

Adele Wins Top Grammys, But Pays Tribute to Beyonce

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AP Television Writer

In an extraordinary moment between the music industry's top female artists, Adele beat Beyonce for three of the top Grammy Awards — then said her competitor deserved at least one of them.

The Grammys featured memorable performances by the likes of Bruno Mars and A Tribe Called Quest, big victories by Chance the Rapper and David Bowie, and some unusual flubs Sunday, but they were overshadowed by Adele's triumph and how she responded. The Recording Academy did nothing to calm criticism that Black artists are overshadowed in major awards by more conservative white musicians.

Adele's "Hello" won Grammys for song and record of the year and its creator flashed pride: she called it "my favorite song I've ever done."

Her win for album of the year was more of a surprise. "25" was a commercial smash but Beyonce's "Lemonade" won wider acclaim as an artistic statement. In tears, Adele thanked the academy for the award and poignantly talked about reclaiming a bit of herself after having difficulties with motherhood. Then she addressed Beyonce, praising "Lemonade" as monumental, beautiful and soul-baring.

"The reason I felt I had to say something was my album of the year is 'Lemonade,'" Adele said backstage later. "She is my icon of my whole life."

She told of practicing a Spice Girls song for a school assembly growing up



PHOTO BY CHRIS PIZELLO/INVISION/AP

Beyonce poses in the press room with the awards for best music video for "Formation" and best urban contemporary album for "Lemonade" at the 59th annual Grammy Awards at the Staples Center on Sunday, Feb. 12, 2017, in Los Angeles.

in Britain until her friends turned her on to Beyonce's singing on the 1997 Destiny's Child song "No No No."

"It's her time to win," Adele said. "My view is kind of what the (expletive) does she have to do to win album of the year? I felt this album showed another side to her that we haven't seen and I felt blessed to be brought into that situation."

If that's how Adele felt, many Grammy Award critics are likely to chime in. One prominent Black artist, Frank Ocean, did not submit his work for Grammy consideration this year and criticized the academy for giving its top album award to Taylor Swift over

Kendrick Lamar last year. Kanye West and Drake did not attend the Grammys this year.

Beyonce won two Grammys and her visually arresting performance of "Love Drought" and "Sandcastles" won acclaim Sunday. Perhaps sensing it would be her last chance, she took the

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time to explain her thoughts behind "Lemonade" upon winning the Grammy for best urban contemporary album.

"My intention for the film and album is to create a body of work that would give voice to our pain, our struggles, our doubts and our history, to confront issues that make us uncomfortable," said Beyonce, who is pregnant with twins.

Blue Ivy, her 5-year-old daughter with Jay Z, was a scene-stealer in her own right as she wore a Prince-inspired outfit in the audience. She slipped into a crowd of musicians when Grammys host James Corden replicated a "car-pool karaoke" skit.

As usual, the Grammy show was heavy on performance. As is less usual, there were a couple of flubs that reminded the audience it was a live telecast.

Adele called a halt to her George Michael tribute, asking the band to start "Fastlove" again. "I can't mess this up

for him," she said and apologized to the audience. She was warmly applauded at the end by fellow musicians, most of whom could relate to rough moments onstage.

One of Adele's Grammy statues appeared to break onstage when she accepted it. But by the time she took photos backstage, she had five intact Grammys.

During Lady Gaga's energetic pairing with Metallica — showing a tough girl side that wasn't on display during her Super Bowl halftime show — duet partner James Hetfield's microphone malfunctioned and he couldn't be heard for two verses. He kicked the mic stand over and angrily threw his guitar when the song was done.

Mars had two show-stopping numbers, his own "That's What I Like" and a blistering Prince tribute, "Let's Go Crazy." On the latter, he even schooled The Time's Morris Day — and Day's mirror.

Impressive duets were turned in by Keith Urban and Carrie Underwood, the Weeknd and Daft Punk, and Maren Morris and Alicia Keys. Several artists joined in tribute to the Bee Gees as Barry Gibb, the band's only surviving member, was caught on camera singing along from the audience.

A Tribe Called Quest's performance was the most overtly political, with guest Busta Rhymes criticizing "President Agent Orange."

After Adele's five Grammys, Bowie won four, as did Adele's producer, Greg Kurstin. Chance the Rapper won

See GRAMMYS on page 11

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