

Hip hop's Jermaine Dupri has been called on to produce an updated version of "We Are the World."

"It's called "We Are the Future," " Dupri said from Los Angeles on Tuesday after hearing the Grammy nominations. Dupri got four nods.

"All new artists (are gonna be on this version), it's the 20th anniversary of "We Are the World." Quincy Jones called me, he asked me to do it. We're just gonna make it something extravagant. We gonna try to re-create, follow in the footsteps of those who made a big record before, like Michael (Jackson), Quincy and Lionel Richie."

The plan is to record the song on February 13, the night of Grammy Awards, Dupri said. After the ceremony, a big celebrity bash is going to be held, and artists who will be participating in the project will be pulled out periodically to a nearby studio. Dupri wants to record the song at A&M Recording Studios, the same place "We Are the World" was made in 1985.

"Hopefully Usher will be there, Kanye (West), Jay-Z hopefully, all the bigwigs," J.D. said. "(We want) to do what they did way back when. I'm looking forward to that. That's something you give your heart to. For Quincy to call me, that's my idol. I'm trying to make sure it's right."

Dupri said this new track is automatically going to be different from "We Are the World" because it'll have rappers on it, but he's hoping that it will strike a chord like its predecessor..

"When I first heard the original it was crazy," Dupri remembered. "When I just heard about Quincy, Michael, Lionel getting together to write a song, I was really intrigued. I heard Band Aid and all them other records. Usually I didn't go for them sappy type of songs. You hear them and be like, "OK." You know what it's for, but it ain't nothing I would ride around and listen to in my car. But "We Are the World" struck me as something. It was a big record, and the way they did it was huge because they played it around the world simultaneously.

"It just became one of them type of records," he continued. "It's difficult for us to duplicate what happened, but at least we gonna try to come close to it. The artists is key to the whole situation. I hope the artists hear me and want to be a part of it."

"We Are the World" was recorded in January 1985 after the American Music Awards. Besides the song's writers, Stevie Wonder, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Tina Turner and Cyndi Lauper were among those who participated in the musical coalition known as USA for Africa. The proceeds from the song went to famine relief in Africa.

"We Are the Future" is just a fraction of what music fans are going to be hearing from Dupri in the coming months. He's looking for a new home for his So So Def imprint, and when that gets solidified he plans to put out albums by himself and Da Brat. In the meantime he's executive

producing albums by So So Def alumni Bow Wow and Jagged Edge as well as girlfriend Janet Jackson, and he produced four songs for his good friend Mariah Carey. Then there's that Grammy ceremony he'll be attending in February.

His work on Usher's *Confessions* LP earned him nominations for Album of the Year and Best Contemporary R&B Album, as well as two Best R&B Song nominations for "Burn" and "My Boo."

"You expect it but you can't never take it for granted that it's going to happen," he said.

"This feels like what we were waiting on. I know Usher was waiting on this. This is his year to at least win the Grammys and have a good Grammy shelf in his house. The (awards) I'm up for, I don't know if I'm gonna win. I can't really say 'cause they're tough. One of them categories, "My Boo" and "Burn" are nominated in the same category. I have a better chance in that category." [MTV](#)