



# People & Places

ENTERTAINMENT

In Brief

Music

'It's so epic. It makes me cry'

## Secret sauce in Legend's album: the Grammys

**LOS ANGELES:** Jimmy Kimmel will host the first major Hollywood awards ceremony of the coronavirus pandemic — but just how the Emmys will be held remains cloudy.

Kimmel, who is also producing the Sept 20 ceremony on ABC honoring TV's best, acknowledged that in Tuesday's announcement.

"I don't know where we will do this or how we will do this or even why we are doing this, but we are doing it and I am hosting it," the ABC late-night host said in a statement.

The network said details on the show's production will be announced soon. Choosing Kimmel to emcee the ceremony reverses course from last year's no-host Emmys.

The entertainment industry is just beginning to restart production following a months-long shutdown aimed at curtailing the spread of COVID-19. Orchestrating an awards ceremony during the ongoing pandemic with its crowd of presenters, nominees and guests is a daunting prospect, whether done virtually or otherwise.

While the Emmys are plunging ahead as scheduled, other ceremonies are bowing to the pandemic's pressures. The 93rd Academy Awards will be held April 25, 2021, eight weeks later than planned, and the British Academy Film Awards is shifting its originally announced February 2021 ceremony to April 11.

The Emmy Awards are considered a kickoff for the new TV season that traditionally begins in September, although virus-caused production delays have raised questions about whether shows will be ready to air as planned.

Nominations for the 72nd prime-time Emmys will be announced by the TV academy on July 28. (AP)

**LOS ANGELES:** "That '70s Show" actor **Danny Masterson** was charged with the rapes of three women in the early 2000s, Los Angeles prosecutors said Wednesday, the culmination of a three-year investigation that resulted in a rare arrest of a famous Hollywood figure in the #MeToo era.

The three counts of rape by force or fear against Masterson were filed Tuesday, and an arrest warrant issued. Masterson, 44, was arrested late Wednesday morning, jail records showed. He was released a few hours later after posting bond and is scheduled to be arraigned Sept 18.

Masterson's attorney **Tom Mesereau** said his client is innocent, and "we're confident that he will be exonerated when all the evidence finally comes to light and witnesses have the opportunity to testify."

Prosecutors allege that Masterson raped a 23-year-old woman sometime in 2001, a 28-year-old woman in April of 2003, and a 23-year-old woman he had invited to his Hollywood Hills home between October and December of 2003.

If convicted, he could face up to 45 years in prison.

Prosecutors declined to file charges in two other Masterson cases that police had investigated, one because of insufficient evidence and the other because the statute of limitations had expired.

Masterson has been married to actor and model **Bijou Phillips** since 2011.

"Obviously, Mr Masterson and his wife are in complete shock considering that these nearly 20-year old allegations are suddenly resulting in charges being filed, but they and their family are comforted knowing that ultimately the truth will come out," said Mesereau, who has previously represented Michael Jackson and Bill Cosby in their trials for sexual crimes.

"The people who know Mr Masterson know his character and know the allegations to be false." (AP)

**LOS ANGELES:** Netflix CEO **Reed Hastings** and his wife, **Patty Quillin**, are donating \$120 million toward student scholarships at historically black colleges and universities.

The couple is giving \$40 million to each of three institutions: the United Negro College Fund, Spelman College and Morehouse College. The organizations said it is the largest individual gift in support of student scholarships at HBCUs.

Hastings has a history of supporting educational causes, including charter schools. He launched a \$100 million education fund in 2016, beginning with money toward college scholarships for black and Latino students.

Hastings said now is the time when "everyone needs to figure out" how to contribute to solving racism. He said HBCUs have been resilient "little-known gems" for black education.

Amid protests over police brutality that began three weeks ago, companies and business leaders have been pledging solidarity with their black employees and the black community. But tech companies — including Netflix — have fallen short in hiring, retaining and promoting underrepresented minorities within their own ranks.

Other tech industry donations in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests have largely been on the company level. (AP)



This Aug 22, 2019 file photo shows Rapsody posing for a portrait in New York to promote her latest album 'Eve'. The rapper collaborated with John Legend on his latest album 'Bigger Love'. (AP)

'A cultural catastrophe'

## 'Hamilton', 'Phantom' off London stages until '21

**LONDON, June 18, (AP):** Some of London's biggest West End shows, including "Hamilton" and "The Phantom of the Opera," won't reopen until next year, producers announced Wednesday, as arts bodies warned that Britain faces a "cultural catastrophe" because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Producer **Cameron Mackintosh**, his producing partners and his Delfont Mackintosh Theatres group said "Hamilton," "The Phantom of the Opera," "Mary Poppins" and "Les Miserables," would return "as early as practical in 2021."

The company said it was talking to staff about "potential redundancies."

Mackintosh, one of Britain's biggest and wealthiest theater producers, said the decision was "heartbreaking" and criticized Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government for offering stage producers "no tangible practical support beyond offers to go into debt, which I don't want to do."

He said the government's "inability to say when the impossible constraints of social distancing will be lifted makes it equally impossible for us to properly plan for whatever the new future is."

Music, theater, art, design, architecture and publishing generate billions for the British economy each year, but the country's clubs, theaters, cinemas, concert halls and art galleries shut down in March as part of a nationwide lockdown to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Shops and outdoor spaces such as zoos are now starting to reopen, but indoor venues remain closed because of social distancing rules that require people to

remain two meters (6-½ feet) apart.

The government says it's reviewing the distance rule amid pressure from retailers, restaurateurs and others to cut it to one meter (three feet).

The government has penciled in a July 4 re-opening date for pubs and restaurants, but Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden acknowledged that "it is going to be exceptionally difficult" for theaters to open.

Dowden said at a news conference that he planned to gather representatives from theaters, choirs and orchestras with medical experts in the next week to work on a "road map" for safe performances.

A study released Wednesday by research firm Oxford Economics projected that the UK's creative industries could lose £74 billion (\$93 million) in revenue this year and a fifth of the UK's 2 million creative-sector jobs could disappear.

Chief executive **Caroline Norbury** of the Creative Industries Federation, which lobbies for arts and culture, said that "without additional government support, we are heading for a cultural catastrophe."

"Thousands of world-leading creative businesses are set to close their doors, hundreds of thousands of jobs will be lost and billions will be lost to our economy," she said.

Norbury and other culture-sector leaders called on the government to set up a "cultural renewal fund" and continue support programs that have supported self-employed people and furloughed workers during the lockdown. The Treasury plans to scale back the programs in the next few months.

A letter to the government signed by almost 100 theater artists including actors **James McAvoy** and **Wendell Pierce** and "Fleabag" creator **Phoebe Waller-Bridge** warned that "British theater is on the brink of ruin."



Mackintosh

**NEW YORK, June 18, (AP):** At the 2020 Grammy Awards, **John Legend** excitedly walked around with "a special secret," as he puts it: He had just finished recording a batch of songs and felt like his new album was near done.

And though he performed and won his 11th gramophone at the show, he productively used the week where most of the music industry flocks to Los Angeles to add new flavor to his album.

At the Grammys he met **Koffee**, who made history when she became the youngest artist to win the best reggae album Grammy, eventually collaborating with her on a song for "Bigger Love," his seventh album out Friday. And a day before the awards show at the white-hot annual Roc Nation brunch, he sought out rapper **Rapsody** — who is signed to Jay-Z's company — and asked her to rap on one of his songs.

Legend said listening to Rapsody's verse on "Remember Us" brings him to tears, especially when the skilled lyricist name-drops **Kobe Bryant**, who died on the day of the Grammys, and **Nipsey Hussle**, who Legend won his most recent Grammy with for their song "Higher."

"It's so epic. It makes me cry. I listen to it sometimes and it makes me tear up," said Legend, who performed "Higher" at the Grammys in tribute to Hussle alongside **DJ Khaled** and others. "I remember how emotional I was the day of the Grammys when Kobe passed away. It was such a crazy time."

Legend said Rapsody wrote two verses for his song, asking him which he preferred. "This was the one that just immediately hit me. I loved her referring to Kobe and Nipsey and Biggie and some of the other artists we lost, but also some artists that are still with us that made records that were important to us."

Legend's album also features collaborations with **Jhené Aiko** and **Gary Clark Jr.**, while a pack of all-star producers and songwriters also help on the project, including **Charlie Puth**, **Anderson Paak**, **Ryan Tedder**, **Ester Dean**, **Teddy Geiger**, **Tayla Parx** and **Raphael Saadiq**, who executive produced the album.

But Legend's collaboration with Hussle is still getting love a year after its release. On Monday "Higher" earned two nominations at the BET Awards, including video of the year. The clip was filmed not long before Hussle died.

"What a video to go out on — in his neighborhood, elevated above the neighborhood, looking down on it," Legend said. "He was so proud of his neighborhood and his community. He had invested so much in the community and done so much to bring hope and jobs and education to the community."

"We made a record with Nipsey that will last forever," he said. "That's a beautiful thing that's come from it."

Legend, 41, said some of the songs on "Bigger Love" have a strong and resilient impact in a similar vein of "Higher." Though he created the album before the coronavirus pandemic and the protests advocating for black lives that have erupted around the world, he said the songs still resonate.

"It wasn't written in response to exactly what's happening in this moment, but I feel like it could be a lift for people who are experiencing the uncertainty and the turmoil of this time," he said. "Some of those songs feel more poignant now than they would have were we not going through these crises in America."

Also:

**SIESTA KEY, Florida:** One of the stars of MTV's Florida-based reality show "Siesta Key" has been fired.

MTV posted the decision to remove **Alex Kompothecras**, 25, on the show's official Twitter account Tuesday evening.

"We've made the decision to cut ties with Alex and are editing the current season to minimize his presence," according to an MTV statement. "He will not be in future seasons of 'Siesta Key.'" The statement did not say what it had based the decision on.

"Siesta Key" premiered in 2017 and follows a group of young people in Sarasota County, Florida. Kompothecras grew up on the Gulf Coast barrier island, where much of the show is filmed. He was dismissed on Tuesday as the second half of the third season began to air.

Alex's father, **Gary Kompothecras**, is the founder of the 1-800-ASK-GARY medical referral service and an executive producer of the show. He also owns the Crescent Club, which his son manages on the show.

"Our family is very disappointed with MTV and we are exploring all our options," Gary Kompothecras told the Sarasota Herald-Tribune.

editor's choice

