



A big screen shows British singer-songwriter Adele accepting the BRITs global success award during the BRIT Awards 2017.



British singer-songwriter Emeli Sande (left) talks after receiving the award for British female solo artist with her sister Lucy (right).



Liam Payne accepts the award for British artist video of the year for One Direction's 'History' during the BRIT Awards 2017.

Growing artistic

Adele, who took four Grammys last week, was not up for many Brits because her album "25" was eligible last year, and won four Brits. She won this year's Global Success award, which recognizes international sales. Robbie Williams, former member of boyband Take That turned adult pop hitmaker, was given the Brits Icon award. The award for British breakthrough artist went to big-voiced soul singer Rag 'n' Bone Man, whose song "Human" has had heavy play around the world, "Oh my days," said the singer, whose real name is Rory Graham. "I'm nearly speechless." Rag 'n' Bone Man beat nominees including the favored grime musician Skepta. Grime artists Stormzy and Kano were also award contenders, reflecting the growing artistic and commercial clout of the distinctly British rap genre.

The awards have been accused of failing to represent the industry's ethnic diversity. All last year's British nominees were white, and protesters rallied under the hashtag #britssowhite. Organizers responded by expanding the diversity of the voter base of 1,000 music-industry figures. This year's list was more diverse, with Sande, soul singer Michael Kiwanuka and singer-songwriter Lianne La Havas among non-white British contenders, along with the three grime performers. La Havas, who lost to Sande for best British female artist, said on the red carpet she was glad the London-centric sound of grime was being recognized.

"For me personally, when I hear grime, because I'm from London it sounds like London to me," she said. "It does in hindsight feel a bit unusual that it was something that wasn't promoted as much. "But I also think now we've got some real stars happening in that genre, it makes a lot of sense now." Keith Harris, who was appointed to head a diversity taskforce for the British music industry, said "people feel there might actually be a breakthrough." "The question is whether this is going to be long-term or short-term," he said. "That's my concern." Most Brits winners are chosen by music-industry members, with several selected by public vote - including a best video category decided by social-media ballot during the broadcast. It was won, for the fourth year in a row, by One Direction. — AP

Winners of 2017 BRIT Awards

Mastercard British Album of The Year

David Bowie, "Blackstar"

British Single

Little Mix, "Shout Out To My Ex"

British Male Solo Artist

David Bowie

British Female Solo Artist

Emeli Sande

British Group

The 1975

British Breakthrough Act

Rag'n'Bone Man

Brits Global Success Award

Adele

British Artist Video of The Year

One Direction

Critics' Choice

Rag'n'Bone Man

International Female Solo Artist

Beyonce

International Male Solo Artist

Drake

International Group

A Tribe Called Quest — Reuters



Chris Martin of British band 'Coldplay' (left) duets with a recording of late British pop icon George Michael during the BRIT Awards 2017.



A big screen shows US rapper Drake accepting the award for international male solo artist during the BRIT Awards 2017.



Singer Chris Martin performs on stage.



British singer-songwriter Rory Graham, better known as Rag'n'Bone Man, accepts the award for a British breakthrough act during the BRIT Awards 2017 ceremony.



British musician Liam Gallagher presents the British album of the year award.



US singer Bruno Mars performs during the BRIT Awards 2017 ceremony and live show in London.



(From left) Adam Hann, Ross MacDonald, Matthew Healy and George Daniel of the British rock band 'The 1975' talk on stage after receiving the award for a British group.