

ARTS & CULTURE

New festival spotlights Memphis women in music

By [Jada Ojii](#), Daily Memphian

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It was after Liz Lane (right) interviewed MizStefani on her “Modern Girl” radio show, which shares “music by women across genre and era, for everybody (and every body),” that the two began working to make the festival a reality. (Mark Weber/The Daily Memphian)

A new festival will shine a light on women in the local music scene.

The inaugural Women in Memphis Music (WiMM) Festival will take place Saturday, June 24, at Midtown’s Hi-Tone Cafe.

The lineup includes several local favorites, including seasoned jazz songstress Joyce Cobb, rapper Glockianna, and the Klitz Sisters, Memphis' pioneering punk band that formed in the late 1970s.

Tina Turner belonged to the world, but West Tennessee claims a little piece

“We have covered every genre practically in this festival,” said festival founder MizStefani. “So somebody that comes to this festival is going to walk away discovering something that they didn't even know that was here.”

After making the move to Memphis from New York in 2020, the rock, Americana and soul singer said she couldn't help but notice that women weren't getting the recognition they deserved in the music industry.

“And it was crazy to me because I knew there were so many female musicians. I was meeting them everywhere,” she said. “And I just couldn't figure out why they didn't have a more prominent place in the monthly listings, the venues across the city.”

In response, she created Women in Memphis Music along with “co-conspirators” Alice Hasen, a local violinist, and Rachel Maxann, a rock-folk singer-songwriter.

WiMM put together its first showcase of musicians at Minglewood Hall's B-Side venue in March 2022.



Founders of the Women in Memphis Music Festival MizStefani (left) and Liz Lane pose June 15 at the Hi-Tone.
(Mark Weber/The Daily Memphian)

But after connecting with Liz Lane, a WEVL 89.9 FM radio host, in December 2022, they decided to turn MizStefani's idea into a full festival with 10 acts.

It was after Lane interviewed MizStefani on her "Modern Girl" radio show, which shares "music by women across genre and era, for everybody (and every body)," that the two began working to make the festival a reality.

"She sat down for a great interview in December, told me all about WiMM," Lane said. "And then she said, 'You know, one of my dreams has been to put a festival together.' And I said, 'Let's do it. We came together, it's kismet. Let's make it happen.'"

Starting in January 2022, the pair reached out to women they thought would be a great fit for the festival.

Raneem Imam, a local singer-songwriter and producer was one such artist. A graduate of Rhodes College's music program, Imam prides herself on a genre-bending style of pop and R&B.

"I love the fact that this is promoting women and these songwriters are getting a spotlight and getting to try out new songs in front of an audience," Imam said about attending a WiMM live showcase in 2022.

After connecting with MizStefani shortly after, she performed at WiMM's showcase in January.

This month's festival will give audiences a chance to discover even more music from women in the Memphis scene.



This festival will highlight women in the Memphis music scene. (Courtesy Women in Memphis Music)

general Memphis area."

That not only includes music, but also Memphis-based comedy acts between the music sets to provide something "a little different," MizStefani said.

"Bands like Oakwalker, they're relatively new, but they're just an amazing Americana group that just, they're just on fire in the best way possible," Lane said. "Glockianna, a 16-year-old rapper, I mean, I wish I had that kind of hutzpah when I was 16."

"Especially here in Memphis, we are just so lucky with all the talent that surrounds us," Lane continued. "And so, for me, it's really important to share that with other people, and that other people know all the amazing music and work that's being done in the city or just in the

Stand-up comedians set for the event include Katrina Coleman, Kate Lucas and Jane Haze.

Festival tickets are \$30; a portion of proceeds benefit scholarships for Stax Music Academy students. Doors open at 5 p.m. with performances going from 6 p.m. to midnight. [Click here for more information.](#)

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