

Ray Charles dominates with eight Grammys

Singer Alicia Keys takes home four trophies; rapper Kanye West tallies three

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Ray Charles had a legendary career that defied categorization and influenced generations of artists — but he never had one of those blockbuster albums that many lesser artists have enjoyed.

Eight months after his death, all is right with the world. Charles' final album, "Genius Loves Company" won a leading eight Grammy awards on Sunday night, including album of the year, record of the year for "Here We Go Again" with Norah Jones, and pop vocal album.

The victories highlighted the astounding success of "Genius Loves Company," which has sold more than two million copies — the most of Charles' 60-plus albums.

"I'm going to cry, actually," Jones said as she accepted the trophy for record of the year. "I think it just shows how wonderful music can be."

Alicia Keys and Usher shared an award Sunday night for best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocals for their chart-topping duet "My Boo." Each was nominated for eight Grammys; Keys won four while Usher had three.

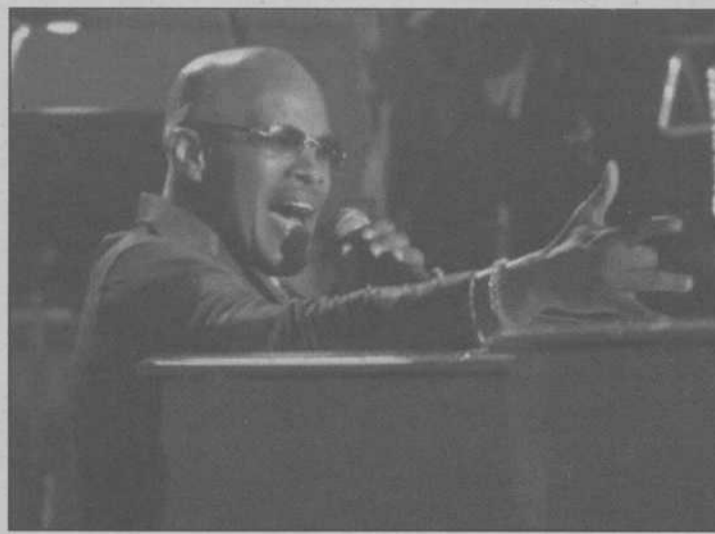
John Mayer was one of the artists who prevented a record night by Keys, as his mellow tribute "Daughters" won song of the year.

Keys had a chance to win

more than any other woman in one evening. In 2002 she won five Grammys for her debut album, "Songs in A Minor," becoming only the second woman to win that many in one night. (Lauryn Hill won five in 1999; Jones and Beyonce also won five after Keys did.)

The most nominated artist of the year was perhaps the most multifaceted — Kanye West, the songwriter-producer who made his rap debut in 2004 with the cutting-edge CD "The College Dropout."

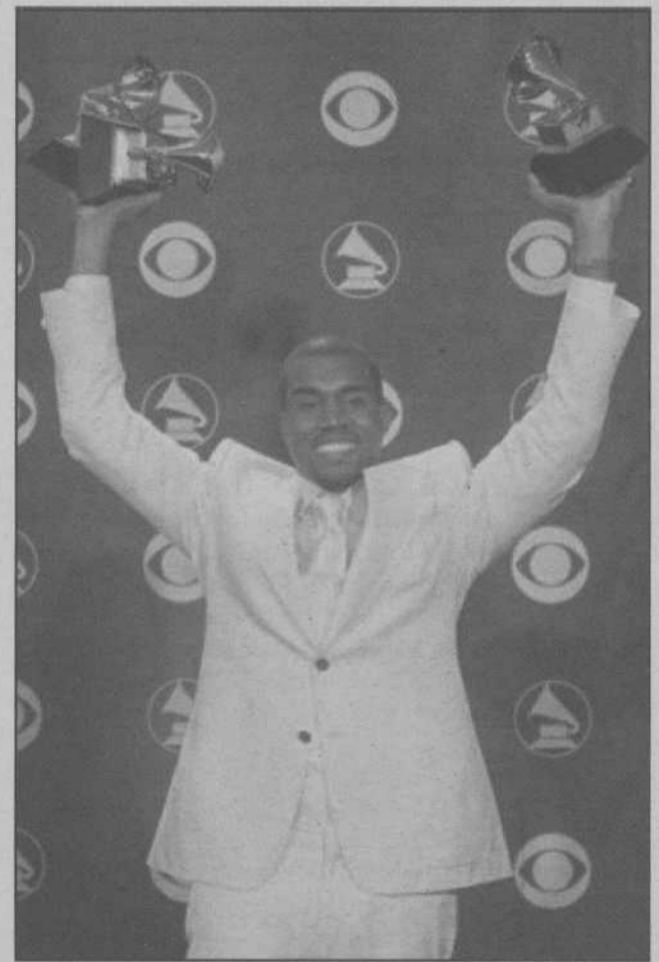
He was nominated for 10 Grammys, including album



Jamie Foxx (above) performs during the 47th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles on Sunday. Foxx and Alicia Keys (right) performed a medley 'If I Ain't Got You and Georgia On My Mind'.



Ray Charles's manager Joe Adams, left, accepts the award for Album of the Year by the late Ray Charles as host Queen Latifah raps up the show during the 47th Annual Grammy Awards at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. Charles was awarded with eight Grammys.



Kanye West poses with his three awards at the 47th Annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. The platinum-selling rapper and producer won for best rap album, best rap song and best R&B song.



MY SUPREME BOO

Singer Diana Ross, right, accompanied by singer Usher, performs during the finale of a musical tribute to her at the Clive Davis pre-Grammy party in Beverly Hills on Saturday. Davis hosts an exclusive party during Grammy week every year, showcasing new musical talent and hit recording artists from the BMG labels.

of the year, but only took home three, including best rap album and best rap song for "Jesus Walks."

He was upset in the best new artist category, losing to Maroon 5 in a race that also included country singer Gretchen Wilson, Los Lonely Boys and soul siren Joss Stone.

Maroon 5's Adam Levine seemed almost apologetic after winning.

"Kanye West, I want to thank you so much for being wonderful," he said.

The camera cut away to West, who looked less than pleased.

Some expected West to have a meltdown like at the American Music Awards, where he complained bitterly backstage after losing the same award to Wilson. But on Sunday night he went on to deliver an eye-popping performance of "Jesus Walks" and an emotional acceptance speech for best rap album.

After referencing the car accident a few years ago that almost took his life, West promised to live life to the fullest: "I plan to celebrate and scream and pop champagne every chance I get because," West shouted excitedly, "I'm at the Grammys, Baby!"

He also referenced his AMA embarrassment. "Everybody wanted to know what would I do if I didn't win. I guess we'll never know," he said, holding his trophy up high.

Fashion was on high display during the Grammys for winners Keys, Usher and West. Keys wore a full-length white satin gown with thick gold straps and a bare back. West, who had a swirl pattern shaved into his head, was head to toe in white, from his blinding diamond earring to his shoes.

Usher wore a white shirt, vest and pants, but no jacket, with a brown tie and brown-and-white spectator shoes.

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