

ANI DIFRANCO

b. September 23, 1970

GRAMMY-WINNING SINGER

“We so often fall in that trap of trying to convince somebody they’re wrong, when really it’s just go find the good people doing the good work and help them out.”

Angela Maria “Ani” DiFranco is a Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter, musician and progressive social activist. Her unique musical style and lyrics combine elements of folk, alternative rock, funk and other influences.

Born in Buffalo, New York, DiFranco was playing guitar and singing Beatles covers at local venues by the age of 9. At 14 she was writing and performing her own songs at bars and coffee houses. She graduated from the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts at 16 and became an emancipated minor.

At the age of 19, DiFranco started her own record label, Righteous Babe Records. She released her self-titled first album—and more than 20 subsequent studio albums—on the label. DiFranco openly identified as bisexual in the early '90s.

During that decade, she toured nationally and internationally. She addressed her love for men and women in several of her songs and became a pioneering voice for the LGBTQ community.

As DiFranco’s fame and visibility increased, she appeared on music television programs such as MTV and VH1 and in cover stories for Spin, Ms. magazine and other popular publications. In 1995 she performed as part of a concert at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Her cover of “Wishin’ and Hopin’” appeared in the opening credits of the 1997 film “My Best Friend’s Wedding.”

In 1999 Righteous Babe Records began releasing albums by other artists. The label also created the Righteous Babe Foundation through which DiFranco has supported grassroots initiatives to advance abortion rights, LGBT rights and other issues.

DiFranco has performed at benefit concerts and spoken at feminist rallies. She headlined the LEAF and Clearwater festivals in support of environmental protection. In 2004, along with celebrities like Whoopi Goldberg and Margaret Cho, she led the March for Women’s Lives on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. For her 2017 “Rise Up” concert tour, she partnered with Emily’s List, a leading Democratic organization aimed at electing pro-choice female politicians.

DiFranco has been nominated for nine Grammy Awards. Her 12th album, “Evolve,” earned the 2004 Grammy for Best Recording Package. In 2006 the National Organization for Women honored DiFranco with the “Woman of Courage Award.” In 2009 she received the prestigious Woody Guthrie Award as a consistent advocate for social change.

DiFranco married her sound engineer, Andrew Gilchrist, in 1998 and divorced five years later. She married Mike Napolitano in 2009. They have two children.

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