who is serving his 17th year as student pastor at Eagle's Landing First Baptist Church in Atlanta. All seven band members remain active in student ministry in the Atlanta-area and tour part-time around their local-church duties. In April, the group made a historic trip to North Korea, as the only U.S. band invited to play at the April Art Friendship Festival. For more information on Casting Crowns and for updated spring concert listings, please visit [www.castingcrowns.com](http://www.castingcrowns.com) or [www.reunionrecords.com](http://www.reunionrecords.com).

The GMA Music Awards show will be presented on April 23, 2008 at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville and broadcast live on Gospel Music Channel. A complete list of nominations is available online at [www.doveawards.com](http://www.doveawards.com).

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