

Grammys switching to online voting, changes top album rule



This Dec 9, 2008 file photo shows a Grammy Award statue. — AP

The Grammys Awards are transitioning to online voting and have updated rules for its top category, album of the year. The Recording Academy announced new changes yesterday, including its official switch to online voting for its 13,000 members. Voting for the 2018 Grammy Awards will take place in the fall and will include songs and albums released between Oct 1, 2016, and Sept 30, 2017. Bill Freimuth, the academy's senior vice president of awards, said the academy expects to attract younger voters and touring musicians who are away from home during voting season.

"It is something that has been long-desired, long-talked about and long-investigated," he said of online voting, which comes a year after the Latin Grammys made the switch. Freimuth said there were concerns about security issues, but added they have "done everything we can to make sure the integrity of the system will be preserved." Another major change is the addition of songwriters to the nominees for album of the year, which was previously reserved for artists, producers and engineers. However, all participants in the album, including featured artists, songwriters, producers and engineers, must now be credited with at least 33 percent or more playing time on the album to be eligible for nomination. Prior to

the new rule, all participants on an album would earn a nomination for album of the year even if they worked on one song.

The album of the year rule change would mainly affect pop, rap and contemporary R&B albums where producers typically vary throughout the project, as opposed to country and rock albums, where fewer producers are present. Beyonce's "Lemonade," Drake's "Views" and Justin Bieber's "Purpose" - all nominees this year for album of the year - each had at least 20 producers credited. Adele's "25," which won the top prize in February, had 11 producers. The fifth nominee was country singer Sturgill Simpson, who produced his album by himself. "Does participation on a single track on a 12- or 15-track album really signify that they really worked on the album? When it was put that way most people were saying, 'No, not really,'" Freimuth said.

New Age genres

If the new rule had been implemented at this year's show, Bruno Mars and Ryan Tedder wouldn't have earned Grammys for their production work on Adele's album, for example. Freimuth added that songwriters and producers who work on a big hit on an album could earn a nomination for record or song of the year

for their song. The new changes were approved last month by the Recording Academy's board of trustees. Other changes include nomination review committees added to the rap, contemporary instrumental and New Age genres. The committees serve as an additional layer of checks and balances, and for rap, could prevent wins like Macklemore & Ryan Lewis in 2014 over Kendrick Lamar, which were highly criticized. It could also allow rising acts to earn nominations over veteran performers like Eminem and Kanye West, who consistently earn nominations.

"We form these committees only when we hear from ... those genre communities (when) they feel like something's wrong, or that our nominations could be better," said Freimuth. "For rap, what they were finding was that 'legacy' artists, almost no matter what they released, they would get a nomination because of their name recognition and fan base." The rock, R&B and country genres are other genres that have nomination review committees. The Grammy Awards have 83 categories. Nominees will be announced Nov 28, and the 60th awards show will take place at Madison Square Garden in New York on Jan 28, 2018. — AP



In this June 21, 1997, file photo, Country Joe McDonald, left, an anti-Vietnam War protester and 1960s rock icon, sings "Carry On," a healing song of peace, during San Francisco's 30th anniversary celebration of the "Summer of Love." — AP photos

1960s rock icons recall groovy, gritty Summer of Love

The Summer of Love in 1967 marked a turning point in rock and roll history: It introduced America to the exciting new sounds coming out of San Francisco's local music scene.

There was the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Big Brother and the Holding Company, which launched Janis Joplin's career, and Country Joe and the Fish, another signature band of the era. The Associated Press talked to members of these bands to discuss their memories of that legendary summer and how it shaped their careers and influenced their lives. Here's what they said:

• **Bob Weir, 69.** Grateful Dead, guitarist, vocals. On how that summer shaped his life: "We were sort of forced into a divorce from what we'll call the straight culture. They had a war going on that, Number One, didn't look good to us, and then even worse boded quite ill for us. If I had fallen to the draft, I probably wouldn't be here now. So what the straight culture had to offer for us, for me, was death. In our culture, in the Summer of Love, I had the life that I've lived to this day to look forward to."

On making music history: "We were remaking the rules for music. I think we had a notion that we were remaking the rules a bit more than we actually ended up doing. But we did change music, our generation."

On Jerry Garcia: "When I first met Jerry, he wasn't a hippie. He was basically a banjo player. He was a talented guy, and a great guy to hang with and an accomplished musician. And I figured I could do a lot worse than hooking up with that guy and playing music because I could see that we could go places together."

On Jimi Hendrix: "I found myself jamming with him at the Monterey Pop Festival backstage. I didn't know who he was, and I don't think he knew who I was. But we were plugged into the same amplifier and had a great time together basically destroying that amplifier. And we became friends after that."

On fame: "Our great fame didn't come right away, believe me. It was a long time in coming, which is one of the reasons that those of us who are still here are still here. Because we never got a chance to suffer from that 'too much, too soon' syndrome, which is almost invariably quite destructive."

• **Country Joe McDonald, 75.** Country Joe and the Fish, lead singer, guitar.

On the hippies: "The main thing about the Summer of Love and that period of history is that we were incredibly poor and disenfranchised. Our clothes were hand-me-downs, and our instruments were cheap musical instruments, and the artists were lucky to get paid \$50 or \$100 bucks. The bands were making \$200 a night, split five, six, seven ways."

On the vibe at the time: "It was exciting. It was small, and it was new. It was empowering and inclusive. Anyone could participate and was encouraged to participate. It had something that people wanted. It was also a period of invention and creativity, and with each new creative moment and invention, our morale was boosted." On what led to the Summer of Love: "In 1965 and '66 we had had enough. We couldn't stand it anymore. We weren't going to do what the status quo asked us to do. I grew up with a T-shirt with nothing on it. There was like one haircut for men. There was death in Vietnam, for black Americans, for minority Americans of all kinds. There was nothing for homosexuals except prison. For women, there was nothing except marriage and nursing, but there wasn't opportunity. We created opportunity. We created a mindset."

On how it shaped his life: "It gave me a life. I didn't feel comfortable in the old life I had. I was part of it, I was successful in it. I



This undated file photo shows members of the Grateful Dead band, from left to right, Mickey Hart, Phil Lesh, Jerry Garcia, Brent Mydland, Bill Kreutzmann, and Bob Weir.



In this December 1969 file photo, singer Janis Joplin performs with her group Big Brother and the Holding Company.



In this March 8, 1968 file photo, members of the rock group Jefferson Airplane pose in San Francisco. From left are, Marty Balin, lead singer, songwriter and founder, Grace Slick, vocalist, Spencer Dryden, drummer, Paul Kantner, electric guitar and vocalist, Jorma Kaukonen, lead guitarist, vocalist and songwriter and Jack Casady, bass guitarist.



In this photo Mandy Moore, left, and Claire Holt pose for a portrait at the "47 Meters Down" junket at the Montage Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. — AP

IN '47 METERS DOWN,' MOORE AND HOLT EMBRACE UNCHARTED WATERS

Mandy Moore spent six weeks at the bottom of a London pool trapped inside a steel cage, hyperventilating and screaming while filming the underwater thriller "47 Meters Down." It wasn't all called for in the script. Countless "what ifs" played out in her mind: What if her air suddenly cut out? What if her scuba equipment wasn't properly attached? "It hadn't really been done before, so no one really knew the ramifications of spending that much time underwater," Moore, 33, said. In total, Moore said she and her co-star Claire Holt spent 95 percent of production underwater for "47 Meters Down," which arrives in theaters Friday more than two years after it was shot.

Moore and Holt, 29, play sisters who try escaping their everyday problems by going on a Mexican vacation. They party, they argue and they go shark diving in a rickety cage. The cable suddenly breaks loose, sending them plummeting 154 feet to the ocean floor. In reality the actresses only descended 20 feet down to reach the bottom of that London pool. But as Moore will tell you, that's still 20 feet underwater. "It wasn't lost on us that we're breathing underwater and that is not normal," Moore said. Much like their characters, Moore and Holt were running out of air the moment they dived in. Director Johannes Roberts said it sped up shooting. They had a fixed amount of time until each air tank emptied and production stopped.

Unlike their characters, Moore and Holt were not dealing with actual sharks or darkness in the deep ocean. However, communication was an issue for all. In the film, the sisters were too deep for radio frequencies, leaving them unsure if help was on the way. On set, Roberts directed on dry land, only audible to Moore and Holt through underwater speakers. They couldn't even communicate with the underwater crew who wore special scuba diving masks different than their costume versions. So Moore and Holt looked to one another for guidance to both finesse their performances and remain calm.

Appreciate the experience

Holt said they didn't have to try too hard to act frightened - the strenuous production did that for them. "We knew our characters more, what facial expressions worked and what didn't," she said. Unease wasn't just reserved for the actresses. It became something of a theme for the film off-screen as well. Before the film's theatrical release, a bigger competitor emerged in the Blake Lively shark thriller "The Shallows." "47 Meters Down" headed for different territory, opting for a straight to video release. Roberts learned about the changes, including a new title, "In the Deep," from a horror film website. He and "47 Meters Down" co-writer Ernest Riera were already working on a new script in Spain, and Roberts told his creative partner he never wanted to speak of the film again.

The underwater production, lengthy editing and the video release had all taken their toll on the director. "It's a brutal job," Roberts said. "How you deal with it, is badly." However things changed again. "The Shallows" did better than expected at the box office, earning over \$55 million, according to comScore. A new distributor, Entertainment Studios, stepped in and set the film for a wide release. "It showed there's a market for it," Roberts said, an admitted shark movie aficionado.

Moore and Holt said they haven't seen "The Shallows," though Holt said she read the script. She noted they're distinct films, and "47 Meters Down" is not just a shark movie, she said. "It's about being trapped underwater, running out of air with nowhere to go. You can't go up; you'll get the bends," Holt said. "You don't know where you are. You don't know if anyone is coming for you." The film's unconventional journey to theaters has coincided with a career resurgence for Moore, who stars in the hit NBC series "This is Us." Holt is part of "The Vampire Diaries" franchise on the CW, most recently appearing in the spinoff "The Originals." They're proud of the hard work shooting "47 Meters Down," especially those days spent underwater. As for the film's distribution woes and delayed premiere, that's the last thing on their minds. "As actors, it's really important for us just to appreciate the experience," Moore said. "That's the only thing we're in control of." — AP

CLINTON, OBAMA SURPRISE WOMEN IN FILM AWARDS WINNERS, GUESTS

Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama and Sen. Kamala Harris made surprise appearances at Women in Film's awards ceremony with special videos, while veteran newsmen Dan Rather called the group's work toward gender parity in entertainment an example of "basic American decency, tolerance and generosity." Comedian Jessica Williams hosted the unexpectedly patriotic Crystal + Lucy Awards Tuesday at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, where F-bombs flew freely and "Wonder Woman" earned applause anytime it was mentioned.

Clinton said she hadn't seen "Wonder Woman" yet, but planned to: "Something tells me that a movie about a strong powerful woman fighting to save the world from a massive international disaster is right up my alley," she said before introducing Crystal Award-winner Elizabeth Banks. Lucy Award winner Tracee Ellis Ross was misty-eyed as she watched Obama describe her as brilliant and hilarious. "Your character on 'Black-ish,' Bow, is an inspiration for folks all across this country," the former first lady said.

"Oh my goodness gracious," Ross said. In accepting the award named for Lucille Ball, Ross said that "to be a part of reshaping what it is to be a modern woman through the face and beingness of a joyful black woman is really special." But she said she wonders why such representations are so few. "Why are black women underrepresented in the stories that get told?" Ross asked, adding: "That question is not just a question for black women." Robert Redford, who played Dan Rather in the 2015 film "Truth," presented the reporter with a humanitarian award.

Rather praised Women in Film for supporting equality, inclusion and fairness. "In standing tall about these characteristic American values, you do our country - not just the film industry, but our country - great service far beyond what you may imagine," he said. "It is of tremendous value to our nation as a whole." Oscar-winner Lupita Nyong'o introduced filmmaker Mira Nair, who received the Dorothy Arzner Director's Award. Producers Michael Barker and Tom Bernard received the inaugural Beacon Award: The co-founders of Sony Pictures Classics have released more

than 60 films directed by women.

Actress Zoey Deutch received the Max Mara Face of the Future Award, which Banks received eight years ago. "You get eight years before you get the Old Lady in the Business award, so good luck," Banks quipped. She said movies and TV shows by and about women are important because media images shape popular perspectives. "We are creating culture," she told the industry-heavy crowd. "We are sending messages out into the world, and those messages matter. Presenting strong independent women who have agency in TV and film, is really important - not just in this room, not just in our culture, but in global culture."

The annual Crystal + Lucy Awards raise funds for Women in Film's research and education programs. Besides awards, the gala offered a look at some of Women in Film's new initiatives, including the "Flip the Script" series of short videos premiering on YouTube yesterday. — AP



Donna Langley attends the Women In Film 2017 Crystal and Lucy Awards.



Robert Redford attends the Women In Film 2017 Crystal and Lucy Awards.



Elizabeth Banks attends the Women In Film 2017 Crystal and Lucy Awards.



Dan Rather attends the Women In Film 2017 Crystal and Lucy Awards.— AP photos