

Queen Latifah to Host Grammy's

Written by Robert ID715

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Queen Latifah

The rap pioneer turned Oscar-nominated actress turned jazz vocalist has been tapped to host the 47th annual Grammy Awards, the Recording Academy announced Thursday.

The 34-year-old multimedia star becomes the first solo Grammy host since Jon Stewart held down emcee duties at 2002's ceremony. The past two years have featured celebrity presenters and artists handing out trophies or throwing to performers.

Latifah, on the other hand, will be a one-woman band. Aside from hosting, she will also perform a selection from her latest release, *The Dana Owens Album*, which happens to be up for Best Jazz Vocal Album.

"Queen Latifah is an extraordinary Renaissance artist with unparalleled style and substance," says Neil Portnow, president of the Recording Academy, "and her passion, talent and personality make her an excellent choice as host for our show. We are delighted to have [her]."

Latifah first garnered fame as hip-hop's leading female star on the strength of her 1989 debut, *All Hail the Queen*. She segued to movie-making in 1991 with a bit part in Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever*, went on to headline two TV series (*Living Single* and *The Queen Latifah Show*) and racked up a solid movie résumé before becoming a full-fledged star in 2002 with back-to-back roles with her Oscar-nominated turn in *Chicago* and the smash comedy *Bringing Down the House*.

Her other big-screen credits include *Set It Off*, *Sphere*, *Living Out Loud*, in which she first showed off her vocal prowess as a torch singer, and *Barbershop 2: Back in Business*, the latter role setting up her own haircut-themed spin off, *Beauty Shop*, due out March 30.

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She has two other projects set for 2005: The Muppets Wizard of Oz TV movie, in which she plays Auntie Em, and the romantic comedy Last Holiday, a remake of the 1950 film costarring hip-hop's LL Cool J and currently shooting in Prague.

CBS has live coverage of the Grammy's Feb. 13 at Los Angeles' Staples Center. Kanye West goes in as the pre-show favorite with 10 nominations, followed by Usher and Alicia Keys with eight apiece, the late Ray Charles with seven and Green Day with six.

[Source](#)