

# ANI DIFRANCO

## LIVE AT BABEVILLE PRESS RELEASE

**ani difranco releases her  
third concert dvd, *live at  
babeville*, filmed on the  
stage of her very own venue**

**DVD release date:  
April 1, 2008**

**For immediate release.**

For more information,  
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[www.righteousbabe.com/press/ani/babeville](http://www.righteousbabe.com/press/ani/babeville)

On September 11 and 12, 2007, singer/songwriter/guitarist Ani DiFranco played two sold-out shows before a hometown audience in Buffalo, New York. What made those nights so special wasn't just the music—because that's always special at an Ani show—but the fact that she was playing the inaugural shows in her very own venue, a downtown church once slated for demolition that has been beautifully restored as a state-of-the-art music hall and newly renamed "Babeville." Ani took the opportunity to fashion a two-night retrospective of sorts, performing songs from every stage of her fabled career in breathtaking new arrangements with her latest touring band; Allison Miller on drums, Todd Sickafoose on upright bass and Mike Dillon on vibes and percussion. The spirit of celebration was in the air, and the energy in the room—both onstage and in the audience—was extraordinary.

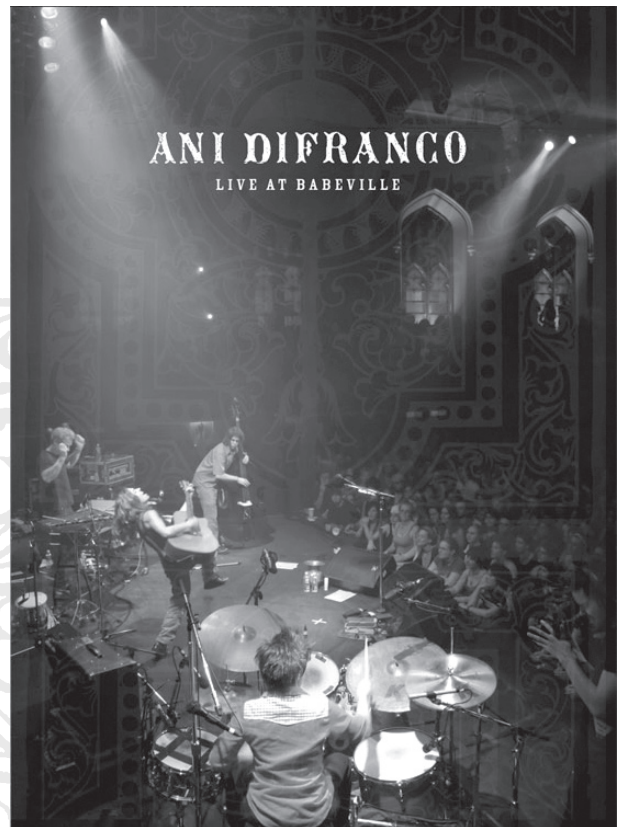
Six cameras were on hand to capture the excitement in high definition video and 5.1 surround sound, and now the highlights of the two shows are available on a single DVD featuring eighteen songs (two of which have not yet appeared on her studio albums), plus interview and sound check footage. The result is both a must-have memento for fans and an ideal intro to Ani at her finest—onstage, playing her guitar and singing with all the passion, intensity, and joy that have made her a legend.

For a closer look at Babeville, see [www.babevillebuffalo.com](http://www.babevillebuffalo.com).

This year Ani's tour schedule is picking up momentum after a couple of years of relative rest. After hitting the Southeast in March, Ani and the band head to the West Coast in April with new dates being added through the summer every week. On top of all the hours spent on the road, she still found time to get the band in the studio to work on her next studio album, expected this fall.

To learn more about Ani's music and other projects, visit [www.righteousbabe.com](http://www.righteousbabe.com).

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# ANI DIFRANCO

## LIVE AT BABEVILLE

### BIOGRAPHY



Since releasing her first recording in 1990, Ani DiFranco has established herself as one of the most influential and inspirational artists of the modern era. DiFranco's innovative guitar style, signature percussive fingerpicking, expressive vocals and incisive lyrics—along with a constitutional inability to be anything less than totally real—have earned her a loyal, dedicated fan base and ongoing critical acclaim. The empowering spirit of this one-of-a-kind singer/songwriter, guitarist and producer is evident in songs that tackle barbed political and sexual issues with uncommon insight and compassion. With DiFranco, what you see and hear is what you get—the act of making music is inseparable from the process of living her life.

It turns out that Ani is as dedicated to her community as she is to her art. For the last several years, she and her manager Scot Fisher have been renovating a long-neglected landmark building in their hometown of Buffalo, N.Y., saving it from the wrecking ball. The building called Babeville is now a state-of-the-art performance space and contemporary arts center, as well as the headquarters of Righteous Babe. “Changing the world becomes plausible if you just focus on your immediate surroundings; your home life, your relationships, your workplace, your community,” she once said; Babeville is a physical manifestation of that assertion.

Fans will soon be able to see the space when Righteous Babe Records releases Ani's new DVD, *Live at Babeville*. Six cameras were on hand to capture the excitement as Ani and her touring band (Todd Sickafoose on bass, Allison Miller on drums and Mike Dillon on vibes and percussion) played the inaugural performances in front of sold-out crowds in Buffalo. The DVD release caps off a very busy year for DiFranco. While taking time off at the beginning of 2007 following the birth of her daughter, she handpicked the songs for her first-ever studio career retrospective, *Canon*. Ani also worked in conjunction with Seven Stories Press, who published her first book of poetry, *Verses*, illustrated with her own original artwork. Both were released on September 11, the day of that inaugural show at Babeville. Quite a journey for a young woman who sold her first release from the trunk of her car.

Ani began her recording career in quintessential lo-fi/DIY fashion by pressing up 500 cassettes to sell at her shows; it was the first of a steady outpouring of artful and boldly personal recordings, marking her as perhaps the most prolific artist of her generation. Altogether, her 20 official albums have sold more than 4 million copies—and she's done it in classic troubadour fashion, one fan at a time, via word of mouth and sheer charisma, rather than through radio play or marketing campaigns.

As impressive as her recorded output may be, there's no substitute for a DiFranco live performance. As relevant and compelling today as the young firebrand was when she first burst on the scene, this self-described “little folksinger” continues to galvanize audiences, packing joints like Carnegie Hall and amphitheatres around the world, though she has the knack of making each venue she plays feel as cozy as a living room and as sweaty as a neighborhood dive.

Ani has been stunning and delighting listeners ever since she was a teenager in Buffalo, playing bars she wasn't old enough to legally enter, armed with her emotive guitar playing and soaring vocals that slide effortlessly from a whisper to a roar and back again. During her high school years she studied dance, began to paint and wrote poems (many of which later became song lyrics) before choosing music as her primary medium of expression. Right from the start, people identified with her deeply personal songs about the dynamics of romance, the politics of family life, the choices she watched her friends make and the state of things from her neighborhood to the planet as a whole. After just about every one of her funny, outspoken, intimate performances, she'd head off to the next gig in her battered VW, leaving behind a fresh batch of converts eager to spread the word to everyone they knew.

(Bio Continues ----->)



# ANI DIFRANCO

## LIVE AT BABEVILLE BIOGRAPHY (CONT')

The early 1990s brought a temporary relocation to New York and classes in poetry and politics at the New School, but her real education still happened on the road. Ani was a live performer first and foremost, but that didn't stop her from putting out albums any time she'd gathered up enough new material to warrant one. Realizing that the mainstream record business had nothing to offer that she couldn't provide herself, Ani went ahead and created Righteous Babe Records right in her hometown, turning down one offer after another since making that characteristically bold move. Over the next decade, she performed solo, with one or two other musicians, and with a full band, then returned to the more stripped-down sound of one woman and one guitar for a while. At the same time, she began to learn her way around the recording studio, gradually developing her own unique means to convey the spontaneity, intensity and wit of her live concerts on disc.

Righteous Babe is home to all of DiFranco's albums, along with recordings from an eclectic handpicked roster of artists whose music is as unclassifiable and unpredictable as her own. Ani has collaborated with Prince, Cyndi Lauper, Dar Williams, the Twilight Singers, Jeff Klein, Bruce Cockburn, John Gorka and Maceo Parker on their albums; she has produced recordings by Hamell on Trial, Dan Bern, Utah Phillips, Janis Ian, Michael Meldrum and others; she's performed orchestral versions of her music with the Buffalo Philharmonic and had her songs covered by the likes of Dave Matthews and Chuck D. Along the way, she has inspired countless other musicians to rewrite the rules of the recording industry by striving for self-sufficiency and refusing to allow art to be subsumed by commerce.

Small wonder, then, that Ani made *CMJ*'s list of the 25 most influential artists of the last 25 years, taking her place alongside U2, Nirvana, the Pixies and Radiohead. And in 2006, she became the first musician to be honored with the National Organization of Women's "Woman of Courage Award," presented each year to an individual who has set herself apart by her contributions to the feminist movement.

"Overlap," performed as an encore at Babeville, contains what might be interpreted as the covenant between Ani and each member of her legion:

*i build each one of my songs  
out of glass  
so you can see me inside them  
i suppose  
or you could just leave the image of me  
in the background, i guess  
and watch your own reflection  
superimposed*



# ANI DIFRANCO

## LIVE AT BABEVILLE

### PRESS



Buffalo, NY

### Ani DiFranco shows a softer side

By Jeff Miers

September 12, 2007

...There was much to celebrate Tuesday. The near completion of this new concert hall; the first area performance of DiFranco's brilliant new band; the fact that we were all doing something on Sept. 11 other than sitting around mourning the world that has emerged over the past six years. All of this leant an air of electricity to the event, rooted in DiFranco's music of hope — hope for the city, the country, even the world if you were in a particularly open mood. But more than anything, this concert was about the broadening of DiFranco's scope as an artist. It was clear that this show would be different from the beginning, when DiFranco kicked into "Napoleon," and shortly thereafter, this new ensemble — bassist Todd Sickafoose, drummer Allison Miller and vibraphonist Mike Dillon — fell in behind her. Often in the past, DiFranco's performances — as moving, visceral and eminently musical as they are — have been like a clenched fist. Passion, righteous indignation, guitar playing that grabs the listener and head-butts them to attention. But here, immediately, was some joy. It was in the interaction between musicians, in the way they stroked the groove subtly, in the way she moved from purr to growl to heartrending open throat and back.

This was underscored soon after, when the first of the

evening's brand-new songs got its debut. Over a gorgeously consonant chord progression, DiFranco revealed, "I got myself a new mantra/It's, 'Don't forget to have a good time.'" This might not seem like such a big deal, but for DiFranco, it is one. "Swim" offered the new band a chance to shine, and it did — particularly Dillon, who took bassist Sickafoose's funky, walking bass line as an opportunity to indulge in some nice chords and melodic movement, which subtly served the tune's roiling rhythm. In fact, every musician on the stage deserves some serious props — starting with DiFranco's trademark of staccato-slap rhythms and deliciously finger-picked open voicings, and proceeding right through Miller's funk-inflected beats and striking cymbal work, Sickafoose's organic pocketexploiting upright playing, and Dillon's vibes, which he manipulated with effect pedals at his feet, thereby adding a layer of near-avant garde noise to the proceedings. Throughout it all, the sound in the church was pristine. "Paradigm" found DiFranco tracing the roots of her activist beliefs atop one of her most moving compositions, and was dedicated to her mother, who she said was "downstairs watching the baby." "Lag Time" offered a spotlight for the manner in which DiFranco marries her wholly unique guitar phrasing to her vocal melodies, something she does so well. The best lines of the evening? Aside from DiFranco's hilarious rap on the birth of her daughter, they came from "Coming Up," one of her most moving songs.

"But I love this city, this state/this country is too large and whoever's in charge up there/had better take the elevator down and put more than change in our cup/or else we are coming up." Yeah. Right on.

## Performing Songwriter

Be Heard

### The Indie Power List

By Bill DeMain

December 2007

From labels to websites to festivals and everything in between, here are the top 20 movers and shakers in the world of independent music.

#### #6 Ani DiFranco

Artist and owner of Righteous Babe Records

In 1989, an 18-year-old DiFranco started her own label with \$50 and plenty of moxie. She then hit the road, establishing the tour-tour-tour ethic that has defined what it takes to be a successful indie artist. Along the way, she's retained ownership of all aspects of her career, from masters to

publishing, while sometimes poking fun at major labels with songs like "The Million You Never Made."

Of her status as indie icon, she said, "I'm just a folksinger, not an entrepreneur. My hope is that my music and poetry will be enjoyable and meaningful to someone, somewhere, not that I maximize my profit margins. I mourn the commodification and homogenization of music by the music industry, and I fear the manufacture of consent by the corporately controlled media. The last thing I want to do is feed the machine."



www.righteousbabe.com

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### PRESS

#### POP MATTERS

### Abandoned church becomes a place to worship the arts

by Chuck Myers

McClatchy-Tribune News Service (MCT)  
October 3, 2007

BUFFALO, N.Y. - The former Delaware Asbury Methodist Church has never looked so good - or conveyed clear, crisp sound so well.

That's no small achievement, considering the 19th century Gothic Revival-style church and Buffalo landmark narrowly averted a date with the wrecking ball a little more than a decade ago.

As the fate of the abandoned church hung in the balance during the mid-1990s, folk-rock musician and Buffalo native Ani DiFranco and her longtime manager and president of Righteous Babe Records, Scot Fisher, stepped forward to rescue the dilapidated structure, and transform it into a remarkable venue for the performing and visual arts.

Today, the church, since re-dubbed Babeville, serves as the new base for DiFranco's independent label, Righteous Babe, and an exhibition gallery for Buffalo's Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center.

"Initially when we walked in the building, I don't know what we thought," DiFranco says. "If we had understood how large this project was going to become, and how many people and organizations it would involve, and the kind of money and crazy strategy and negotiating it was going to take to realize it, I don't think we would have touched it.

"But we just thought `Yeah, it's a sturdy building with a couple of leaks in the roof, and we'll move the offices in there and have shows in here and it would be simple.' And the next thing you know the north tower is twisted and has to be taken down and reassembled, and the main stained glass is rotted and needs to be taken down and remade. It was just like everything snowballed."

Designed by architect William Selkirk in 1871, and constructed in 1876, the church sits in the heart of Buffalo at the corner of Delaware Avenue and Tupper Street. After a gradual decline in congregation, Delaware Asbury Methodist Church closed its doors in the early 1980s, and soon fell into disrepair. In 1995, DiFranco and Fisher initiated a grassroots effort to prevent the edifice's destruction, and then give it new life with a major overhaul.

A \$10 million renovation transformed the sanctuary into a bright and airy space, replaced the building's grand stained glass windows and added a new glass-covered staircase to the backside exterior. A new bar area also went in below the church, while a new energy-efficient geothermal cooling and heating system was installed.

DiFranco notes that, while she envisioned the historic church as a new arts and events facility, the renovation never would have materialized without the enthusiasm and dedication of Fisher.

"He's been important to the process of my life for 20 years now or something," DiFranco says. "Righteous Babe records wouldn't exist without him. I have these grand ideas, but not the skills to realize them. He was the one that translated them along the way. ... It's his passion, I think too, that drove this and others projects that we've done in Buffalo."

Although houses of worship typically are designed to carry a pastor's sermon

to the back of the room, changing the sanctuary into a multi-purpose venue required a more versatile sound system.

"We hired all kind of consultants and we hung baffling that you could see around the place, and we have the in-house PA that was designed specifically for the room," DiFranco says. "We're going to tweak it a little further, but we're about 90 percent there in terms of having a room you can rock in. But still, of course, it has the character of the space - that beautiful verve without being mush."

Babeville has hosted a wide range of events since it went live in early 2006, including community fundraisers, chorus shows, a visit by former President Bill Clinton and DiFranco's first concert performances at the location in September. In addition, DiFranco and Fisher are exploring further creative uses for the main performance room in the future.

"One of the things that we have thought about so far, that sort of maybe will be a phase-three plan for this facility, is to have an audio-visual production facility here so that people can come and make videos, have a live concert film or video, or recording in this room when we get the acoustics dialed in," DiFranco says.

On a more symbolic level, DiFranco feels Babeville and the effort to bring the site back to life provides a strong reminder of how civic preservation can reconnect a community with its heritage and cultural identity.

"There's just so many levels at which it is essential that we're preservationists in a sense, because the character of a city - that is our wealth. It enriches our lives. It makes people want to be here, stay here and come from somewhere else. ... If you destroy the architecture, we lose a sense of our own soul and our connections to history."

