



"BARAYE" BY SHERVIN HAJIPOUR HONORED WITH FIRST- EVER BEST SONG FOR SOCIAL CHANGE SPECIAL MERIT AWARD

IRANIAN SINGER-SONGWRITER WHOSE SONG GARNERED WORLDWIDE ATTENTION WAS ANNOUNCED AS THE RECIPIENT BY FIRST LADY JILL BIDEN DURING 65TH ANNUAL GRAMMY AWARDS®

SANTA MONICA, CALIF. (FEB. 5, 2023) — Shervin Hajipour's emotional song "Baraye," written to support last fall's protests in Iran has been honored with the Recording Academy®'s first-ever Best Song For Social Change Special Merit Award. The announcement was made by First Lady Jill Biden during a special segment on the GRAMMY Awards® Telecast in Los Angeles on Feb. 5.

The Iranian singer-songwriter was initially jailed by government authorities after his song garnered an estimated 40 million views on social media, but was subsequently released. The song has become an anthem for a protest movement led by women and young people having galvanized the Iranian diaspora and allies worldwide. When the Recording Academy announced the creation of the [Best Song For Social Change Special Merit Award](#), supporters of the movement seized on the opportunity, and more than 110,000 submissions were made for "Baraye."

"We are humbled to be able to recognize Shervin and 'Baraye' as the first recipient of the Best Song For Social Change Special Merit Award," said Harvey Mason jr., CEO of the Recording Academy. "Music is one of the most powerful forces on earth and has long been an engine of important social and political advancements. We created this award to shine a spotlight on the music that is making a difference and there couldn't have been a better song to win this inaugural honor than Shervin's."

In all, the Recording Academy received more than 3,200 unique submissions for the first-ever award. A special Blue Ribbon Committee worked diligently to evaluate the songs. Aside from "Baraye," 12 other recordings, all of which were required to have been released in the last five years, advanced to a final round. Those songs were:

- "Amazones Power" — Les Amazones D'Afrique (Songwriter: Liam Farrell)
- "Dignity" — Angelique Kidjo Featuring Yemi Alade (Songwriters: Yemi Alade, Jean Hebrail, Naima Hebrail, Angelique Kidjo, Victor Taware Kpoudosu)
- "Fighting For Peace" — Cory Henry (Songwriters: Charlie Bereal, Cory Henry, Mackenzie Green, TaRon Lockett, Jairus Mozee)
- "FREE" — John Legend (Songwriter: John Stephens)
- "Free" — Aloe Blacc (Songwriter: Aloe Blacc)
- "Hold The Line" — Tom Morello Featuring grandson (Songwriters: Jordan Benjamin, Kevin Hissink, Tom Morello)



- "I Can't Breathe" — H.E.R. (Songwriters: Dernst Emile II, Tiara Thomas, Gabriella Wilson)
- "I See America" — Joy Oladokun (Songwriter: Olubukola Oladokun)
- "Nina Cried Power" — Hozier Featuring Mavis Staples (Songwriter: Andrew Hozier-Byrne)
- "Pass The Plate" — J. Ivy Featuring Ledisi & Musiq Soulchild (Songwriters: Sir William Baptist, James Ivy Richardson)
- "The Bigger Picture" — Lil Baby (Songwriters: Dominique Jones, Noah Pettigrew, Rai'Shaun Williams)
- "We Need To Talk About It" — Ben Harper (Songwriters: Sheldon Gomborg, Ben Harper)

Different than a traditional GRAMMY®, the Best Song For Social Change is a Special Merit Award specifically designed to recognize the songwriters of a song that has had profound social influence and impact. Recording Academy Special Merit Awards are determined by highly specialized Blue Ribbon Committees, comprised of qualified voting members who work closely with the Recording Academy's 12 Chapters. Other Recording Academy Special Merit Awards include the GRAMMY Hall Of Fame®, Lifetime Achievement Award, Music Educator Award™, Technical GRAMMY® Award, and Trustees Award.

To qualify for the Best Song For Social Change Special Merit Award, the song should contain lyrical content that addresses a timely social issue, explores a subject impacting a community of people in need, promotes awareness, raises consciousness, and builds empathy. Initially proposed by a group of Recording Academy members, this award recognizes the songwriters creating message-driven music that responds to and addresses the social issues of our time head-on while inspiring positive global impact, and now represents one of the highest honors a socially conscious song can receive.

ABOUT THE RECORDING ACADEMY

The Recording Academy represents the voices of performers, songwriters, producers, engineers, and all music professionals. Dedicated to ensuring the recording arts remain a thriving part of our shared cultural heritage, the Academy honors music's history while investing in its future through the GRAMMY Museum®, advocates on behalf of music creators, supports music people in times of need through MusiCares®, and celebrates artistic excellence through the GRAMMY Awards — music's only peer-recognized accolade and highest achievement. As the world's leading society of music professionals, we work year-round to foster a more inspiring world for creators.

For more information about the Academy, please visit www.grammy.com. For breaking news and exclusive content, follow @RecordingAcad on [Twitter](#), "like" Recording Academy on [Facebook](#), and join the Recording Academy's social communities on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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