



Maggie Rogers



Rosalia



Gloria Gaynor



Bonnie McKee



Shania Twain



FKA twigs

Powerful speech Drama over inclusion, fairness at Grammys

By Leanne Italie

Drama over fairness and inclusion at the Grammy Awards carried over to music's big night Sunday as newcomers and mainstays in the industry supported Sean "Diddy" Combs and his powerful speech putting the Recording Academy on a clock to fix the nomination process when it comes to rap and R&B in major categories.

"I think if they smart, they listen to Diddy," soulful singer Lucky Daye told The Associated Press on the red carpet.

British rapper Labrinth added: "Hopefully there's a conversation to really think about what's happened."

Days ago, the academy's just-ousted CEO Deborah Dugan claimed that the awards are rigged and filled with conflicts of interest. At the Clive Davis gala Saturday night, Combs - who was honored - spoke for 50 fiery minutes, saying in part:

"So I say this with love to the Grammys, because you really need to know this, every year y'all be killing us man. Man, I'm talking about the pain. I'm speaking for all these artists here, the producers, the executives. The amount of time it takes to make these records, to pour your heart into it, and you just want an even playing field." Combs urged in his speech that substantive change should come within 365 days.

Legend Smokey Robinson had words of support for Combs, his friend, but he said he wasn't surprised about the Grammy criticism.

Touched

"Diddy could actually be a politician. I thought this speech was powerful. It touched on a lot of things people were afraid to say," he said.

Of Dugan calling out manipulation of the nomination process, he said, "It's not like it's news. We've known it all along. It's just coming to the forefront. All that is hidden will come to light."

Tyler, The Creator said backstage after his "Igor" won best rap album that he's "half and half" on the controversy over whether Grammy voting is fair.

"On one side, I'm very grateful that what I made could just be acknowledged in a world like this," he told reporters. "But also, it sucks that whenever we, and I mean guys that look like me, do anything that's genre-bending, they always put it in a 'rap' or 'urban' category. I don't like that 'urban' word. It's just a politically correct way to say the N-word. When I hear that, I'm just like why can't we just be in pop?"

His other half feels like the "rap nomination was a backhanded compliment."

DJ Khaled in addressing Comb's speech on inclusion said, "That's why I made sure to say 'This is for hip-hop.'"

He won a Grammy on Sunday for best rap/sung performance for "Higher."

"We just want ours too. That's it. This is for hip-hop. This is for Nipsey Hussle," he said.

Bluesman Keb' Mo', who has served in academy positions over the years, said his experiences on the inside have been "nothing but integrity." He added: "Nothing's perfect, but my experience is the Grammys trying to maintain integrity and the artistic process."

Others said Combs' words and support will hopefully go a long way.

"I believe that, you know, sometimes there's always a tweaking that can be done. ... I think sometimes you may have to just revisit the process," said gospel artist Tasha Cobbs Leonard. "I have hope that's what's happening now in every category."

The Grammys have been criticized over the years when Beyoncé, Kanye West, Eminem, Mariah Carey and other top stars have lost in major categories, including album of the year and best new artist. The rap and R&B stars often fall short of their pop, rock and country counterparts. (AP)

Style



Mollie King



Camila Cabello



Ella Mai



Heidi Klum



Chrissy Teigen



Lilly Singh



Lana Del Rey



Saweetie



Lala Milan



Jameela Jamil



Liza Koshy



Ariana Grande



Nikita Dragun



Lizzo



Keltie Knight

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