

Valerie Simpson, Roberta Flack & Deniece Williams Among Those To Be Inducted Into The Women Songwriters Hall Of Fame

Valerie Simpson, Roberta Flack, Deniece Williams, Tawatha Agee and Klymaxx will all be members of the [Women Songwriters Hall Of Fame](#) inaugural class this year. Jeri Keever “Bunny” Hull, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Veryl Howard and two more women are also part of the list of inductees. The WSHOF’s mission is to “Honor women whose work represents the heritage and legacy of the world’s music songbook.” The induction ceremony will take place in Washington, D.C. at the National Museum Of Women In The Arts on June 25th. Tickets are on sale to attend the event in person as well as virtually and can be purchased [here](#).

DJ Cassidy Presents Pass The Mic The Soul Train Edition

DJ Cassidy presented his Pass The Mic show in conjunction with the Soul Train Awards last night. This edition paid tribute to some of his musical heroes from the '80s. A section of some of the era’s greatest artists joined him remotely to sing along with his DJing of their song. Jody Watley, Deniece Williams, Morris Day and Jerome Benton of the Time, Shannon, George Clinton, Evelyn “Champagne” King, Alicia Myers, Chaka Khan,

Lisa Lisa, Melvin Riley of Ready For The World, Shelia E., Larry Blackmon and Willie Morris of Cameo and El DeBarge all participated and sang one of their classic songs.Â

Norman Brown & Deniece Williams Revisit Her Classic Single Free



Guitarist and singer Norman Brown has linked with Deniece Williams to revisit her 1976 hit “Free.” Their new version is from Brown’s forthcoming album *The Highest Act Of Love*. The contemporary jazz star who started his career in the ’90s after being discovered by Norman Connors is ready for the release of his 11th studio album. Brown’s guitar adds another layer of tranquility to “Free” and it is a welcome surprise to hear Williams in 2019. Brown’s jazz influence from Wes Montgomery was his starting point in music but he never fell for the jazz purist arguments. His music has had elements of pop, R&B and blues. Brown says,Â

“My blending and crossing of styles happens organically by allowing the content to reveal its elements. There are only two kinds of music -Â ‘good and bad.’”

Brown’s *The Highest Act Of Love* comes out February 22nd.Â

Throwback: Deniece Williams-Free



[youtube id="0lLrn6AVV2s"] Deniece Williams was a session singer for Stevie Wonder's Wonderlove, Minnie Riperton and Syreeta Wright before she scored a solo deal with Columbia in 1975. She originally sent most of the songs from her debut album to Earth, Wind & Fire for Philip Bailey. Surprisingly, she ended up recording the songs with EW&F with Maurice White and frequent collaborator Charles Stepney producing the bubbling soul of *This Is Niecy*. The band's orchestrated jazz funk harmoniously fit with Williams's incredible range and sublime soprano. "Free" was her breakout song and it demonstrated the fierce control of her higher octaves within a whisper. "Free" and "It's Important To Me" helmed *This Is Niecy*'s commercial success. Williams's prime period was at its beginning and she would continue to assert the nimbleness of her vocals until the end of the '80s with signature songs and outstanding albums. In 2017, Williams launched her [YouTube](#) channel with three new series to teach viewers vocal techniques, share stories about her career and give inspirational messages.