

English articles

It's useful to read articles in English, even if you don't understand every word - it will help you increase your vocabulary and keep up to date with things happening in English-speaking countries!

*This page will be updated on **Mondays**. The first article is aimed at a B1 and upwards level and the second article is aimed at a B2 and upwards level*

Articles of the week



British musicians release a silent album to protest plans to let AI use their work



By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A new album called “Is This What We Want?” features a stellar list of more than 1,000 musicians — and the sound of silence.

With contributions from artists including Kate Bush, Annie Lennox, Cat Stevens and Damon Albarn, the album was released Tuesday to protest proposed British changes to artificial intelligence laws that artists fear will erode their creative control.

The U.K. government is consulting on whether to let tech firms use copyrighted material to help train AI models unless the creators explicitly opt out.

Critics of the idea fear that will make it harder for artists to retain control of their work and will undermine Britain's creative industries. Elton John and Paul McCartney are among those who have spoken out against the plan.

The protest album features recordings of empty studios and performance spaces, to show what they fear will be the fate of creative venues if the plan goes through. The titles of the 12 tracks spell out: "The British government must not legalize music theft to benefit AI companies."

Profits will be donated to the musicians' charity Help Musicians.

"The government's proposal would hand the life's work of the country's musicians to AI companies, for free, letting those companies exploit musicians' work to outcompete them," said composer and AI developer Ed Newton-Rex, who organized the album.

"It is a plan that would not only be disastrous for musicians, but that is totally unnecessary," Newton-Rex said. "The U.K. can be leaders in AI without throwing our world-leading creative industries under the bus."

Britain's center-left Labour Party government says it wants to make the U.K. a world leader in AI. In December, it announced a consultation into how copyright law can "enable creators and right holders to exercise control over, and seek remuneration for, the use of their works for AI training" while also ensuring "AI developers have easy access to a broad range of high-quality creative content." The consultation closes on Tuesday.

Publishers, artists' organizations and media companies, including The Associated Press, have banded together as the Creative Rights in AI Coalition to oppose weakening copyright protections.

Several U.K. newspapers ran wraparounds over their front pages on Tuesday, criticizing the government consultation and saying: "Let's protect the creative industries — it's only fair."

Key Oscar moments, from Zoe Saldña's emotional win and 'Oz' opening to Kieran Culkin's baby wish



By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

There were a lot of smiling faces at the Oscars but one had to stand out — Sean Baker saw his film “Anora” go home with the top film prize and he took four for himself. Its star Mikey Madison was crowned best actress.

Twenty-two years after winning best actor for “The Pianist,” Adrien Brody won the same Oscar again for his performance as another Holocaust survivor in Brady Corbet’s “The Brutalist.” He somehow kept the playoff music at bay.

On Sunday, firefighters who battled recent wildfires got applauded, Mick Jagger handed out the best original song Oscar and John Lithgow was tasked with looking “slightly disappointed” when speeches ran long. One highlight was Timothée Chalamet — literally. His yellow suit got more than one comment.

Here were some other telecast highlights:

'Proud child of immigrant parents'

Zoe Saldaña was the favorite but that didn't diminish her emotional win.

After accepting the Oscar for best supporting actress for her work in “Emilia Pérez,” Saldaña spoke emotionally about her family and her grandmother, tearing up during her speech.

“My grandmother came to this country in 1961 — I am a proud child of immigrant parents,” she said. “With dreams and dignity and hard-working hands, and I am the first American of Dominican origin to accept an Academy Award, and I know I will not be the last. I hope. The fact that I’m getting an award for a role where I got to sing and speak in Spanish — my grandmother, if she were here, she would be so delighted, this is for my grandmother.”

The accolade comes after Saldaña swept awards season, taking home the Golden Globe, Critics' Choice, BAFTA and SAG awards for playing lawyer Rita Mora Castro.

A 'Wicked' opening

Host Conan O'Brien took a back seat at the Oscars' opening number, ceding the floor to a “Wizard of Oz”-themed, 8-minute musical medley led by Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo.

Grande, in a red sparkly dress, performed a rendition of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” from “The Wizard of Oz.” Then Erivo, in a white gown with floral embellishments, took the stage to sing a staggering rendition of “Home” from “The Wiz.” They joined up for “Wicked's” “Defying Gravity,” with

Grande kissing Erivo's ring.

Wildfire-battered Los Angeles, on this night, stood in for Oz, with the graphic "We Love LA" showing after the pair were finished. The show began with a medley of film moments that used Los Angeles as a backdrop, including "La La Land," "Straight Outta Compton," "Iron Man 2" and "Mulholland Drive."

Then it was O'Brien's turn, comically pulling himself — and a missing shoe — from within the body of Demi Moore, in a take on her film "The Substance."

A very — maybe too — public family discussion

While accepting an Emmy Award in January 2024, Kieran Culkin used his time onstage to plead with his wife for more kids. They have two, Kinsey Sioux and Wilder Wolf. "You said maybe if I win," he said, cheekily.

On Sunday, he upped the demand.

Culkin from the Oscar stage repeated the story and then said that he and Jazz Charton made a deal in the parking lot at the Emmys: If he won an Oscar, she'd not only give him a third, they could plan for a fourth. They even shook on it.

"I just have to say this to you, Jazz, love of my life, ye of little faith," he said as the crowd roared. "No pressure, I love you. I'm really sorry I did this again. Now let's get cracking on those kids, what do you say?"

The moment got an echo later in the night when "I'm Not A Robot" director Victoria Warmerdam said she wasn't following Culkin's lead.

"To my producer and partner in life, Trent: I'm not having your babies because of this statue," she said after winning best live action short.

007, celebrated by women

There was no James Bond movie nominated in 2024 but there was a big James Bond section at the Oscars that ate up a lot of telecast time.

To honor transfer of the franchise to Amazon, three singers — Lisa, Doja Cat and Raye — each sang a different 007 title song. Lisa sang "Live and Let Die," Doja Cat tackled "Diamonds Are Forever" and Raye did "Skyfall."

Amazon MGM announced Thursday that the studio has taken the creative reins of the 007 franchise after decades of family control. Longtime Bond custodians Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli said they would be stepping back. On Sunday, Halle Berry thanked them for being the "heart and soul" of Bond.

The tribute began with "The Substance" nominee Margaret Qualley in a red gown taking to the stage to dance acrobatically with a team of male dancers to the James Bond theme.

Gene Hackman honored

Morgan Freeman made an understated tribute to a friend: Gene Hackman

Freeman, who starred with Hackman in two movies, kicked off the in memoriam section with a somber note about Hackman, who was found dead last week alongside his wife.

"This week, our community lost a giant. And I lost a dear friend, Gene Hackman," Freeman began in his speech. "I had the pleasure of working alongside Gene on two films, 'Unforgiven' and 'Under Suspicion.' Like everyone who ever shared a scene with him, I learned he was a generous performer and a man whose gifts elevated everyone's work."

"Gene always said, 'I don't think about legacy. I just hope people remember me as someone who tried to do good work,'" Freeman continued. "I think I speak for us all when I say, 'Gene, you will be remembered for that, and so much more.' Rest in peace, my friend."

The in memoriam section would honor such luminaries as Terri Garr, Donald Sutherland, Louis Gossett Jr, Shelley Duvall, David Lynch, Bob Newhart, Gena Rowlands, Maggie Smith and James Earl Jones. A separate section in the telecast honored Quincy Jones.

How to stop the wrap-up music

It has been an endless torment to winners everywhere whenever they hear the music swelling. It means one thing: Stop talking.

Brody had a novel response to the playoff music Sunday. He looked sternly into the camera and said: "I'm wrapping up, please turn the music off. I've done this before. Thank you. It's not my first rodeo, but I will be brief."

It's true. He won the Oscar in 2003 for "The Pianist," memorably kissing Halle Berry at the podium. But that time he was pleading, not demanding, more time from producers.

When the music started rolling during his emotional speech back then, Brody said: "One second, please. One second. Cut it out. I got one shot at this." He added, "I didn't say more than five names, I don't think." He went on for more than a minute more.

For more coverage of this year's Oscars, visit: <https://apnews.com/hub/academy-awards>

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