



SIGNED

Conor Matthews

LABEL ALTADENA/WARNER RECORDS

🎯 In the summer of 2014, after Conor Matthews' freshman year at Belmont University — where he was enrolled in the songwriting program — he took a job at the Nashville Nordstrom. He had no idea it would lead to a future career as a songwriter.

That same summer, Matthews, now 24, attended a writers' round and recognized someone to whom he had sold a shirt three days earlier: Universal Music Group Nashville senior director of A&R Joe Fisher. "I told him I wanted to be a songwriter, and he said, 'That's crazy, dude. I work at Universal. Come by and play me some songs sometime,'" recalls Matthews.

Three months later, Fisher contacted Matthews to tell him he had forwarded a few of his songs to Keith Urban, who was instantly sold. By February 2015, Matthews signed a publishing deal with Warner Chappell, joining writing sessions with Sugarland and Sam Hunt.

Nearly three years later, Matthews became the first artist to join Altadena, the music company launched by hit songwriter-producer busbee — who died unexpectedly on Sept. 29 — through a joint venture with Warner Records. Busbee and Warner co-chairman/CEO Aaron Bay-Schuck offered the pop/R&B artist a recording contract last December; in May, he signed to Altadena/Warner, which the company announced in September.

"Conor represents the kind of high-level, credible pop artist with whom Bay-Schuck has had massive success," says Altadena GM Daniel Lee, adding that Matthews has delivered almost 20 masters since signing his deal. "He drips with charisma."

Now, after busbee's death, Matthews is more determined than ever to make him proud, working on an upcoming debut EP and putting together a live show that will incorporate choreography. "I'm really excited to just work as hard as I can and try and live up to all the things that [busbee] saw in me from such an early stage. To be able to do that is very rewarding."

—GAB GINSBERG