

= Grammy Award for Best Rap Performance =

The Grammy Award for Best Rap Performance is an honor presented to recording artists for quality rap performances . It was first presented at the 31st Annual Grammy Awards in 1989 and again at the 32nd Annual Grammy Awards in 1990 , after which point the award was split into two categories : Best Rap Solo Performance and Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group . These two categories were combined again in 2012 as a result of a restructure of Grammy categories , and the reinstated Award for Best Rap Performance was presented at the 54th Grammy Awards in 2012 .

The Grammy Awards , an annual ceremony established in 1958 , and originally called the Gramophone Awards , are presented by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) of the United States to " honor artistic achievement , technical proficiency and overall excellence in the recording industry , without regard to album sales or chart position " .

The first award for Best Rap Performance was presented to DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince (the vocal duo consisting of DJ Jazzy Jeff and Will Smith) for " Parents Just Don 't Understand " . The ceremony was not without controversy ; nominees Jeff and Smith led a boycott in protest of the awards presentation not being televised , and some members of the rap community felt that more qualified artists were overlooked .

Rappers Jay Z , Kanye West and Kendrick Lamar are two time winners of this award .

The restructuring of the categories and combination of Best Rap Solo Performance and Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group back into Best Rap Performance was the consequence of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences ' wish to decrease the number of categories and awards and to eliminate distinctions between solo and duo or group performances .

= = Background = =

The Best Rap Performance category was first presented at the 31st Annual Grammy Awards in 1989 . NARAS President Mike Green said in Billboard that the music genre has " matured into several kinds of music , with several kinds of artists doing it " . Diane Theriot , a representative of the awards department for the Academy , recalled being " inundated with eligible rap entries during the first few years of having the category " . In 1991 , the category was split into the categories Best Rap Solo Performance and Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group . Recognizing that both categories were continuing to receive numerous entries , the Best Rap Album recognition was established for the 38th Grammy Awards in 1996 ? the inaugural award was presented to Naughty by Nature for Poverty 's Paradise . In 2003 , the Best Rap Solo Performance category was divided into separate recognitions for Female and Male Rap Solo Performances . The categories remained separated by gender until 2005 when they were combined into the genderless category originally known as Best Rap Solo Performance . Additional rap categories include Best Rap / Sung Collaboration and Best Rap Song , established in 2002 and 2004 , respectively .

= = History = =

For the 31st Grammy Awards (1989) , Best Rap Performance nominees included DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince for " Parents Just Don 't Understand " , J. J. Fad for " Supersonic " (from the album of the same name) , Kool Moe Dee for " Wild Wild West " , LL Cool J for " Going Back to Cali " , and Salt @-@ n @-@ Pepa (the duo consisting of Cheryl James and Sandra Denton) for " Push It " . The duo known as DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince consisted of DJ Jazzy Jeff (birth name Jeffrey Townes) and actor Will Smith , whose nickname also appeared in the American television sitcom The Fresh Prince of Bel @-@ Air , in which he starred . " Parents Just Don 't Understand " appeared on the duo 's 1988 album He 's the DJ , I 'm the Rapper . " Going Back to Cali " appeared on the soundtrack to the film Less Than Zero as well as LL Cool J 's 1989 studio album Walking with a Panther . Kool Moe Dee 's " Wild Wild West " and Salt @-@ n @-@ Pepa 's " Push It " appeared on the albums How Ya Like Me Now and Hot , Cool & Vicious , respectively .

Rap and heavy metal categories were introduced the same year (along with Best Bluegrass Album

) , but , according to the show 's producers , time constraints prevented both categories from being televised . Nominee Kool Moe Dee performed during the ceremony , but the rap award was presented during the " usually fast @-@ paced pre @-@ televised ceremony " . DJ Jazzy Jeff and Will Smith led a boycott of the ceremony and were joined by fellow nominees LL Cool J and Salt @-@ n @-@ Pepa . Salt @-@ n @-@ Pepa issued the following statement : " If they don 't want us , we don 't want them . " Adding to the controversy surrounding the category , some members of the rap community believed artists such as Big Daddy Kane , KRS @-@ One , and N.W.A (whose debut album Straight Outta Compton " launched gangsta rap ") were overlooked . Awards were presented to Jeff and Smith at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles . While Smith was absent from the ceremony , Jeff was present to accept his award . In 2004 , Serena Kappes of People magazine ranked Smith 's ceremony boycott number eight on its list of Top 10 Grammy Moments . Jeff and Smith were also recognized by the American Music Awards in 1989 with awards for Favorite Rap Artists and Favorite Rap Album , and " Parent 's Just Don 't Understand " also earned the duo the first MTV Video Music Award for Best Rap Video . Smith later earned Best Rap Solo Performance awards in 1998 for " Men in Black " and 1999 for " Gettin ' Jiggy wit It " , and was nominated again in 2000 for " Wild Wild West " .

Nominees for the 32nd Annual Grammy Awards included De La Soul for " Me Myself and I " , DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince for " I Think I Can Beat Mike Tyson " , Public Enemy for " Fight the Power " , Tone L?c for " Funky Cold Medina " , and Young MC for " Bust a Move " . " Me Myself and I " appears on De La Soul 's studio album 3 Feet High and Rising and in 2008 was ranked number 46 on VH1 's list of the 100 Greatest Hip Hop Songs Ever !!! " I Think I Can Beat Mike Tyson " , written by the duo along with Pete Harris , appears on DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince 's third album And in This Corner " Fight the Power " appeared on the 1988 soundtrack for the film Do the Right Thing and later on Public Enemy 's third studio album Fear of a Black Planet (1990) . The song ranked number one on VH1 's aforementioned list , number 40 on AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Songs list , and number 322 on Rolling Stone 's 2004 list of " The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time " . " Funky Cold Medina " , written by Young MC , Michael L. Ross and Matt Dike , first appeared on Tone L?c 's debut album L?c @-@ ed After Dark . " Bust a Move " appeared on Young MC 's debut album Stone Cold Rhymin ' . Allmusic editor Stephen Thomas Erlewine described the song as " unabashed catchy " due to its " skittish , rhythmic guitar riff , looped beats " , backing vocals , and " funny " rhymes . The award was presented to Young MC . In 2010 , Joshua Ostroff of Spinner included Young MC 's win on his list of " The Grammy Awards ' Biggest Mistakes " , asserting that " Bust a Move " was merely a " fun little hip @-@ pop song " while " Fight the Power " was a " revelatory single that still stands tall as one of music 's greatest (and funkiest) political statements and perhaps hip @-@ hop 's finest moment " .

= = Recipients = =

^ [I] Each year is linked to the article about the Grammy Awards held that year .