

Canadians go for Grammy glory

BY MARK BASTIEN

Canadian Press

The U.S. recording industry is throwing itself a party tomorrow night, but chances are it will be crashed by some creative Canadians. Seven Canadian musicians are nominated in nine categories for the 31st annual Grammy Awards, to be announced in a live broadcast from Los Angeles.

The awards will likely be dominated by Boston folksinger Tracy Chapman and New York's jazz-happy Bobby McFerrin, but some Canadians are expected to make it to the podium to accept America's top music prize.

Canada's best hope is K. D. Lang, the crinolined cowgirl from Consort, Alta., who coralled three nominations for her country crooning. She's almost certain to win in the category of best country music collaboration for her rendition of Crying with the late great Roy Orbison. But she's in danger of losing the award to herself. In the same category, she's also nominated for Honky Tonk Angels' Medley, a bluesy country set she sings with Nashville queens Brenda Lee, Loretta Lynn and Kitty Wells.

Lang's other nomination is for best female country vocal, but her daunting competition includes Reba McEntire, Emmylou Harris, Tanya Tucker and K. T. Oslin.

Another Canadian who's likely to come up a winner is funky folkie Neil Young for best "concept" music video.

He's nominated for the controversial video *This Note's for You*, in which he lampoons pop stars who do commercials. The video, banned from U.S. music channel MTV, features lookalikes of cola hucksters Michael Jackson and Whitney Houston.

If Young loses, it will probably be to George Harrison, whose *When We Was Fab* video recalls his heady days with the Beatles.

Two Canadian rock stars — an oldtimer and a brash newcomer — also have good shots at eclipsing the competition in their categories.

Robbie Robertson, late of The Band, is up for best male rock performance for his self-named debut solo album. The album's universal critical kudos could give Robertson the edge over Robert Palmer, nominated for *Simply Irresistible*.

The category's other nominees are also rock veterans: Eric Clapton, Rod Stewart and Joe Cocker.

In the best rock instrumental category, Toronto's Jeff Healey has a good chance of scoring for his virtuosic guitar playing. The blind musician has become a favorite among U.S. music critics for his *See the Light* album.

Other Canadians up for Grammys are singer **Joni Mitchell**, composer David Foster and the polka prince of St. Catharines, Ont., Walter Ostanek.

Mitchell, nominated for her album *Chalk Mark in a Rain Storm*, will almost certainly lose the best female pop vocal prize to Tracy Chapman's song *Fast Car*.

Foster is up for two awards — best instrumental composition for *Winter Games*, his music for the 1988 Calgary Olympics, and best music video for *The Symphony Sessions*.

Both categories are difficult to call, although instrumental honors could go to *Olympic Spirit*, the music for the 1988 Los Angeles Summer Games.

As for the polka prize, Ostanek hopes to be a winner his second time round. His album *All Aboard It's Polka Time* might be the sentimental favorite, since he lost in the same category two years ago.