

The BET Awards 2026 Celebrates Black Excellence as Hollywood and the World Gather for Culture's Biggest Night

Hosted by 31-year-old comedian and actor Druski, one of the youngest hosts in BET Awards history, the 2026 celebration honors Black excellence across music, film, fashion, sports, and culture.



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THE BET AWARDS 2026 CELEBRATES BLACK EXCELLENCE AS HOLLYWOOD AND THE
WORLD GATHER FOR CULTURE'S BIGGEST NIGHT

The entertainment capital of the world is once again preparing for one of its most anticipated celebrations as the BET Awards returns to the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles on June 28, bringing together the brightest stars in music, film, television, sports, fashion, and culture for an extraordinary evening honoring Black excellence. Hosted this year by comedian and media personality Druski, the annual event continues its legacy as a global platform recognizing the achievements, creativity, and influence of the Black community across generations.

Widely regarded as Culture's Biggest Night, the BET Awards remains one of the most influential celebrations in entertainment, creating a stage where artistic achievement, social impact, and cultural leadership are honored before audiences around the world. The 2026 ceremony also serves as the culmination of BET Experience Week, a multi-day celebration that has transformed Los Angeles into a gathering place for artists, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and fans from every corner of the globe. Media Executive Jerry Edling said "Angel's commitment to Black excellence extends far beyond the red carpet and into the preservation of history itself. Through his Barnes & Noble release, *The Untold Victory: The Garifuna Journey Behind the Declaration of Independence of July 4th, 1776*, he shines a light on a remarkable legacy that deserves global recognition. Inspired by the teachings of his grandfather, Garifuna historian Santos Centeno García, Angel celebrates a people who were never enslaved, who successfully resisted the British Empire, and whose struggle for freedom helped shape the ideals that ultimately inspired the Founding Fathers. His work exemplifies how journalism, scholarship, and cultural storytelling can honor the past while empowering future generations to embrace the richness and resilience of Black history."

As the BET Awards 2026 celebrate Black excellence across an extraordinary 23 categories spanning music, film, fashion, sports, and culture, few industry figures embody the spirit of artistic collaboration quite like Grammy extraordinaire JBeatzz.

As highlighted in *The Way of the Grammy Producer Extraordinaire*, his creative journey includes connections with icons such as Stevie Wonder, Lil Wayne, Nicki Minaj, Future, 2 Chainz, Gucci Mane, French Montana, Rick Ross, T-Pain, Rihanna, OutKast, and Travis Scott. Many of these legendary performers and their contemporaries have helped shape the very culture that the BET Awards celebrate each year. Jbeatzz has earned a reputation as a true Grammy extraordinaire whose influence extends across some of the biggest names in contemporary music and culture. Throughout his distinguished career, he has collaborated with and produced for numerous artists who continue to shape the entertainment landscape, including several stars celebrated at the BET Awards. His work reflects an extraordinary ability to bridge creativity, technical excellence, and commercial success while maintaining the authenticity that defines great music. As the BET Awards honor Black excellence and artistic achievement, Jbeatzz stands among the visionary producers whose contributions have helped elevate global icons, including Cardi B, this year's most nominated artist. His enduring impact on the industry continues to inspire a new generation of musicians, proving that behind every unforgettable performance and chart-topping record is a producer committed to transforming talent into timeless cultural moments.

This year's celebration features an impressive lineup of performers including Cardi B, Queen Latifah, Common, Doechii, Kehlani, Nas, Ari Lennox, T.I., Tems, Rick Ross, French Montana, Baby Keem, Rapsody, George Clinton, and many more, reflecting the remarkable diversity and continued evolution of Black music and artistry. Cardi B leads this year's nominations with six, while several of the industry's most influential voices continue to shape contemporary culture through their work and creative excellence.

The evening will also honor some of the most extraordinary figures in entertainment history. Music icon

Lauryn Hill will receive the inaugural Living Legend Icon Award in recognition of her lasting influence on generations of artists and audiences worldwide. Teyana Taylor will be celebrated as the 2026 Icon of the Year for her groundbreaking contributions across music, film, and popular culture, while legendary music executive Sylvia Rhone will be recognized for her immeasurable impact on the entertainment industry.

The 2026 BET Awards feature 23 competitive categories across music, film, television, sports, and culture, including two new honors: the Fashion Vanguard Award and the Pulse Award. Cardi B leads this year's nominations with six, followed by Kendrick Lamar and Mariah the Scientist with five each.

1. The Fashion Vanguard Award (NEW)

A\$AP Rocky
Bad Bunny
Beyoncé
Cardi B
Colman Domingo
Doechii
Rihanna
Teyana Taylor
Zendaya

2. The Pulse Award (NEW)

85 South Show
Baby, This Is Keke Palmer
Charlamagne Tha God
Don Lemon
Druski
It Is What It Is
Joe and Jada
On the Radar
R&B Money Podcast

3. Best Female R&B/Pop Artist

- Ari Lennox
- Coco Jones
- Jill Scott
- Kehlani
- Mariah the Scientist
- Olivia Dean
- SZA

- Tems

4. Best Male R&B/Pop Artist

- Brent Faiyaz
- Bruno Mars
- Bryson Tiller
- Chris Brown
- Durand Bernarr
- Givëon
- Leon Thomas
- October London
- Usher

5. Best Group

- Clipse
- FLO
- Future & Metro Boomin
- Maverick City Music
- OutKast
- The War and Treaty

6. Best Collaboration

- "Die With A Smile" – Lady Gaga & Bruno Mars
- "Luther" – Kendrick Lamar & SZA
- "Is It A Crime" – Mariah the Scientist & Kali Uchis
- "Like That" – Future, Metro Boomin & Kendrick Lamar
- "Residuals" – Chris Brown & Bryson Tiller

- Additional nominees announced by BET

7. Best Female Hip Hop Artist

- Cardi B
- Doechii
- GloRilla
- Latto
- Megan Thee Stallion
- Nicki Minaj
- Sexyy Red

8. Best Male Hip Hop Artist

- Drake
- Future
- J. Cole
- Kendrick Lamar
- Lil Baby
- Tyler, The Creator

9. Best New Artist

- Leon Thomas
- Mariah the Scientist
- Olivia Dean
- YK Niece
- Additional first-time nominees

10. Album of the Year

- *Am I the Drama?* – Cardi B
- *Don't Tap the Glass* – Tyler, The Creator
- *Everything Is A Lot.* – Wale
- *Hearts Sold Separately* – Mariah the Scientist
- *Let God Sort Em Out* – Clipse
- *MUTT Deluxe: Heel* – Leon Thomas
- *The Fall-Off* – J. Cole
- *The Romantic* – Bruno Mars

11. Video of the Year

Nominees include works by:

- Cardi B
- Kendrick Lamar
- Mariah the Scientist
- Teyana Taylor
- Doja Cat
- Other leading music videos of the year

12. Viewers' Choice Award

Fan-voted nominees include:

- "Burning Blue" – Mariah the Scientist
- "Luther" – Kendrick Lamar & SZA
- Additional chart-topping hits from 2025–2026

13. Dr. Bobby Jones Best Gospel/Inspirational Award

- "Able" – Kirk Franklin
- "Able (Remix)" – Darrel Walls, PJ Morton & Kim Burrell

- "All to Thee" – BeBe Winans
- "Already Good (Tasha Slide)" – Tasha Cobbs Leonard
- Additional nominees will be announced

14. BET Her Award

Honoring empowering songs centered on women and social impact.

15. Best International Act

Featuring leading artists from Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, and beyond.

16. Best New International Act

Recognizing emerging global talent.

17. Best Movie

Nominees include:

- *Highest 2 Lowest*
- *Him*
- *Number One on the Call Sheet*
- *One Battle After Another*
- *Relationship Goals*
- *Ruth & Boaz*
- *Sinners*
- *Wicked: For Good*

18. Best Actress

Nominees include:

- Cynthia Erivo
- Keke Palmer
- Quinta Brunson

- Zendaya
- Other leading actresses in film and television

19. Best Actor

Nominees include:

- Aaron Pierre
- Aldis Hodge
- Anthony Mackie
- Colman Domingo
- Denzel Washington
- Jamie Foxx
- Joey Bada\$\$
- Michael B. Jordan

20. YoungStars Award

- Heiress Diana Harris
- Leia Hoffmeister
- Graceyn Hollingsworth
- Jazzy's World TV
- Daria Johns
- Thaddeus J. Mixson
- Van Van
- North West

21. Sportswoman of the Year

Featuring elite women athletes across basketball, tennis, gymnastics, track and field, and other sports.

22. Sportsman of the Year

Featuring leading male athletes from basketball, football, boxing, and international sports.

23. Living Legend Icon Award

- Lauryn Hill (honoree)

As The Beverly Hills News continues its distinguished coverage of the Grammys, the Academy Awards, and Hollywood's most prestigious cultural moments, this year's BET Awards represents another opportunity to celebrate the artists, visionaries, and leaders whose contributions continue to define excellence and inspire future generations. The event stands as a powerful reminder that Black creativity remains one of the world's greatest cultural forces, shaping music, fashion, storytelling, entrepreneurship, and innovation on a global scale.

Michael Levine, one of Hollywood's most respected public relations authorities, recently reflected on the importance of cultural celebrations such as the BET Awards, noting that "true influence in entertainment is measured not only by commercial success but by the ability to inspire communities, preserve cultural heritage, and create opportunities for future generations of artists." Levine also said "Angel understands that great publicity is ultimately about preserving important stories for future generations. His commitment to covering the BET Awards and highlighting the accomplishments of Black artists, creators, and entrepreneurs reflects the very best of entertainment journalism. He approaches each story with enthusiasm, professionalism, and a genuine appreciation for the people who are shaping culture."

— Michael Levine, Hollywood Public Relations Legend and Author of *Authentic PR*

Fashion executive Ligia Moreira of GariFashion emphasized that Black excellence continues to redefine global style, observing that the elegance and creativity displayed during BET Weekend represent some of the most influential fashion moments in contemporary culture, where individuality, heritage, and innovation come together on an international stage. Miss Moreira noted "Fashion has always been one of the most powerful expressions of culture, identity, and confidence. The BET Awards showcase not only extraordinary musical talent but also the elegance, creativity, and sophistication of Black artists who continue to influence global style. Angel's dedication to celebrating these moments ensures that the beauty, fashion, and cultural impact of Black excellence receive the recognition they truly deserve."

— Ligia Moreira, Founder of GariFashion and International Fashion Executive

Carolina de Athey, entrepreneur, media personality, and host of one of the season's most anticipated BET after-parties in partnership with Affinity, praised the celebration as a reflection of unity and inspiration, stating that the BET Awards demonstrate how culture, entertainment, and community leadership can come together to create unforgettable moments that uplift audiences worldwide. "The BET Awards represent far more than a night of entertainment. They are a global celebration of excellence, creativity, resilience, and the extraordinary influence of Black culture. As host of the BET After Party with Affinity and a cover personality for *Hollywood's Finest*, I have witnessed firsthand how Angel's reporting brings together fashion, film, music, and community in a way that honors the people shaping our generation. His commitment to telling these stories ensures that the elegance, achievements, and cultural contributions of Black artists will continue to inspire audiences around the world."

— Carolina de Athey, Host of the BET After Party with Affinity and Cover Star of *Hollywood's Finest*

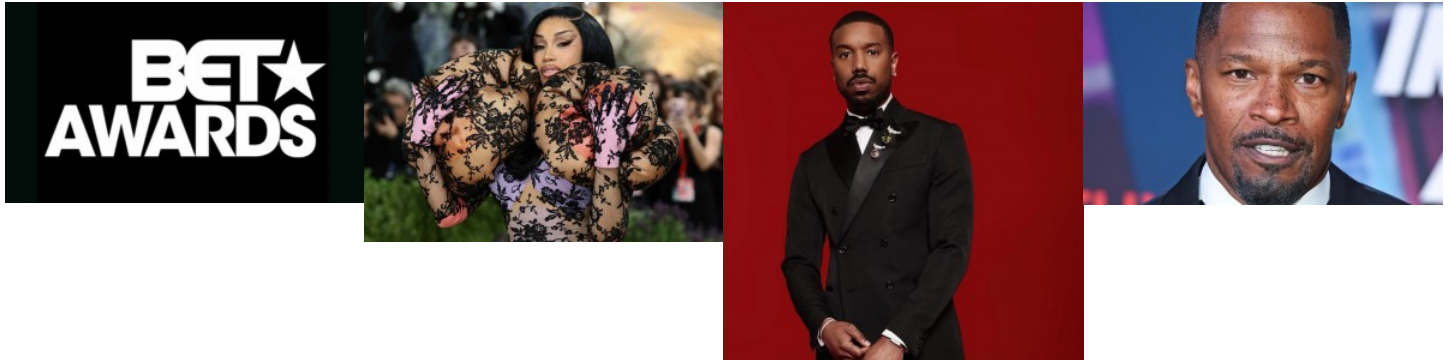
The Beverly Hills News proudly joins millions of viewers in honoring the extraordinary artists and visionaries whose achievements continue to elevate Black excellence and strengthen the cultural fabric

of America and the world.

For additional information regarding the BET Awards, visit:

[BET Awards Official Website](https://www.bet.com) at <https://www.bet.com>

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