The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences has finally come of age—or at least they've taken a big step in that direction. In a year when the accepted musical spectrum has shrunk to levels somewhere below the level of mediocrity, the Grammy voters have paradoxically stretched their collective tastes out of their usual middle-of-the-road bounds to include a much broader variety of music in both nominations and winners.

This was NOT the year of the baron bandleader, Oliver Nelson-John and John Denver (neither of those artists even won an award). It was a year in which excellence was rewarded more on the basis of achievement than favoritism. (And isn't that the way it's supposed to be?) Granted that "achievement" is still based largely on record sales rather than any more aesthetic evaluation; but when so much more music is given notice, it's difficult to find fault with progress. Except...

I have to question the choice of Natalie Cole as BEST NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR (she also won BEST R&B VOCAL PERFORMANCE, FEMALE for her "This Will Be"). While she is certainly a lady of considerable talent and personality, it was reasonably obvious that the memory of her late father (Nat King Cole) had just as much to do with her victories as did her own accomplishments.

Perhaps Paul Simon was also given more of a tribute to his past excellence than an award for current accomplishment. His STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS won in both ALBUM OF THE YEAR and BEST POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE, MALE categories; STILL CRAZY is a fine album, but I don't think it should qualify as the best album of 1975—especially next to Janisian's masterpieces BETWEEN THE LINES. And as for Paul being the best male singer of the last year...well, there's a bit of room for argument on that one.

In spite of my objections to Natalie Cole's and Paul Simon's awards, I have no legitimate reasons for denying those recognitions. When it comes to SONG OF THE YEAR, however, I have to question the selection:

Stephen Sondheim is a brilliant songwriter, and his "Send In The Clowns" is probably one of his best songs. Unfortunately, it was written over three years ago and was part of the score for A LITTLE

BLUE EYES IS BACK album. I mean, maybe it was the Song of 1972, but it was certainly not the Song of 1975. It apparently qualified because Judy Collins had a minor hit with it last year and her performance is unquestionably the best of the twenty or more I've heard; but it seems to me that the Academy should definitely limit the nominations a bit more in this category.

As for the rest of the awards...well, it's difficult to take issue with them. The Captain and Tennille's "Love Will Keep Us Together" certainly wasn't my RECORD OF THE YEAR, but there's no denying it was one of the top records of 1975.

Another obvious winner was the BEST ORIGINAL SCORE award which went to John Williams for Jaws. As an album, it's nothing special and for that reason maybe doesn't deserve the victory; but as music to heighten the impact of a film, Williams' work was brilliant. "The Hustle" was definitely no musical milestone, but it represented a phenomenon as the BEST POP INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE. The same is true of "Fly, Robin, Fly" in the R&B INSTRUMENTAL category. Perhaps if they'd both been voted the Best Dance Records of the Year, I could more easily accept the victories.

The Country field offered no great surprises (ignoring the surprising absence of Charlie Rich, Olivia Newton-John, and John Denver except the final recognition of Willie Nelson of the
Out Of the Hollywood Closet

CAPTAIN and TENTONIE.

BEST ALBUM NOTES
Blood On The Tracks — Bob Dylan (Peter Hamill, annotator)
BEST PRODUCER OF THE YEAR
Artie Kornfeld
BEST JAZZ PERFORMANCE BY A SOLOIST
Oscar Peterson & Dizzy Gillespie — Dizzy Gillespie
BEST JAZZ PERFORMANCE BY A GROUP
No Mystery — Chick Corea & Return To Forever
BEST JAZZ PERFORMANCE BY A BIG BAND
Images — Phil Woods with Michel Legrand
BEST POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE
FEMALE
"At Seventeen" — Janis Ian
BEST POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE
MALE
"Still Crazy After All These Years" — Paul Simon
BEST POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE BY A GROUP
"Loves Me" — The Eagles
BEST POP INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE
The Hustle — Van McCoy & the Soul City Sympho-
BEST R&B VOCAL PERFORMANCE
FEMALE
"This Will Be" — Natalie Cole
BEST R&B VOCAL PERFORMANCE
MALE
"Shining Star" — Earth, Wind & Fire
BEST R&B SONG
"Where Is The Love?" — Casey, Finch, Clark & Wright (writers)
BEST SOUL GOSPEL PERFORMANCE
Take Me Back — Andrae Crouch & the Disciples
BEST COUNTRY VOCAL PERFORMANCE
FEMALE
"I Can’t Help It" — Linda Ronstadt
BEST COUNTRY VOCAL PERFORMANCE
MALE
"Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain" — Willie Nelson
BEST COUNTRY VOCAL PERFORMANCE
BY A DUO OR GROUP
"Lover Please" — Kris Kristofferson & Rita Coolidge
BEST COUNTRY INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE
"The Entertainer" — Chet Atkins
BEST COUNTRY SONG
"Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song" — Moman & Bullock
BEST ORIGINAL SCORE
Jaws — John Williams
BEST CAST SHOW ALBUM
The Who
ALBUM OF THE YEAR, CLASSICAL
Beethoven: The Nine Symphonies — Sir Georg Solti, Chicago Symphony
BEST CLASSICAL PERFORMANCE, ORCHESTRA
Ravel: Daphnis & Chloe — Pierre Boulez & the New York Philharmonic
BEST OPERA RECORDING
Mozart: Cosi Fan Tutte — Colin Davis
BEST CHORAL PERFORMANCE, CLASSICAL
Orli: Carmina Burana
Cleveland Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas
BEST CHAMBER MUSIC PERFORMANCE
Schubert: The Piano Trios — Rubenstein, Szeryng & Fournier
BEST CLASSICAL PERFORMANCE, INSTRUMENTAL SOLOIST
Bach: Sonatas and Partitas for Violin — Nathan Milstein
BEST CLASSICAL VOCAL PERFORMANCE
Mahler: Kindertotenlieder — Janet Baker
BEST ENGINEERied RECORDING, CLASSICAL
Ravel: Daphnis & Chloe — Boulez & the New York Philharmonic
HALL OF FAME AWARDS
Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young
BEST ENGINEERED RECORDING, NON-CLASSICAL
Schonberg: Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 43 — Janos Ferencsik
BEST ALBUM PACKAG
Eagles — Ohio Players

WINNERS OF THE 10TH ANNUAL GRAMMY AWARDS
RECORD OF THE YEAR
Love Will Keep Us Together — Captain & Tennille
SINGULAR ALBUM OF THE YEAR
Still Crazy After All These Years — Paul Simon
SINGULAR SONG OF THE YEAR
Need A Little Time — Stephen Stills
NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR
Natalie Cole
BEST INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE
The Backword Files — Mike Melnick
BEST ARRANGEMENT OF COMPLEMENTARY VOCALISTS
Mary — Ray Stevens
BEST Engineered RECORDING, NON-CLASSICAL
Schonberg: Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 43 — Janos Ferencsik
BEST ALBUM PACKAG
Eagles — Ohio Players