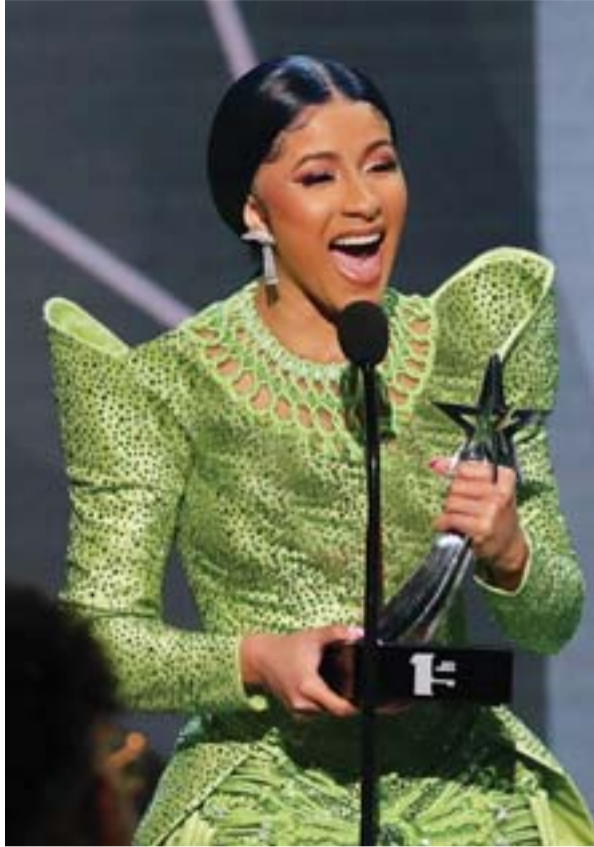


Lifestyle | Awards



Cardi B accepts the Album of the Year award onstage during the 2019 BET awards at Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles, California. — AFP photos



Nipsey Hussle's family accepts the Humanitarian Award in honor of Nipsey Hussle onstage.



Lil Baby accepts Best New Artist onstage.



Lil Baby performs onstage.



Reverend Al Sharpton accepts the Dr. Bobby Jones Best Gospel/Inspirational Award sponsored by State Farm onstage.



Ella Mai accepts the Coca-Cola Viewers' Choice Award for 'Trip' onstage.



Mary J. Blige performs onstage.



Mary J. Blige accepts the Lifetime Achievement Award.



Mary J. Blige performs onstage.



Host Regina Hall speaks onstage.



Billy Ray Cyrus (left) and Lil Nas X perform onstage.

BET AWARDS BOTH ENTERTAINED AND MOVED

The most popular group at Sunday night's BET Awards has never had a record deal. The men, who as boys were known as the Central Park Five, took the stage to introduce Grammy Award-winning singer H.E.R. Kevin Richardson, Antron McCray, Raymond Santana, Korey Wise and Yusef Salaam are now known as the Exonerated Five, and they received a standing ovation. Their story was the basis of the Netflix limited series "When They See Us," which dramatized their experiences of being wrongly convicted in a 1989 rape case in New York. The show has stoked strong feelings about how they were mistreated, subsequent struggles and eventual exoneration.

Korey Wise, Raymond Santana Jr, Yusef Salaam, Antron McCray, and Kevin Richardson speak onstage at the 2019 BET Awards. The 19th annual event celebrates the best in African-American culture. The show kicked off with a performance by the most-nominated artist of the night, Cardi B. The rapper kept it hot with a lap dance for her husband, fellow artist and Migos member, Offset, as she and a host of dancers turned it out.



(From left) Takeoff of Migos, Mustard, and Quavo of Migos perform onstage.

country or hip hop. Yler Perry turned the stage into a pulpit while receiving the Ultimate Icon Award.

Perry, who went from writing and starring in plays to owning his own studio, spoke about learning to turn pain into powerful stories. "When I built my studio, I built it in a neighborhood that is one of the poorest black neighborhoods in Atlanta, so that young kids could see that a black man did that and they can do it, too," Perry said. "The studio was once a Confederate army base, which meant that there were Confederate soldiers on that base plotting and planning on how to keep 3.9 million Negroes enslaved. Now that land is owned by one Negro."

Mary J. Blige was presented a lifetime achievement award from Rihanna and performed a medley of her hits. There were tributes to the late director John Singleton, who died in April following a stroke, and rapper Nipsey Hussle, who was gunned down March 31 in Los Angeles near a clothing store he owned.

Hussle's family accepted his award, and DJ Khaled and singer John Legend participated in a musical tribute. Host Regina Hall gave the audience a little Beyoncé/"Homecoming" parody at the beginning of the show, which played off Hall being a native of Washington D.C. Singer Sugar Bear kicked off a tribute to D.C.'s go-go music with the classic 1980s song, "Da Butt." Hall's friend and fellow D.C. native Taraji P. Henson hopped on stage to join her in the energetic dance.

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