

Sherry Eaker  
presents

# 41 BISTRO AWARDS

Celebrating 41 Years of Recognizing  
Outstanding Excellence  
in Cabaret and Jazz

Monday, March 16, 2026 ★ 7:00 pm  
Chelsea Table + Stage NYC

**JAZZED TO CELEBRATE**

**DEE DEE  
BRIDGEWATER**

**THE ASCAP-BOB HARRINGTON LIFETIME  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER**



PHOTO BY EVELYN FREJA

**AND ALL OF TONIGHT'S  
BISTRO AWARD HONOREES**

 **ascap**  
WE CREATE MUSIC

# 41 BISTRO AWARDS

Produced by  
**SHERRY EAKER**

Host  
**JIM DAVID**

Announcer  
**SIDNEY MYER**

Musical Director/Piano  
**DARYL KOJAK**

Bass  
**RITT HENN**

Drums  
**REX BENINCASA**

Production Stage Manager  
**JONATHAN MERCADO**

Associate Producer  
**MARK DUNDAS WOOD**

Assistant Producer  
**MARY LAHTI**

Directed by  
**GERRY GEDDES**

Sponsored in part by





Kurt Peterson  
Kathleen Landis  
Claire-Frances Sullivan

*congratulate*  
**Frank Dain**  
*on his Bistro Award*

We are honored to have joined  
Frank in producing his newest  
album, *I've Had a Love*.  
Bravo, Frank!

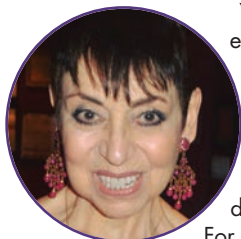


[www.JamesWilliamProductions.com](http://www.JamesWilliamProductions.com)

*Please see our website for details about our  
exciting new projects, including the release of the  
podcast, Loving You: The Untold Sondheim.*

# 41 BISTRO AWARDS

## AND ON WE GO!



You can ask anyone I know. Every year following a Bistro Awards event, I say the same thing: "This is definitely going to be my last year producing the Bistro Awards." Obviously, I've never followed through on that thought.

But last April, following our very successful 40th anniversary celebration, I figured that this was it, saying to myself, "How could I ever top this show? It's the perfect time to retire after four decades of honoring all these wonderful artists."

For months, I reveled in the aftermath of our 40th show, practically rejoicing in the fact that I didn't have to start thinking of our next show and all the details that it would entail. How easy things would be with no responsibilities and no deadlines set upon me.

But after a while, I started returning to the rooms to see artists, many of whom I had never seen before, and my attitude changed. Many of the performers whose shows I attended so galvanized me with their energy, honesty, and devotion to their music that they quickly wiped away all thoughts of *not* producing the Bistro Awards show again. I just had to do it. My producing batteries were recharged.

Bob Harrington, who created the Bistro Awards, once wrote in his "Bistro Bits" column in *Back Stage*, where I was editor:

*"A star is an incandescent personality  
who can light up a stage by his or her mere presence,  
a performer whose extraordinary talent can not only reach  
an audience, but can powerfully connect with it and  
create the illusion of sharing a highly personal experience.  
A star is a rare, special person possessing the ability to  
entertain, along with an unmistakable magnetism....  
Star quality is hard to define,  
but you know it when you see it."*

And all this brings us to tonight, when I am very proud to present, at the 41st annual Bistro Awards, 14 "stars." Not only do all of them possess exceptional vocal talent, but they also have that rare special presence and magnetism on stage—that *je ne sais quoi* quality—that is simply part of their essence. As Bob noted, you just know it when you see it.

Now, let me think about the 42nd Annual Bistro Awards....

And on we go,

Sherry Eaker  
Producer

## MUSICAL NUMBERS\*

**CORINNA SOWERS ADLER** ..... “Here’s to Life”

Words: Phyllis Molinary; Music: Artie Butler  
Shane Turner (piano), Ritt Henn (bass), Rex Benincasa (drums)

**DEBORAH STONE, DARYL KOJAK,  
SEAN HARKNESS, TOM HUBBARD** ..... “Here to Love You”

Words & Music: Michael McDonald  
Deborah Stone (vocals), Daryl Kojak (piano), Sean Harkness (guitar)  
Tom Hubbard (bass)

**CHRIS GRASSO, LAUREN SCALES,  
MIKE FLANAGAN** ..... “Play Me”

Words & Music: Neil Diamond  
Lauren Scales (vocals), Chris Grasso (piano), Mike Flanagan (sax)  
Ritt Henn (bass), Rex Benincasa (drums)

**ANAÏS RENO** ..... “Les Feuilles Mortes” / “Autumn Leaves”

Words: Jacques Prévert; Music: Joseph Kosma  
English lyrics by Johnny Mercer from *Les Portes de la Nuit*  
Ben Rice (piano), Sameer Shankar (bass)

**FRANK DAIN** ..... “Hello, Young Lovers”

Words: Oscar Hammerstein, II; Music: Richard Rodgers  
from *The King and I*  
Kathleen Landis (piano), Ritt Henn (bass)

**MARY FOSTER CONKLIN** ..... “Some Cats Know”

Words: Jerry Leiber; Music: Mike Stoller  
Daryl Kojak (piano), Ritt Henn (bass), Rex Benincasa (drums)

**TAMMY McCANN** ..... “Send in the Clowns”

Words & Music: Stephen Sondheim from *A Little Night Music*  
Daryl Kojak (piano)

**DAVID MARINO** ..... “The Windmills of Your Mind”

Words: Alan & Marilyn Bergman; Music: Michelle Legrand  
French lyrics by Eddy Mornay from *The Thomas Crown Affair*  
Daryl Kojak (piano), Ritt Henn (bass), Rex Benincasa (drums)

**DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER** ..... “In the Still of the Night”

Words & Music: Cole Porter from *Rosalie*  
Bill Charlap (piano)

\*Subject to change

# 41 BISTRO AWARDS THE 2026 RECIPIENTS

## DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER

ASCAP-BOB HARRINGTON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Dee Dee Bridgewater's commitment to her artistry and career in jazz is fed by her passion for variety and experiment. The three-time Grammy winner has instigated projects paying tribute to musicians and performers from Ella Fitzgerald to hard-bop pianist/composer Horace Silver. She has stretched the boundaries of scat-singing to new lengths, creating sounds that can be ethereal, brash, or hilarious.

Her triumphs in the jazz world have been matched by her successes in a considerably different discipline: musical theatre—on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in the West End. Her most famous theatrical turn was her legit-stage debut: a Tony Award-winning performance in the original cast of Broadway's *The Wiz*, in which she created the role of Glinda, Good Witch of the South. Her other theatrical credits include such titles as *Sophisticated Ladies* and *Lady Day*.

She was born Denise Eileen Garrett in Memphis, Tennessee where her father was a jazz trumpeter and music teacher. Bridgewater's first professional singing job was with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band. Her first album, *Afro Blue*, was released in 1974, the same year she began her stint in *The Wiz*. She took a detour into pop, funk, and R&B in the 1980s, but afterward moved to Paris, where she refined her jazz sensibility. She flourished for more than a decade in France before returning to the U.S.

Bridgewater has released a score of albums, from *Afro Blue* to *Elemental*, her recent, Grammy-nominated album with jazz pianist Bill Charlap. She has produced most of her own albums in recent years. In 1996 she founded DDB Productions and DDB Records (an independent recording label).

Besides her Tony and her Grammys, she's won many other honors, including the Doris Duke Artist Award, The ASCAP Foundation Champion Award, and an NEA Jazz Masters Award. She was presented with an earlier Bistro Award in 2012, for Ongoing Artistry in Jazz.

Her philanthropic work includes a role fighting world hunger as a Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). She also co-created The Woodshed Network, a support organization for women in jazz.

She is proud mother to two daughters, Tulani Bridgewater (producer on the *Elemental* album) and China Moses (a singer and TV host).

Bridgewater's commitment to being fully present and engaged, whether onstage or off, seems bound to continue long after her acceptance of this and any other lifetime achievement award.

*Continued on page 9*



**Congratulates  
the Bistro Winners  
in our  
Don't Tell Mama Family**

**CORINNA SOWERS ADLER**

**FRANK DAIN**

**STRING THEORY**

**(DEBORAH STONE, DARYL KOJAK  
SEAN HARKNESS, TOM HUBBARD)**

**And to the  
many other artists  
who have matriculated  
at this  
Cabaret Campus!**

## MARY FOSTER **CONKLIN** CONSUMMATE JAZZ VOCALIST AND ARCHIVIST



Mary Foster Conklin won her third Bistro Award in 2007 for Tribute Recording. *Blues for Breakfast—Remembering Matt Dennis* was a passion project, post-9/11, which set her on the path to becoming a true archivist of 20th century popular song. Her shows are a mix of old and new music, with an emphasis on lesser-known material and tunesmiths that deserve a second listen, such as Matt Dennis, Bob Dorough, Beat poet Fran Landesman, and the dark art songs of rock-and-roll icons Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. A New Jersey native who came to New York to pursue theatre work, her transformation from actor to jazz singer began when she joined jazz drummer Art Lillard's Heavenly Band and the music naturally shifted from show tunes to blues, Latin, and bebop.

In New York, Conklin's talents have earned her a place on the stages of Mezzrow, Pangea, Birdland, The Blue Note, Zinc Bar, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the Iridium. When the Highline opened, she made news singing from various fire escapes as "The Lady in the Red Dress" with the Renegade Cabaret. Her weekly radio show, now in its tenth year, is based at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ. A *Broad Spectrum—the Ladies of Jazz* celebrates women composers and lyricists and streams online at WFDU.FM every Sunday. Her fifth recording, *These Precious Days*, a heartfelt collection of popular and jazz tunes penned primarily by women, was released in 2023 to critical acclaim and worldwide airplay. [www.maryfosterconklin.com](http://www.maryfosterconklin.com)

## FRANK **DAIN** OUTSTANDING VOCAL ARTISTRY AND CABARET ADVOCATE



In New York City, Frank Dain has performed at Carnegie Hall/Weill Recital Hall, Rose Theater/Jazz at Lincoln Center, Café Pierre, Waldorf Astoria's Cocktail Terrace and Peacock Alley, The Town Hall, The National Arts Club, The Players, The Knickerbocker, Kitano Jazz, Don't Tell Mama, the Metropolitan Room, The Laurie Beechman Theatre, Pangea, Chelsea Table + Stage, Urban Stages, and Danny's Skylight Room. In Philadelphia, he played at the Prince Theater.

He has released two CDs, *I Thought About You* and *I've Had a Love*, both of which received high praise. Dain has been the editor-in-chief of *Cabaret Scenes* magazine since 2003. He is the treasurer of the American Songbook Association, is on the advisory board of The Mabel Mercer Foundation, served on the Board of the Manhattan Association of Cabaret for eight years, and has been one of the permanent judges for the talent contest *Mama's Next BIG Act!* since its inception. As a designer, he has created promotional materials for many cabaret performers, the Bistro Awards, the MAC Awards, and Off-Broadway productions. [frankdain.com](http://frankdain.com)

Continued on page 11

Celebrating 36 years of  
**Jamie deRoy**  
& friends

**CONGRATULATE**

Sherry Eaker and  
The Bistro Awards  
41 years of excellence

**Special Bistro Award  
recipients**

**Dee Dee Bridgewater**

ASCAP-Bob Harrington Lifetime Achievement Award

**Mary Foster Conklin**

Outstanding Jazz Vocalist and Archivist

**Frank Dain**

Outstanding Vocal Artistry and Cabaret Advocate

**all the other  
Bistro Award honorees**

Corinna Sowers Adler

Mike Flanagan

Chris Grasso

Sean Harkness

Tom Hubbard

Daryl Kojak

David Marino

Tammy McCann

Anaïs Reno

Lauren Scales

Deborah Stone



Photo: Terry Gruber

[www.JamiedeRoy.com](http://www.JamiedeRoy.com)

## MIKE FLANAGAN

OUTSTANDING JAZZ ENSEMBLE: *MANY RIVERS*



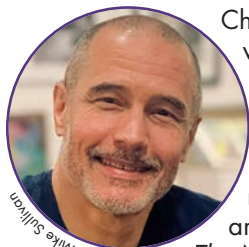
Mike Flanagan is a *Billboard*-charting, Lennon Award-winning, and OUTmusic Award-winning saxophonist, pianist, songwriter, composer, music director, educator, and actor. As a recording artist, he has released six albums, topped the iTunes Jazz Albums chart, and charted on *Billboard* three times. His groundbreaking music video for his original song “Trying,” which he both acted in and directed, has received more than 1 million views on YouTube. Flanagan holds a BM degree from Berklee

College of Music, as well as an MM degree from New York University, where he also taught as an adjunct professor of composition.

Upon graduating, Flanagan was offered his current role, serving as Artistic Director for both the Post Office Cafe & Cabaret and Tin Pan Alley in Provincetown, MA. For three years, Flanagan was also hired to music-direct for Lea Delaria at her venue, The Club Provincetown, in addition to leading his own nights there. His newest release, *Many Rivers*, on which he performed alongside Lauren Scales and Chris Grasso, hit No. 46 on the Jazz Week top 200 radio chart and is currently climbing.

## CHRIS GRASSO

OUTSTANDING JAZZ ENSEMBLE: *MANY RIVERS*



Chris Grasso is a jazz pianist who specializes in working with vocalists. *Many Rivers*—his new release with vocalist Lauren Scales and saxophonist Mike Flanagan on the Grammy-winning label Truth Revolution Records—is winning raves from critics and climbing the jazz charts. Grasso serves as music director for internationally renowned vocalist Sharón Clark. They have appeared around the globe and received rave reviews from the *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *JazzTimes*.

Grasso has also performed with Gene Bertoncini, Keter Betts, Carmen Bradford, Lea Delaria, Kenny Garrett, Allan Harris, Nicole Henry, Buck Hill, Marlon and Stephanie Jordan, Lewis Nash, Nicki Parrott, Freda Payne, Ken Peplowski, Houston Person, Bucky Pizzarelli, Chuck Redd, Joshua Redman, Avery Sharpe, Janis Siegel, Suede, Denise Thimes, Frank Vignola, Bobby Watson, Cassandra Wilson, Matt Wilson, and more. He has appeared at leading venues, including Jazz at Lincoln Center, Birdland, the Kennedy Center, Blues Alley, Bohemian Caverns, the Iridium, and the Music Center at Strathmore, as well as festivals in the U.S. and overseas.

Continued on page 13

**CABARET**  
SCENES  
MAGAZINE

american  
songbook  
association

CONGRATULATE

**SHERRY EAKER**  
and the  
**BISTRO AWARDS**

on 41 Years of Celebrating  
CABARET and JAZZ

**Here's to 41 more!**

*and congratulations to the*  
**2026 Bistro Award Recipients**

[www.CabaretScenes.org](http://www.CabaretScenes.org)  
[www.AmericanSongbookAssociation.org](http://www.AmericanSongbookAssociation.org)

## SEAN HARKNESS

OUTSTANDING COLLABORATION: *STRING THEORY*



Sean Harkness left Burlington, VT, in 1994 to immerse himself in NYC's music scene. Now a first-call guitarist whose talents complement those of an international client list. Harkness is a solo artist, music director, and sideman known for intimate settings with singers from stage and screen. Within six months of getting his first guitar at age 11, he had a weekly theatre engagement in Bridgeport, CT. After high school bands and studies with Brian Keane and Sal Salvador (Stan Kenton Band), Harkness studied at

Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Then, after a year of busking the streets of Europe, he moved to Vermont where, for five years, he worked in the shop, assisting master guitar builder Chip Wilson. Studies with T.O. Mann helped him develop a signature touch on the instrument that caught the ears of Windham Hill Records (Sony/RCA/BMG) and other producers. Now calling NYC home, Harkness has earned many awards, including two previous Bistro Awards, four BroadwayWorld.com Awards, and nine MAC Awards. Harkness represents Walden Guitars, DR Handmade Strings, Fishman Pickups, and Graph Tech hardware.

## TOM HUBBARD

OUTSTANDING COLLABORATION: *STRING THEORY*



Tom Hubbard is a bassist who lives and works in New York City. He studied with Arthur Gold and George Stahl of the Minnesota Orchestra and with renowned jazz bassists Richard Davis and Dave Holland. He has performed with a host of top jazz instrumentalists, including Kenny Barron, Jay McShann, Charlie Rouse, and Dewey Redman, among others. Hubbard has accompanied a long list of singers, including Joe Williams,

Jon Hendricks, Mose Allison, Freddy Cole, Chris Connor, Sheila Jordan, Liza Minnelli, Michael Feinstein, Marilyn Maye, Stacey Kent, and Martha Reeves and the Vandellas. Hubbard is a two-time MAC Award winner for best ensemble instrumentalist.

He has performed in some of the top venues worldwide, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Philadelphia's Academy of Music, The Sydney Opera House, Tokyo's NHK Hall, and Frankfurt's Alte Oper. [tomhubbardbass.com](http://tomhubbardbass.com)

Continued on page 15

Congratulations

# Anais Reno

The kind of artistry that deserves  
this standing ovation! Bravo!

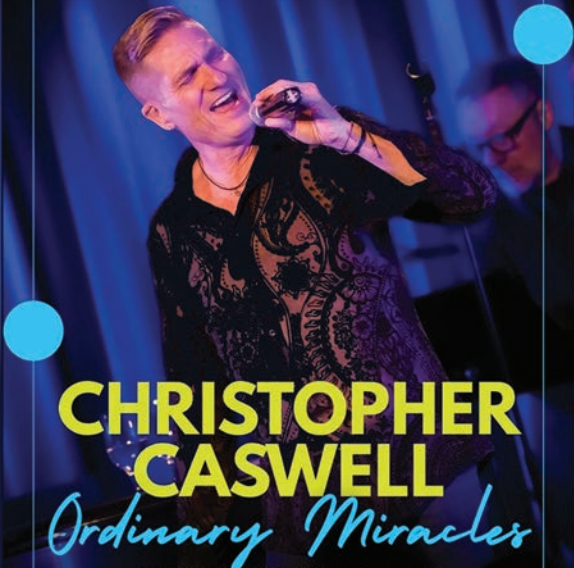
**OUTSTANDING JAZZ VOCALIST**



With Admiration  
Judy & Sean Katz

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2025 MAC Award Nominee - Best Male Vocalist  
[www.ChristopherCaswell.com](http://www.ChristopherCaswell.com)



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CASWELL**

*Ordinary Miracles*

THE LAURIE BEECHMAN THEATRE  
THURSDAY, MAY 7 • 7 PM

## DARYL KOJAK

### OUTSTANDING COLLABORATION: *STRING THEORY*



Amranda Bernhardt

Daryl Kojak—pianist, arranger, producer, musical director, composer and songwriter—is honored to have worked with a long list of talent, including Robin Williams, Billy Crystal, Phoebe Snow, Ben Vereen, Sheila Jordan, Michael Feinstein, Jane Monheit, Cheryl Bentyne, Kristin Chenoweth, Vicki Sue Robinson, George Coleman, Randy Brecker, Sheldon Harnick, Sandra Bernhard, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Mary Testa, Rita Rudner, Richard Belzer, Tiny Tim, Catherine Russell, Laurie Krauz, Heather MacRae,

Stephanie Pope, and many others.

He has composed and scored music for film, television, stage, artist recordings, and video games and has been honored with the Bistro Award for Outstanding Musical Director, the Caribbean Gospel Music Award for Top Gospel Arranger, the MAC Award for Best Jazz Group, and—with Laurie Krauz—the Bistro Award for Outstanding Theme Show for *Tapestry Rewoven*. Daryl is thrilled to receive the honor of a 2026 Bistro Award for *String Theory*, with Deborah Stone, Sean Harkness, and Tom Hubbard.

## DAVID MARINO

### OUTSTANDING VOCALIST



Bertrand Escher

David Marino is a young vocalist and rising star making headway internationally, performing at prestigious theatres and jazz clubs across the world. Fresh off releasing his debut EP, *The Debut Sessions*, Marino has made himself a home at the iconic Birdland Jazz Club in New York, alongside musical director Billy Stritch, and has recently completed tour dates in California, Florida, Germany, France, Italy, and the UK.

As an actor, Marino recently played the role of Tobias in Opera Maine’s production of Stephen Sondheim’s *Sweeney Todd* and is currently holding the lead role of Maxence in the run of Michel Legrand’s highly acclaimed musical, *Les demoiselles de Rochefort*, at the historic Lido Theatre in Paris. Marino is also a proud advocate for mental health causes and, through big band concerts in Montreal, has helped raise \$50,000 for the psychiatric facility at the Jewish General Hospital. In the works, David is excited to be working on a debut album, set for release in the fall.

# Breathe

Songs of Holding On and Letting Go



Thursday  
May 21 at 7 pm

Friday  
May 29 at 7 pm

Bistro and MAC Hanson Award Winner  
2024 MAC Awards  
Female Vocalist Nominee

Lucille Carr-Kaffashan

*don't tell mama*

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NYC 10036

## Goldie Dver

## The Rhythm of Life

The Dorothy Fields Songbook

Music Director  
DAN PARDO

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JAMES BEAMAN

THE *Laurie*  
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THEATRE

Thursday, June 4 7PM

## TAMMY McCANN

OUTSTANDING TRIBUTE SHOW: *LEGENDARY LADIES OF JAZZ: ELLA, SARAH, DINAH, & BILLIE*



Tammy McCann is an internationally recognized jazz vocalist and the artist-in-residence at the Music Institute of Chicago. Renowned for her powerful and “emotionally charged” voice, McCann uniquely blends classical vocal technique and gospel aesthetics with jazz. The Chicago Tribune describes her as having a “voice that inspires wonder,” while critics such as Stanley Crouch praise her pitch precision and “polished swing.” Her career credits include touring as a Raelette with Ray Charles and performing alongside such jazz legends as Ramsey Lewis, Von Freeman, and Branford Marsalis.

Considered a masterful storyteller, McCann has captivated global audiences at iconic venues, including Carnegie Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and The Blue Note, as well as on international stages from Thailand to Greece. Whether performing at Chicago’s own Jazz Showcase or at premier festivals worldwide, McCann is celebrated for her warm delivery and her ability to forge deep emotional connections with her listeners. Alyce Claerbaut of *Billy Strayhorn Songs* has called Tammy McCann “a star with a one-of-a-kind voice.”

## ANAÏS RENO

OUTSTANDING JAZZ VOCALIST



Anaïs Reno is a New York City–based jazz singer and composer who studied jazz performance at SUNY Purchase. She recently won the Silver Medal in the American Traditions Vocal Competition in Savannah. Additional accolades include the Ben Tucker Jazz Award (also part of ATC), the Mabel Mercer competition, and the Julie Wilson Award. Reno has performed in such venues as Birdland, Carnegie Hall, Dizzy’s Club, Madison Square Garden, the Caramoor Jazz Festival, PizzaExpress and Ronnie Scott’s as part of the London Jazz Festival, the Edinburgh Jazz Festival, and others. Among her many appearances at Birdland was a week-long engagement filling in for Tierney Sutton in 2022.

Reno’s debut album, *Lovesome Thing*, celebrating Ellington and Strayhorn, rose to No. 6 on the *JazzWeek Jazz Chart* in 2021; that same year, she took part in a video with NYCNext, in which she sang Billy Joel’s “New York State of Mind” alongside stars including Idina Menzel and Stephen Colbert, and she sang “America the Beautiful” for the Mets/Yankees 9/11 game on national television. In February 2024, Reno released a live recording made at London’s PizzaExpress. She recently released her second studio album, *Lady of the Lavender Mist*, under the Club44 label, with Peter Bernstein, David Wong, and Joe Farnsworth.

Continued on page 19

The board and staff at  
**CABARET** | american  
SCENES | songbook  
MAGAZINE | association

salute and congratulate

**FRANK DAIN**

on receiving a Bistro Award  
for his outstanding work  
as a singer, recording artist,  
Editor-in-Chief,  
and fearless leader.  
Bravo.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2026 BISTRO AWARD RECIPIENTS

**WARREN  
SINGS  
FIELDS**



Madelaine Warren  
Celebrates  
the Lyrics of  
Dorothy Fields

“80 minutes  
of sheer delight.”  
BroadwayWorld

“A fine addition to the  
bio cabaret genre.”  
NiteLife Exchange

“Madelaine, you have  
great Star presence and  
make beautiful music.”  
Gerard Alessandrini

Christopher Denny Music Director  
Tom Hubbard Bass  
Barry Kleinbort Director

Encore Performance!

Sunday March 22 at 4 pm

THE *Lawrie*  
BEECHMAN  
THEATRE

[www.thebeechman.com](http://www.thebeechman.com)

## LAUREN SCALES

OUTSTANDING JAZZ ENSEMBLE: *MANY RIVERS*



Lauren Scales is a born-and-bred Detroit native with ties to NYC and is currently based in Philadelphia. Her background is steeped in soul, jazz, and R&B. She began playing the piano at the age of 4, was writing songs by age 8, and singing professionally at 12. Scales studied jazz voice at the University of Michigan and received her Master of Music degree in songwriting composition from New York University. She is an alumna of the Betty Carter Jazz Ahead Program, the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, and the UNISA Jazz Vocal Competition.

A seasoned session musician, Scales can be found supporting others live and in-studio when not leading her own projects. Currently, she leads her band, The Whole Tones; is the lead vocalist with the progressive R&B group Valipala; and sings with the funk band Snack Cat. She is tremendously proud of the recently released *Many Rivers* album with collaborators Chris Grasso and Mike Flanagan on Truth Revolution Records, for which she contributed two original tunes, and she is happy with the positive reception it has received publicly and critically.

## CORINNA SOWERS ADLER

OUTSTANDING VOCALIST AND EDUCATOR



Corinna Sowers Adler has been nominated for the special "Excellence in Theatre Education" Tony Award every year for a decade. She made her solo New York cabaret debut in 2010 at the Laurie Beechman Theatre in *Stories...A Cabaret*. Since then, she has been in high demand, performing solo shows in NYC's finest cabaret rooms, including the Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center, where she debuted the concert series "Music Over Manhattan." Sowers Adler has been a featured singer several times at the Cabaret Convention held at Jazz at Lincoln Center, presented by The Mabel Mercer Foundation.

Her most recent show, *All That Matters*, has been called "an example of perfect cabaret" by Stephen Mosher of *BroadwayWorld*. She hosts and produces the "Music at the Mansion"™ series and was nominated for the 2012 and 2014 BroadwayWorld cabaret awards in the "Best Female Vocalist" and "Best Host of a Variety Show" categories and the 2020 MAC Awards for Best Female Vocalist. She and her husband, Nicholas Adler, also produce the New Jersey Cabaret Festival, which celebrates performers who have a connection to the Garden State. Sowers Adler is Founding Artistic Director of NiCori Studios & Productions, dedicated to bringing theatre and vocal arts education programming and performance to the next generation, familiarizing them with the American Songbook. NiCori: Educate. Inspire. Entertain.

Continued on page 21

CONGRATULATIONS  
to all the honorees  
and to  
SHERRY EAKER  
for her  
steadfast dedication  
to the  
BISTRO AWARDS

from your  
Connecticut Friends  
Patrick Shaw and Shirley Crabbe

*"Among life's great pleasures is having your mind blown by a new act in a tiny venue. ...one such haven for arty truffle hounds ... the East Village boîte Pangea, which over the past few years has vaulted to the forefront of the alt-cabaret scene." - Elisabeth Vincentelli, New York Times*

**pangea**

[pangeanyc.com](http://pangeanyc.com)

178 2nd Avenue (btw. 11 & 12)

*Congratulations to all Honorees*

# DEBORAH **STONE**

OUTSTANDING COLLABORATION: *STRING THEORY*



A native New Yorker, Deborah has been a dancer, actress, and singer on the East and West coasts, performed in a Broadway musical, and was a “Las Vegas”-style showgirl in New York City and Dallas. She sang at Rose Hall/Jazz at Lincoln Center as part of the 2024 New York Cabaret Convention and so far has performed *String Theory* five times in New York City. Stone entered the world of cabaret in 2016. She has performed in New York City at The Beach Café, Pangea, The Metropolitan Room, The Triad, Don’t Tell Mama, The Laurie Beechman Theatre, and The Green Room 42. In Kansas City she played at The American Jazz Museum’s Blue Room. She has also performed her solo guitar show, *Take Me Back: Joan, Joni, Dylan and Others*, in New York City and nationally. Her website is [deborah-stone.com](http://deborah-stone.com), on which may be found her EPK, press, video clips, links to her singles, and ticket links for upcoming shows.

## 41 BISTRO AWARDS

### DAY-OF-EVENT STAFF

Technical Director  
**COLIN COLFORD**

Stage Managers  
**ANDRÉS JARAMILLO**  
**ROBERT RUCK**

Production Assistants  
**LIORA MICHELLE**  
**ANN TALMAN**

Trophy Presenter  
**DAVID BALLARD**

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Kurt Peterson/Kathleen Landis/Claire Frances-Sullivan, Risa Finkel  
Stephen Shanaghan/Pangea, and Madelaine Warren

### OUR APPRECIATION TO

Martin Bonventure  
Caelan Cardello  
Doug Ferony  
Lauren Henderson  
Susan Hinkson

Lizzy & the Triggermen  
Anaïs Reno  
Catherine Russell and  
Sean Mason

Tessa Souter  
Patricia Thompson  
Dara Tucker  
Jack Wood  
Tracey Yarad

Represented by DL Media, Jazz Promo Services, Katz PR  
Lydia Liebman Promotions, Songbook Ink + Jazz at the Ballroom, and Soundcheck PR

# CONGRATULATIONS

2026 Bistro

Recipients



DEE DEE, FRANK, TAMMY,  
CORINNA, MANY RIVERS: CHRIS,  
MIKE, LAUREN

DAVID, ANAÏS, STRING THEORY:  
SEAN, TOM, DARYL, & DEBORAH!

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BILL MURPHY

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ANN  
Kittredge

2025 BISTRO RECIPIENT  
MAC LAMOTT-FRIEDMAN AWARD WINNER

## Linda Jackson Temporarily **LOST**



Musical Director  
JOHN FISCHER

Director  
LENNIE WATTS

DON'T TELL MAMA  
Thursday, April 23  
Sunday, May 3  
Wednesday, May 13  
All at 7pm

## MAC AWARD WINNER CAMILLE DIAMOND



LENNIE WATTS  
DIRECTOR

TRACY STARK  
MUSIC DIRECTOR

TONI TENNILLE'S BIRTHDAY WEEK!  
SUNDAY, MAY 3RD 4PM  
THURSDAY, MAY 7TH 7PM  
SATURDAY, MAY 9TH 7PM

PHOTOS: HANNAH JANE / JAMES BEAMAN GRAFT

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# 41 BISTRO AWARDS CREATIVE TEAM



Life Chicago

**JIM DAVID (Host)** will forever be grateful to the Bistros, his first award for comedy, and he has hosted numerous Bistro Awards shows in the years since. He's also a three-time MAC Award winner, was the first openly gay man to have a "Comedy Central

Presents" Special (now available on Paramount Plus—Season 4), and has appeared on many other TV shows. He toured the U.S. with his theatre comedy, *South Pathetic*, and has performed around the world for nearly 40 years. He can currently be seen in the Netflix documentary *Outstanding: A Comedy Revolution*, about the history of LGBT comedy. His comic novel about showbiz, *You'll Be Swell*, is available on Amazon. Instagram/TikTok: @comicjim-david; comicjim david.com



Armed & Brandished

**DARYL KOJAK (Musical Director/ Piano)**—pianist, arranger, producer, musical director, composer and songwriter—is honored to have worked with a long list of talent, including Robin Williams, Billy Crystal, Phoebe Snow, Ben Vereen, Sheila Jordan, Michael Feinstein, Jane Manheit,

Cheryl Bentyne, Kristin Chenoweth, Vicki Sue Robinson, George Coleman, Randy Brecker, Sheldon Harnick, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Catherine Russell, Laurie Krauz, Heather MacRae, and Stephanie Pope, among others. He has composed and scored music for film, television, stage, artist recordings, and video games. Honors include the Bistro Award for Outstanding Musical Director, the Caribbean Gospel Music Award for Top Gospel Arranger, the MAC Award for Best Jazz Group, and—with Laurie Krauz—the Bistro Award for Outstanding Theme Show for *Tapestry Rewoven*. With Deborah Stone, Sean Harkness, and Tom Hubbard, Daryl also received the 2026 Bistro Award for Outstanding Collaboration for *String Theory*.



**REX BENINCASA (Drums)** has been a freelancing drummer/percussionist in New York since 1978. He has performed with Eurasia Consort, BaBan Chinese Music Society, Apollo's Fire, Long Island Baroque ensemble, Alba Consort, The Sebastians, and American Ballet Theatre. CDs

and/or movie soundtracks: Karen Mason, Andrea Marcovicci, Craig Rubano, Jamie deRoy, Stephanie Pope, Celia Berk, Wendy Scherl, Ann Kittredge, Renee

Katz, Foday Musa Suso, Philip Glass, *Sesame Street*, NFL Films, and others. Broadway appearances: *Fosse*, *Elaine Stritch at Liberty*, *The Full Monty*, *Flower Drum Song*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Hairspray*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Color Purple*, *Shrek*, *In the Heights*, *Billy Elliot*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Matown: The Musical*, and *Mrs. Doubtfire*. Rex likes all kinds of music. RexVB@aol.com



**RITT HENN (Bass)** is the 2025 MAC Award recipient for Ensemble Instrumentalist, having accompanied artists including Liz Callaway, Ann Hampton Callaway, Amanda McBroom, Michele Broumar, Jeff Harnar, Karen Mason, Karen Akers, and more. He and

his wife, Beth Falcone, recently presented their 10th annual *Beth & Ritt's Holiday Survival Kit* at Urban Stages and are currently releasing new recordings, with a full album due later this year. His original tune "Union Square" is streaming now. RittHenn.com • beacons.ai/bethandritt



**JONATHAN MERCADO (Production Stage Manager)** is an actor, musician, and freelance technician who's been working professionally in New York since 2014. This is his eighth year working with the Bistro Awards as Tech Designer and Production Stage Manager. He

joined the technical staff at the Metropolitan Room in 2015, earning a MAC Award Nomination for his work in 2016, and in subsequent years as well. Other work experience has included positions as technical manager and associate booking manager at Don't Tell Mama—and booking manager and special events director at the Laurie Beechman Theatre. Jonny received his training at the Chicago College of Performing Arts of Roosevelt University and enjoyed a decade of work at Chicago's Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret before relocating to NYC. He also serves as a member of the Technical Staff at The Players, and is the Director of Sacred Music at a Roman Catholic parish in Brooklyn where he is also organist and choirmaster.



**SIDNEY MYER (Announcer)** has been seen on screen in the six-time Emmy-winning Amazon Prime series *After Forever*, Seasons 1 & 2. He has entertained from Palm Springs to London and is a recipient of MAC, Bistro, Broadway World, Theater Pizzazz, Mabel Mercer Foundation's Cabaret Classic,

Mabel Mercer, and Paula Laurence Awards. Myer has been a cabaret booking manager for over four decades (Don't Tell Mama, Rose's Turn, Panache). Off-Broadway credits include *Grandma Sylvia's Funeral*, *Dressing Room*, and *Split Ends*. Other theatre: 25th Anniversary revival of *Irene*; Edinburgh Festival Fringe with *La Gran Scena Opera*; *Beauty and the Beast*, Theatre-by-the-Sea; *Times Square Angel* with Charles Busch. Film: 20th Century Fox's *Headin' for Broadway*. TV: Celebrity interviewer on cable's *Broadway Beat* and *Cabaret Beat*. Commercials: RCA Victor, New York Lotto. Radio: Regular on *The Joey Reynolds Show*.



**FRANK DAIN (Program and Promo Design)** has designed the Bistro Awards program since 2010. He has been the Editor of *Cabaret Scenes* magazine since 2013. He has provided designs for Kurt Peterson's James William Productions (*Proud Ladies*, *When Everything Was Possible*,

*Zero Hour*, *Captain Louis*), St. Luke's Theatre, Theatre at St. Clement's, and for many cabaret performers. Dain has performed at Carnegie Hall, Café Pierre, Waldorf-Astoria, Jazz at Kitano, Don't Tell Mama, Laurie Beechman Theatre, Metropolitan Room, Pangea, Chelsea Table + Stage, and Danny's Skylight Room. His newest CD, *I've Had a Love*, has garnered high praise. [frankdain.com](http://frankdain.com)

## AWARDS STAFF



**SHERRY EAKER (Producer)** began producing the Bistro Awards show in 1990 with "Bistro Bits" columnist Bob Harrington, who created the Awards in 1985. Eighty Eight's was chosen as the award's first live venue, and, after Bob's passing, the event moved on to the Ballroom, then re-

located to The Supper Club, before settling in at Gotham Comedy Club for a 19-year run. This year will mark the event's first year at Chelsea Table + Stage. Sherry had been producing the show during her long tenure as editor in chief of *Back Stage*, but since 2008 she has been producing it under the banner of SEE Theatrical Productions. Sherry is also the editor of *BistroAwards.com* and sends out a weekly newsletter with the site's latest posts.



**MARY LAHTI (Assistant Producer)** is happy to be back for her third year as the Bistro Awards' Associate Producer. She is a two-time MAC Award winner for her shows *Wouda, Coulda Shoulda* (2023) and *A Kid Again* (2014). She often volunteers

for cabaret and theatre community events, especially when they support special causes such as with Urban Stages' *Winter Rhythms*. As an actress, Mary performs in musical theatre (most recently as Miss Hannigan in *Annie*), stage plays, film, and TV, and she is a member of the senior dance team The Pacemakers. She loves to collaborate with her talented husband, Jim, write parodies, choreograph, and teach, and is an artist and a Creative Brainstorming coach. [www.marylauti.com](http://www.marylauti.com)



**MARK DUNDAS WOOD (Associate Producer)** is an arts/entertainment journalist and dramaturg. He began writing for *BistroAwards.com* in 2011 and has been an associate producer of the Bistro Awards show since 2022. Other writing credits include *American Theatre* magazine,

*Back Stage*, *The Clyde Fitch Report*, and *Prologue and Illuminations* (magazines of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival). Currently, he contributes work to the Talkin' Broadway website and the *Village Star-Revue* in addition to *BistroAwards.com*. As a dramaturg, Mark has worked with New Professional Theatre and the New York Musical Theatre Festival. He is literary manager for Broad Horizons Theatre Company.



**GERRY GEDDES (Director)**, critic for *BistroAwards.com*, has a five-decade cabaret career as an award-winning director, writer, teacher, performer, and lyricist. He conceived and directed the musical revues *Monday in the Dark* with George (Bistro and MAC Award winner), *Put on Your Saturday Suit—Words & Music* by Jimmy Webb, *Good Time City—The Songs of Leiber & Stoller*, and *Gerry Geddes & Company* (in residence at Pangea). He has directed singers André De Shields, Darius de Haas, Helen Baldassare, Lisa Viggiano, and others. Gerry has produced numerous award-winning CDs, and his lyrics have been performed and recorded here and in Europe. His workshop, *The Art of Vocal Performance*, is regularly offered to singers of all levels. His memoir of life in NYC from 1967 to 1995, *Didn't I Ever Tell You This?*, is available at [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com)



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# PASSPORT



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**Frank Dain**  
**Deborah Stone and Daryl Kojak**  
for their  
outstanding contributions  
to the world of song

And special thanks for  
Frank Dain's  
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*The Bistro is the oldest award of its kind in the industry. Our mission is to recognize, nurture, and educate cabaret, jazz, and comedy artists through our insightful reviews on [BistroAwards.com](http://BistroAwards.com) and with our annual awards show, now in its 41st year.*

As we go to press, we raise a toast to the following for helping us support what we do:

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Thanks to those who contributed generously to our gift bags. I am extremely grateful:

**Frank Dain, Jim Eigo**/Jazz Promo Services, **Chris Grasso, Judy Katz** and

**Sean Katz**/Katz PR, **Lydia Liebman**/Lydia Liebman Promotions

**Don Lucoff**/DL Media, **Roberta Lawrence**/DL Media and Soundcheck PR

**Susan Waldowski**/Songbook Ink + Jazz at the Ballroom

*(See page 21 for additional artists whose CDs are represented)*

Many thanks to **Stephanie Lewandowski** and **John O'Mahoney** of **Chelsea Table + Stage** and the **Sandbar Rooftop** for their warm welcome into their venues and accommodating our every need.

Special recognition to **Jonathan Mercado** for his technical knowledge and guidance, and for his keen ability to brighten up every room he enters.

For his creative artistry and skills, for his steadfast loyalty and encouragement over these past 16 years, and always for his great advice as a friend, a very special thank you to **Frank Dain**.

We are grateful to **Sidney Myer** for his willingness, year after year, to greet the audiences with his familiar "Good Evening" to kick off our show!

A huge thank-you to the evening's host, comedian-actor-writer **Jim David**, for his complete command of the stage and the audience's attention, and for providing me with lots of memorable laughs.

Assistant Producer **Mary Lahti**'s contributions to this show go beyond what I would ever expect. She is an invaluable source and is key to making sure that everything and everyone is on track.

Of course, much gratitude to Bistro Committee members **Gerry Geddes** and **Mark Dundas Wood** for their knowledge of and passion for live music, their writing skills, and their dedication to the Bistro Awards.

To the late **Bob Harrington**, who in 1985 first conceived the idea of honoring cabaret artists with a Bistro Award, and whose support of their hard work and efforts was recognized in his reviews and feature articles. I thank you for introducing me to this wonderful art form.

*And as always, I am eternally indebted to my Mom and Dad,  
**Lee and Ira Eaker**, who raised the curtain for me and set the bar—  
Always a song in their hearts.*



## THANK YOU

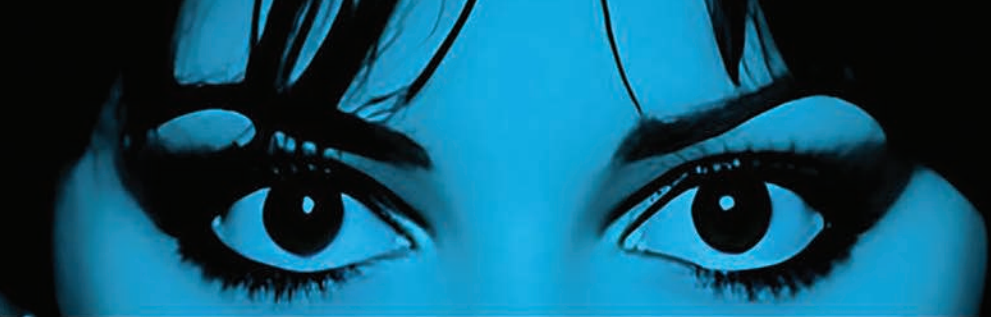
Sherry Eaker Gerry Geddes  
Mark Dundas Wood Lennie Watts  
Sidney Myer Tanya Moberly  
Betsyann Faiella Kelly Wohlford  
Claire-Frances Sullivan

and especially  
Kurt Peterson and Kathleen Landis

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