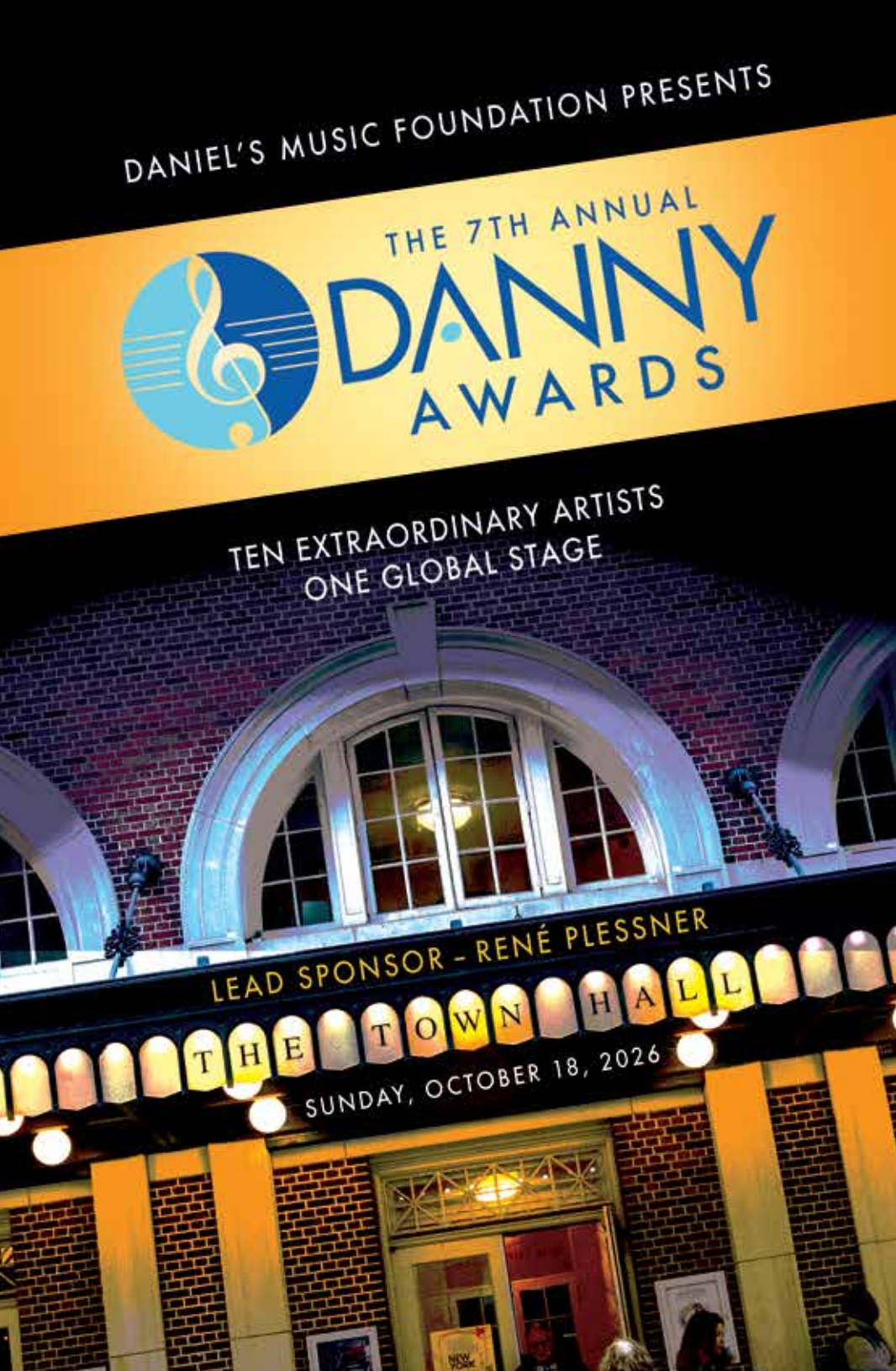
DANIEL'S MUSIC FOUNDATION PRESENTS

THE 7TH ANNUAL DANNY AWARDS

TEN EXTRAORDINARY ARTISTS
ONE GLOBAL STAGE



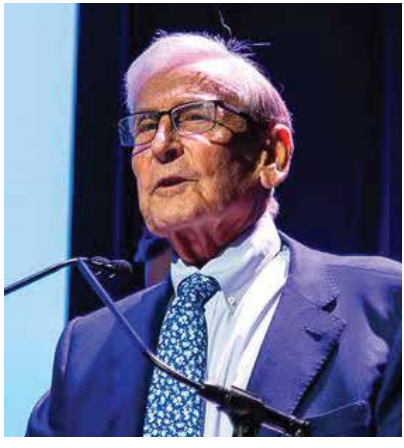
About The Danny Awards

In 2006, Daniel's Music Foundation (DMF) was founded by the Trush Family to provide free access to music for people with disabilities. Since inception, we have witnessed firsthand the talents of countless musicians and have provided them with performance opportunities to share their gifts with others. But we wanted to do more - something that would have an impact beyond the four walls of our music center in NYC.

In 2020, The Danny Awards were born - an annual, global award show that recognizes the incredible contributions of artists with disabilities to the world. We cannot wait for you to meet this year's artists. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the show!



Thank you to our Lead Sponsor – René Plessner



The Danny Awards is an event that would not be possible without the love and support of so many. As we celebrate the 7th Annual Danny Awards, we remain eternally grateful to our Lead Sponsor René Plessner for his continuous commitment to musicians with disabilities. His generosity and encouragement are unparalleled and have provided a platform to recognize the exceptional talent that thrives in our community. Thank you!

With Gratitude and Appreciation To:

The Danny Awards judges for your time, talents, and commitment in selecting our Award Winners. Your efforts have helped shape the musicians of the future.

Alex Alexander
Drummer/Percussionist/Producer/Composer
Phil Barbetta
Just Call Me By My Name Artist/2024 Danny Award Winner
David Boxenbaum
Music and Private Equity Executive/Co-Founder: Octone Records, Owner: Newport Media Advisors and NMA Productions
Alyson Cambridge
Singer/Model/Producer/Actor/Founder: Cambridge Productions & Purpose
Nick Cucci
Senior Executive Director: Recording Academy New York Chapter
George Dennehy
Singer/Songwriter/Just Call My By My Name Label Artist/2020 & 2023 Danny Award Winner
Dina Fanai
Artist/Songwriter/Producer
Richard Gottehrer
Songwriter/Producer/Co-Founder: The Orchard, Owner: Instant Records
Omar Grant
Senior Director and Creative A&R at Sony Music Publishing
Scott Harris
Songwriter/Producer/Musician
James Ian
Just Call My By My Name Label Artist/2022 Danny Award Winner
Bob Kinkel
Co-Creator & Producer: Trans-Siberian Orchestra
Lynn Lendway
Entertainment Executive/President: 24/7 Entertainment NYC
Sparsh Shah
Singer/Rapper/Songwriter/Music Producer/Inspirational Speaker/2020 Danny Award Winner

Our Board of Directors, Advisory Council, Management Team and Staff, whose passion and tenacity have allowed us to grow and serve more people. All our donors and supporters who generously allow us to continue to expand and do what we love.

Everyone who submitted a performance video for consideration; thank you for sharing your musical gifts with us. Our audience today (both in person and online) for helping to make this meaningful, iconic event possible.

AccessWave™ ad COUNCIL Deloitte.
The FAR Fund HFO FOUNDATION The Orchard
Ponce De Leon Foundation
Recording Academy New York Chapter

Show Lineup

Crime	**Ryan Gilfillian**
Opening Remarks	**Carla Sullivan** **DMF Director of Strategic Partnerships & Special Events and Emcee**
City Of Stars	**Elena Petry**
Welcome Remarks	**The Trush Family** **DMF Co-Founders**
The Danny Awards Lead Sponsor	**René Plessner**
Choose Peace	**Daniel Trush & Gerard Powers**
Lost & Found	**Dani Saldo**
Beethoven Violin Sonata No. 10	**Adrian Anantawan & Leigh McAllister**
My Skin	**Panah**
The Story Of My Life	**Vernon Barnard**
DMF Lifetime Achievement Award	**Jeff Moyer**
Say Yes	**Chris Hendricks**
The Audacity	**Summer Dennis**
Proud	**Natalie Te Paa**
Closing Remarks	**Nancy Trush**
Life Lesson	**Real V.i**

2026 Community Choice Award Live Vote and Announcement

Meet the Artists



Adrian Anantawan and Leigh McAllister
Violinist Adrian Anantawan and pianist Leigh McAllister are Boston-based performers, educators, and advocates whose artistry expands ideas of access in classical music. Anantawan, a Curtis, Yale, and Harvard graduate, has performed at the White House, the United Nations, and the Olympic Games. McAllister, a Boston Conservatory graduate and collaborative pianist, performs and teaches throughout Greater Boston. Together, they bring expressive musicianship, warmth, and a shared commitment to creating musical spaces in which disability becomes a source of artistry and connection. *@adrianantawan @willowwee3*



Vernon Barnard
Vernon is an award-winning South African recording artist, motivational speaker, and inspirational performer. After losing his eyesight to glaucoma as a teenager, he turned adversity into purpose, gaining international recognition as a finalist on The Voice South Africa, where his audition has been viewed more than 29 million times. His award-winning music has topped South African charts and earned multiple national accolades. Vernon performs throughout South Africa and internationally, using his music and story to inspire audiences with resilience, hope, and his personal motto: "Put Your Pain Into Power." *@vernonbarnard*



Natalie Te Paa
Natalie Te Paa is a London-born singer-songwriter, part Māori and raised in New Zealand. Born blind with septo-optic dysplasia, she began singing as an infant and wrote her first song at seven. A longtime disability advocate, Natalie has sung lead for New Zealand's Paralympic Team and International White Cane Day and appeared on television internationally. Since moving to London in 2021, she has amassed almost 1 million followers, becoming a voice for diversity while delighting audiences with her musical gifts. *@natbysight*

Meet the Artists

Ryan Gilfillian



Ryan is a talented singer/songwriter and advocate who inspires others to follow their dreams no matter what adversity they face. Following a life-altering car accident in 2009 that left him paralyzed, Ryan discovered his passion for music and songwriting. He's performed at World Cafe Live, Newport Folk Festival, and XPN Festival, with airplay on WXPN Philadelphia and 91.5 Jazz. Through his music, Ryan inspires audiences and champions the disability community. *@ryangilfillian*

Elena Petry



Elena is a cellist and content creator who has captivated audiences with her unique approach to music. Born without arms, she performs the cello using her feet, transforming challenge into artistry. Through her performances and online platform, Elena inspires others to embrace perseverance, creativity, and authenticity. She is honored to perform at the Danny Awards and share her love of music with this incredible community. *@musicorelena*

Dani Saldo



Dani is a disabled Filipino-Canadian artist and songwriter who makes vulnerable, conversational music with moody, melancholy and dreamy coming-of-age productions that explore love and self-discovery. Her song "All I Need" premiered in Anna Kendrick's movie "Alice Darling" at TIFF 2022, with additional music featured on Teen Mom OG and Love Is Blind. An advocate for disabled and intersectional experiences, Dani has participated in several creative entrepreneurship programs. Her debut EP, "everything I couldn't say", is out now. *@dani.saldo*

Summer Dennis



Summer Dennis is an R&B singer of African American, Jamaican, and Trinidadian heritage from Prince George's County, Maryland. A classically trained musician and vocalist with over 20 years of professional experience, she is a two-time WAMMIE Award winner who's single "Everything" peaked at No. 29 on Billboard's R&B charts. Influenced by Lauryn Hill, Earth, Wind & Fire, and Whitney Houston, Summer is also an advocate for domestic violence survivors, the chronic pain community, and Black women's mental health. *@itsthesummer*

Chris Hendricks



Chris Hendricks is a singer-songwriter, recording artist, and transformational speaker who has performed across the U.S., Canada, and Europe for over 20 years. He has shared stages with Amy Grant, Chris Daughtry, MercyMe, and Joe Bonamassa. Living with cerebral palsy, Chris leads with his craft and message, using his signature "Own Your Mirror" philosophy to transform vulnerability into strength. A new Americana-pop album arrives in 2026. *@iamchrishendricks*

Panah



Panah is a Vienna-based singer-songwriter and the creative force behind Panah Music, blending freestyle vocals with house, dance, and R&B influences. Her sound is rooted in vocal improvisation, electronic production, and emotionally driven storytelling. Panah creates music centered on authenticity, resilience, and self-expression. Projects such as Kapitel 1 highlight themes of women's strength, hope, survival, and empowerment through a distinctive contemporary sound. *@panahmusic*

Real V.i



Cosmo Watson was introduced to singing by his father, a member of Stanley and The Turbines. Seeing Michael Jackson perform at 12, he knew music was his calling. He recorded his first song at 14 and later worked with Bounty Killer and Junior Reid. In 2003 two masked gunmen left him using a wheelchair. "Through sheer determination, he set out to conquer one of the biggest challenges of my life." His passion for music keeps him motivated, and focused. *@realv.i*

Jeff Moyer *DMF Lifetime Achievement Award Winner*



Jeff is an internationally known songsmith, performer, writer, and advocate promoting positive regard for all people. He gained national attention as the troubadour for the 1977 504 Sit-in and later performed his "ADA Anthem" at the U.S. Senate following the legislation's signing. His music and materials are used worldwide, continuing his lifelong commitment to advocacy, inclusion, and positive social change. *jeffmoyer.com*

About Daniel's Music Foundation

We believe that opportunity belongs to everyone. Twenty years ago, Daniel's Music Foundation was founded by the Trush Family on the premise that music is a right, rather than a privilege. Today, we remain passionately committed to creating opportunities for people with disabilities through music.

Our free music programs foster joy, learning, self-expression and community. Through engaging, multi-sensory techniques, our methodology —Teaching from the heART™ — enables our members to make music through movement, storytelling, and the arts, in an environment where each person is valued and encouraged to express themselves authentically.

Since inception, we have provided 16,500+ free in-person classes. Each semester, our members participate together at our 8,700 sq ft., barrier-free music center in NYC. To support our members who need additional assistance to express themselves and feel empowered, we also design and build our own accessible instruments, which are tested real-time in our classes.

In response to the pandemic in 2020, we began to offer online classes extending our reach beyond NYC. Since then, we have provided 3,000+ free online classes and events to members of our community. This July, in partnership with Deloitte, we introduced DMF Online, a place where individuals, schools, and organizations can access live online music programs and our robust on-demand video library, regardless of where they live.

To learn more about our free music programs visit:
danielsmusic.org/music-programs

Meet The Trush Family

Since 2006, the Trush Family has dedicated their lives to serving individuals with disabilities by providing free in-person and online music programs through the Foundation. Their skills and experience have allowed them, along with the management team and staff, to create a culture of serving others. Ken has a background in business, finance and operations, Nancy is a former early childhood teacher, and Michael works with children, adolescents and adults as a neuropsychologist. And of course, there is Danny… Daniel's perseverance to reclaim a meaningful life after one of his five brain aneurysms burst at the age of

Thinking Differently About Disability

At Daniel's Music, our commitment to opportunity extends beyond our music programs. In addition to The Danny Awards, we also create spaces that promote career development, artist discovery, and cultural connections. Together, through the universal language of music, we are helping shape a mindset of mutual understanding and respect for all.

Just Call Me By My Name®

Our non-traditional record label promotes the positive and thought-provoking music of artists with disabilities. New this year, the DMF Artist Residency at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, introduces thousands of visitors to our label artists, and creates meaningful moments of connection.

Presentations & Performances

Disability as a topic can be complicated. It is a word with many meanings, interpretations and perceptions that oftentimes brings with it pre-conceived notions. Through heartfelt storytelling and powerful performances, DMF can impact corporate culture and provide a fresh perspective that makes disability approachable, relatable and human.

Event Sponsorship

With high profile events like The Danny Awards® and The DMF Artist Residency at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, companies can gain positive exposure and amplify their commitment to inclusion through corporate engagement.

To learn more, contact Carla Sullivan at carla@danielsmusic.org

12 (an injury which he has never allowed to define him as a person), has helped create the spirit of the Foundation. He is a singer/songwriter and the life force that drives DMF. He also serves as the key ambassador for our mission – and a living example of acceptance, kindness, and joy.



Introducing DMFRadio

With over 20 years' experience, we know that music has the power to connect people, strengthen communities and create opportunities that extend well beyond the stage.

Today, music discovery has never been more accessible, with algorithms, recommendation engines, and short-form platforms transforming how audiences discover music. Oftentimes, leaving exceptional artists struggling to build lasting relationships with audiences, while listeners miss the stories, perspectives, and lived experiences that give music its greatest meaning.

DMFRadio was created in response to this predicament. Launching today, DMFRadio is the first-of-its kind 24/7 online radio station and music discovery platform featuring thoughtfully curated music and stories of artists with disabilities. Its library of songs from 500+ artists spans genres, generations, and perspectives, with programming designed around different moods and moments throughout the day. DMFRadio gives audiences music worth discovering while providing artists with disabilities greater visibility, meaningful context, and opportunities to be recognized for their artistry.

Scan the QR Codes below to download the free app or visit dmfradio.org to learn more and listen online.

DMFRadio for Apple



Thank You for Joining us Today!

If you believe in what we do as an organization and would like to keep our music programs free to the public, we respectfully request that you consider contributing to Daniel's Music Foundation. Donations of all sizes are welcomed, needed, and greatly appreciated.

Your support will help impact the lives of people with disabilities and allow us to use music as an instrument to build a more inclusive society. Simply scan the QR code or visit the merchandise table in the lobby to donate. Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Your Calendars and Save the Dates!

8th Annual Danny Awards
Sunday, October 17, 2027

DMF Annual Spring Benefit
Friday, April 30, 2027

To access live captioning (CART) services for this event on your smartphone, please scan the QR code below:

COMMUNITY CHOICE AWARD

Introducing the 2026 Community Choice Award!

The judges have selected the top ten Danny Award artists, and it's almost time to cast your vote! In response to the significant increase in submissions and wide range of talent, we are making changes to future Danny Awards, including increasing audience participation!

This year, audience members in-person and online, will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite artist at the end of the show. The artist with the most votes will receive an additional $5,000 prize and be recognized as our 2026 Community Choice Award Winner!

When directed, scan the QR Code or visit: bit.ly/communitychoice26 to vote for your favorite performer.

Track Your Favorite Performances Throughout The Show Below:

- [ ] Ryan Gilfillian
- [ ] Elena Petry
- [ ] Dani Saldo
- [ ] Adrian Anantawan & Leigh McCallister
- [ ] Panah
- [ ] Vernon Barnard
- [ ] Chris Hendricks
- [ ] Summer Dennis
- [ ] Natalie Te Paa
- [ ] Real V.i (Cosmo Watson)