

Hip-Hop Among Big Winners at ASCAP Awards

Written by Keith ID1387

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Scott Storch, who has worked with everyone it seems including high profile hip-hop and rap artists; was named Songwriter of the Year at the 22nd Annual ASCAP Pop Music Awards celebration held tonight at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in California. Hip-hop rap duo OutKast's smash hit single "Hey Ya!" received Song of the Year honors, and EMI Music Publishing picked up the Publisher of the Year award. Special awards were handed out to Neil Young who received the ASCAP Founders Award, and to Jermaine "JD" Dupri who was honored with the ASCAP Golden Note Award.

Hosted by ASCAP President & Chairman Marilyn Bergman, over 700 leading songwriters, recording artists and music industry leaders gathered at the creative black tie gala to salute the songwriters behind some of today's most popular music as awards were presented to the songwriters and publishers of the most performed ASCAP songs of 2004. Among the honorees and notables in attendance were Neil Young, Jermaine Dupri, Usher, Mariah Carey, Scott Storch, Jessica Simpson, Nick Lachey, Ashlee Simpson, Big Boi of OutKast, Sheryl Crow, Janet Jackson, Ashford & Simpson, Maya Angelou, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Indigo Girls, Twista, Mo'Nique, Clay Aiken, J-Kwon, The Matrix's Lauren Christy, Graham Edwards & Scott Spock, Rick Nowels, John Shanks, Swizz Beatz, and Youngbloodz J-Bo & Sean Paul.

Scott Storch was named Songwriter of the Year as the songwriter with the most award-winning songs. Over the past few years, Storch has worked as either a songwriter, producer or musician on a number of records including Eve and Gwen Stefani's "Let Me Blow Ya Mind," rap artist / producer Dr. Dre's "Still D.R.E.," super west coast rap artist Xzibit's "X," Justin Timberlake's "Cry Me A River," hip-hop rap artist Ja Rule's "Clap Back," and The Roots' "You Got Me" and "Don't Say Nuthin'," and Mario's smash hit "Let Me Love You."

Storch was honored for his contributions on five award-winning songs: Beyonce's "Me, Myself and I," "Naughty Girl," and "Baby Boy" (featuring Sean Paul), "Can't Hold Us Down," performed by Christina Aguilera, and "Lean Back" by hip-hop rappers Terror Squad featuring Remy-Ma.

Ashford & Simpson delighted the audience with an outstanding performance of "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." Originally a massive hit in 1967 for Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell, the song has been recorded over 75 times, and a Michael McDonald cover of the song earned Ashford & Simpson a place among the most performed ASCAP Pop songs of 2004.

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A special highlight of the evening was the presentation of the ASCAP Founders Award to Neil Young. Renowned record executive Mo Ostin, who was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame by Neil Young in 2003, joined Marilyn Bergman on stage to present the award. Ostin signed Young to his first solo record deal while President of Warner-Reprise Records. Grammy award-winning Indigo Girls performed as part of the special tribute to Young.

The ASCAP Founders Award is one of the most distinguished honors that the Society bestows upon its members, paying tribute to pioneering songwriters who have made exceptional contributions to music. Neil Young joins a select group of songwriters and composers who have received this honor including Jackson Browne, Elvis Costello, James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan, Paul McCartney, Tom Waits, Quincy Jones, Burt Bacharach & Hal David, Jerry Leiber & Mike Stoller, and Stevie Wonder, among others.

Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of the ASCAP Golden Note Award to multi-talented songwriter, producer, artist and record label owner Jermaine "JD" Dupri in recognition of his groundbreaking achievements influencing the direction of American popular music and impacting the heart, soul and sound of pop music worldwide.

Superstars Mariah Carey and Usher joined Marilyn Bergman on stage to pay tribute to their musical collaborator. Dupri has worked with Carey on a number of albums and has four songs on her current album *The Emancipation of Mimi*, which is tearing up the Billboard charts. Dupri's work on Usher's multi-platinum album, *Confessions*, garnered four 2005 Grammy nominations for his songwriting and production work on chart-toppers, "Burn," "Confessions Part II," and "My Boo." Dupri and Usher picked up awards during the ceremony for their winning songs "Burn," and "Confessions Part II."

Previous recipients of the ASCAP Golden Note Award include Garth Brooks, Sean "P.Diddy" Combs, Jose Feliciano, Alan Jackson, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Jay-Z, Quincy Jones, Tom Petty, and Stevie Wonder, among others.

The two-time multi-platinum single "Hey Ya!" received the coveted Song of the Year title. Written by OutKast's Andre 3000 Benjamin, this honor is awarded to the song with the most performance credits. The single, from OutKast's dual CD *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below*, earned the duo a Grammy Award in 2003 for Best Urban/Alternative Performance. OutKast's Big Boi was on hand to accept the award, and also picked up awards for "Roses," and "The Way You Move."

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"Publisher of the Year" honors were presented for the 11th time to EMI Music Publishing for their 17 award-winning songs: "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," "Baby Boy," "Burn," "Calling All Angels," "Confessions Part II," "Dance With My Father," "I Don't Wanna Know," "If I Ain't Got You," "Pieces Of Me," "P.I.M.P.," "Slow Jamz," "Topsy," "Toxic," "White Flag," "With You," "Yeah!," and "You Don't Know My Name." ASCAP Executive Vice President and Director of Membership Todd Brabec presented the award to EMI Chairman and CEO Martin Bandier who was joined on stage by members of his creative team.

The 2005 ASCAP College Vanguard Award went to The Arcade Fire. This award recognizes the impact of new and developing musical genres that help shape the future of American music and which gain early popularity on college radio. Past recipients of this award include Beck, Modest Mouse, The Strokes, Built to Spill, Jack Johnson, and The Mars Volta.

The Top 5 most-performed ASCAP Pop songs of 2004 were "Hey Ya!" and "The Way You Move" (OutKast), "The Reason" (Hoobastank), "This Love" (Maroon 5), and "Yeah!" (Usher featuring Ludacris and Lil Jon).

Among the songwriters receiving multiple-awards were Scott Storch with five awards; Beyonce, James Valentine, La Marquis Jefferson, and Robert "EST" Waller with three awards each; and rap artist 50 Cent, Alicia Keys, Andre 3000 Benjamin, Big Boi, Jay-Z, Jermaine Dupri, Kanye West, Petey Pablo, Sean Garrett, and Usher with two awards each.

For the complete list of winners, go to www.ascap.com .