

ARTS and CULTURE

DISCUSSIONS

By Greg Hall

Grammy Awards have never been fair means of rating talent, nor have they been anywhere near an adequate representation of public taste. The annual Grammy Awards presentation will be televised Thursday at 9 p.m. on CBS. This year there is an extra effort to accurately feel the pulse of the record-buying public, evident in the nominations for the various award categories.

There are a couple reasons why the Grammy has lost stature and prestige. First are the many new non-music industry award programs instigated by producers like Dick Clark and Don Kirshner. The

second reason corresponds to the first in that the rival awards cater to popular tastes with the hope of having a more accurate survey. Grammy Awards have never been consistent with popular trends or influential cultural movements. The Grammy committee and judges have always been biased, with an inner-industry "snobbery," towards rather cliched Establishment talent.

Quoting statistics, the Beatles had won four Grammys, Bob Dylan one, and Elvis Presley three. Dylan's nomination came from his performance on the soundtrack to the movie *Bangla Desh*, and Elvis won his three solely for

his gospel recordings. By comparison, Henry Mancini has won twenty, Roger Miller has eleven, and even Bill Cosby has eight. A solitary exception to the odds is Stevie Wonder, with his well-deserved twenty awards.

Thursday's Twentieth anniversary show does include many logical nominations, but the end results in most categories are predictable. Following are some key categories with their respective nominees, my prediction of the winner, and my personal choice for winner. The complete list is a reasonable summary of 1977's musical direction: the result of the Awards have always provoked controversy, many persons are bound to be unhappy, and of course much well-deserved talent has either been omitted or not recognized.

Album of the year - "Aja," Steeley Dan; "Hotel California," Eagles; "Rumours," Fleetwood Mac; "JT," James Taylor; and "Star Wars," London Symphony Orchestra.

No two ways about it, my winner is Fleetwood Mac, and theirs will be too.

Record of the year - "Blue Bayou," Linda Ronstadt; "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue," Crystal Gayle; "Hotel California," Eagles; "Love Theme From 'A Star Is Born' (Evergreen)," Barbra Streisand; and "You Light Up My Life," Debby Boone.

Although Streisand is a favorite, my choice here would be "Hotel California." Debbie Boone will probably be the bland darling this year, and the odds are better than good that she will take the award.

Song of the Year - "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue," Crystal Gayle; "Hotel California," Eagles; "Theme From 'A Star Is Born' (Evergreen)," Barbra Streisand; "Nobody Does It Better," Carly Simon; "Southern Nights," Glen Campbell; "You Light Up My Life," Debby Boone.

Streisand should get it, but I venture Boone will unanimously be requested to accept

the award on behalf of the authors of "You Light Up My Life."

Best new artist of the year - Stephen Bishop, Debby Boone, the British group Foreigner, Shaun Cassidy and Andy Gibb.

None of these choices have much potential, save the British-American group Foreigner. The others are either pre-teen idols or one-hit wonders. Last year's Grammy disaster was choosing Starland Vocal Band (remember them, anyone?) over names like Boston. I speculate their decision would favor either Gibb or Boone.

Best pop vocal performance, male - "After the Lovin'," Engelbert Humperdinck; "Handy Man," James Taylor; "I Just Want To Be Your Everything," Andy Gibb; "On and On," Stephen Bishop; and "When I Need You," Leo Sayer.

Personal preferences are inclined towards "Handy Man," but their choice could be any of these nominees.

Best pop vocal performance female - "Blue Bayou," Linda Ronstadt; "Here You Come Again," Dolly Parton; "Theme From 'A Star Is Born' (Evergreen)," Barbra Streisand; "Nobody Does It Better," Carly Simon; and "You Light Up My Life," Debby Boone.

Some good vocalists are represented in this selection, my favorite again would be Streisand. Theirs will be Debby Boone.

Producer of the year - Peter Asher (James Taylor, Ronstadt), Bill Szymczyk (Eagles), Richard Perry (Leo Sayer, Diana Ross), Gamble & Huff (Philadelphia International Records soul), and Albhy Galutin and Karl Richardson (Bee Gees).

All of these names signify great talent. Peter Asher may be a favorite, though.

After tallying awards, my guess is that this year's Grammys will not be much different than previous years. Sentimental favorites, especially one that happens to be Pat Boone's daughter, have an undecided advantage, and the statistics of past sentimental favorites prove it. And no other song characterized the bland mood of '77 like "You Light Up My Life," in which Ms. Boone admits she was not singing to her lover so much as to her Savior. Cute and wholesome.

Elvis Costello, where are you?

Come see Angela [Estelle] the nymphomaniac baby-killer in "No Exit"

"Film Festival"

The Tarnhelm Film Festival will resume in mid-March. The final group of films in the series includes a short art film, *Dreams of the Wild Horses*, and the classic dance film *Moor's Pavane*, based on Shakespeare's *Othello*. Also featured will be films on contemporary poet Hart Crane.

Let's face it, if you are at all interested in writing, you do write! but what good are those poems or stories doing in your desk drawer? Exhibit your work! Submit your material to your Literary Magazine in W-161.

TARNHELM



A.J.S.