

SunSentinel

# THE WEEKENDER



Daniel Franzese stars in "Italian Mom Loves You," which will play Boca Black Box Center for the Arts Dec. 4-11. COURTESY

## 'Italian Mom' viral video now a one-man show

By Rod Stafford Hagwood  
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Here's the math: Daniel Franzese has a one-man show in which he plays one woman — a version of his mom — that is really a composite of several women.

The common denominator in his play "Italian Mom Loves You" is that they are all Italian matriarchs. The mama homage runs Dec. 4-11 at the Boca Black Box Center for the Arts.

Franzese is probably best-known for his scene-stealing turns in the hit movie "Mean Girls," the comedy-drama series "Looking" on HBO and, earlier this year, an eye-popping stint on the second season of "RuPaul's Secret Celebrity Drag Race" on VH1.

Partially based on Franzese's own mother, Denise, who lives in Tamarac (his father, Ralph "R. J." Franzese, is a lounge singer based in Wellington), the character in "Italian Mom Loves You" is

filled out with other maternal figures he has known over the years. He names the character Antoinette, borrowing the moniker of a friend's late mom.

"This character is an amalgamation of all these women," Franzese says. "So there are some traits ... that aren't my mom's. So I don't want everyone to think that I'm just playing my mom. Although there are things, you know, that these women all do. Like I think there was one in one of the sketches where I swear on my son's eyes. I've heard women say that but my mom would never personally say that."

In the show, it is the day of Nana's surprise birthday party and everyone is coming over. While trying to put together a proper Italian festa, Antoinette is also dealing with her ex-hubby, drama with her kids and spying on her neighbor.

"She's also juggling a real estate transaction, hoping she gets a condo in Boca," Franzese adds. "So the fact that Boca is mentioned like heaven

and talked about so much in the play, the obvious next step for this before I took it ... anywhere else was to come home and let people in Boca to get a taste of mama's meatballs."

In addition to movies such as "Bully" (partly filmed in Fort Lauderdale), Franzese has appeared in TV series such as "Recovery Road," "Conviction," "SWAT," "CSI," "The Comeback," "Burn Notice" and "Party Down."

His Off-Broadway theater credits include "Dog Sees God," "Jersey Shoresical: A Frickin Rock Opera!" (which he co-wrote) and another one-man show titled "I Never Really Made the Kinda Money to Become a Mess." He was also in the first national tour of "Tony & Tina's Wedding."

But it all started in Broward County. "So I grew up in Sunrise. I was born in New York, but I'll always count Fort Lauderdale ... as my home. [We] moved to Sunrise when I was 7. And I lived there until I was 17. And

then I went to college at the Florida School of the Arts." He also did regional theater, from the late Jan McArt's Royal Palm Dinner Theatre in Boca Raton to the Miami Theater Center in Miami Shores.

After completing the filming for "Bully," but before the movie was released, Franzese worked at the Gateway Movie Theatre in Fort Lauderdale.

"I was selling popcorn," he recalls "And then I got the movie and it premiered at the Gateway Cinema. Can you imagine? I was selling popcorn at the theater and two years later starring in the movie they're showing — very weird, wild. That is my first movie. My first play, my first everything was South Florida. I did everything here. I learned everything there and that's why I'm so connected to South Florida because it's a big small town."

Here's more about the production and the man behind the woman in excerpts

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## Audacy Beach Festival updates

What to know about tickets, transportation, set times for this weekend

By Ben Crandell  
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Audacy Beach Festival 2022 takes over Fort Lauderdale Beach Park on Saturday and Sunday, a blitz of alt-rock guitar led by Grammy nominees Muse on Saturday and the Sunday headliner, rap conversation piece Machine Gun Kelly.

Other highlights include the White Stripes' Jack White, local emo gods Dashboard Confessional, Jimmy Eat World, Andrew McMahon in the Wilderness, The Struts and The 1975.

Performing at 8:40 p.m. Saturday, theatrical British



rock trio Muse was among the Grammy nominees announced Nov. 15, cited in the Best Metal Performance category for the song "Kill or be Killed," from their August release, "Will of the People." Formerly known as Riptide Music Festival, Audacy Beach Festival is hosted by the same people who first organized Riptide in 2016. Entercom Communications, the country's second largest radio company, recently changed its name to Audacy.

Here is what you need to know about Audacy Music Festival tickets, transportation, set times and more.

### Getting in

Single-day advance tickets cost \$85+ per day and \$125+ for two-day passes at AudacyBeachFestival.com. VIP tickets cost \$250+ for one day, \$325+ for two-day accommodations. New this year is the two-day pass for VVIPs, including access to an

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## New pizza, Vegan Block Party, John Mulaney at iTHINK, 'Real Housewives' in Boca Raton



Ben Crandell  
Go Guide

As you may know, this is Art Basel Weekend in Miami Beach and environs, where many of the world's most important gallerists and compelling new artists will gather, inevitably engulfed by a mosh pit of borderline celebrities,

luxury branders, crypto mobsters, opportunists and grifters who put the con in contemporary art. But we love them all.

Who doesn't remember Maurizio Cattelan's \$120,000 banana duct-taped to a wall at Art Basel in 2019? Anonymous Miami-based performance artist OONA remembers: She aims to out-buzz the banana with her performance-art piece "Milk to Mint," which purportedly will allow a select few members of the audience to milk her. While she takes a selfie, which she'll sell, and the

milk is collected in a cup, available to the highest bidder.

To paraphrase Livan Hernandez, "I love you, Art Basel!"

To return to our regularly scheduled programming, here are some other things to do in South Florida this weekend:

### Thursday

**New pizza:** This weekend might require a return to Elisabetta's, where acclaimed Chef Lisabet Summa has added new items across her brunch, lunch and



New Jersey Spinach Pie is a new menu item at Elisabetta's restaurants in Delray Beach and West Palm Beach. ELISABETTA'S

dinner menus at the local-fave restaurant, with downtown locations in Delray Beach and West Palm Beach. Among the offerings are two new pizzas: The

lunch menu now includes New Jersey Spinach Pie, topped with a mound of charred curly

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# Handel's MESSIAH

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Sat., Dec. 3 | 7:30pm | The Parker, Fort Lauderdale

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## Go Guide

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spinach on a base of ricotta, fior di latte and spinach, seasoned with roasted garlic cloves and pecorino (\$19.50). Brunch has a new egg, sausage and bacon pizza, with a San Marzano sauce, fiore di latte, sausage, bacon, eggs and basil (\$18.50). Brunch is available 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Visit [Elisabetas.com](http://Elisabetas.com).

## Friday

**Friday laughs:** Comedian Christina P. (also known as Christina Pazzitzky, who sometimes admits to being Tom Segura's wife) has four shows Friday-Saturday at the Dania Improv, where she'll share the wit exhibited on her critically lauded Netflix special "Mom Genes" and the hit podcast "Your Mom's House." Tickets cost \$30+ at [DaniaImprov.com](http://DaniaImprov.com).

**Friday concerts:** Palm Beach County-based Van Halen tribute band Completely Unchained will be joined by Aerosmith tribute Jaded for an all-ages show on Friday at Revolution Live in downtown Fort Lauderdale, with doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets start at \$6.50+ as part of a Live Nation two-for-one holiday promotion at [LiveNation.com](http://LiveNation.com). ... Country star Brett Young is at Hard Rock Live in Hollywood on Friday at 8 p.m. Tickets start at \$45+ at [MyHRL.com](http://MyHRL.com). ... Blues-guitar ace Tab Benoit plays The Parker in Fort Lauderdale at 8 p.m. Friday, with fiery Fort Lauderdale guitarist Joel DaSilva opening. Tickets start at \$34.50+ at [ParkerPlayhouse.com](http://ParkerPlayhouse.com).

## Saturday

**Beach music:** Audacy Beach Festival returns to Fort Lauderdale Beach Park on Saturday and Sunday, with its best acts falling in that late-Gen X, early-millennial wheelhouse, including Jack White, The 1975, Jimmy Eat World and Muse. The



Gene Henrikson, left, and Jake Miller lead Van Halen tribute band Completely Unchained, returning to Revolution Live on Friday. JENNIFER LETT/SUN SENTINEL

most rewarding set for locals ought to come at 4 p.m. Sunday when Dashboard Confessional takes the stage. Before Chris Carrabba and his band pulled on the heartstrings of emo kids the world over, the Boca Raton singer was a local rock 'n' roll deity. Carrabba returns with music from "All the Truth That I Can Tell," the first new Dashboard album in three years. For the latest on festival tickets, transportation and set times, visit [SunSentinel.com/music](http://SunSentinel.com/music).

**Saturday laughs:** Emmy-winning ex "SNL" wise guy John Mulaney hit Hard Rock Live in May on his "From Scratch" tour, a vividly candid dissection of his personal failures, drug abuse and tabloid-fueled divorce. Rendered in layers of dark and light, moments cringy and perhaps all too familiar, it was a brilliant, hilarious tour de force of storytelling. See for yourself 7 p.m. Saturday

when Mulaney returns to South Florida for a show at iTHINK Financial Amphitheatre in West Palm Beach. Tickets start at \$35+ at [LiveNation.com](http://LiveNation.com).

**Vegan meet-up:** A Winter Festival edition of Vegan Block Party will set up at downtown Fort Lauderdale's Esplanade Park noon-6 p.m. Saturday, with more than 70 vendors and food trucks, kids activities, giveaways. Admission is \$10, kids 10 and younger free. Visit [VeganBlockParty.com](http://VeganBlockParty.com).

**Shop till you stop:** Amanda Weiner's long-running Indie Craft Bazaar brings the work of more than 80 local creatives to the indoor-outdoor Revolution Live complex in downtown Fort Lauderdale from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday. You'll also find food, drink and DIY activities at the all-ages gathering. Admission is free. Visit [Facebook.com/indiecraftbazaar](http://Facebook.com/indiecraftbazaar).

**Boozy brunchy shopping:** At their recently opened Sunny Side Village Store in Fort Lauderdale's under-discovered North Beach Village, the gals of Sunny Side Up Market will host the Holiday Boozy Brunch Market block party on Breakers Avenue from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. The event will include yoga and mimosas, food and drink, live music and more than two dozen vendors. Visit [Instagram.com/sunnysidevillagestore](http://Instagram.com/sunnysidevillagestore).

**Soda Stereo on tap:** Fort Lauderdale-based trio Fortuna (singer-guitarist Hernan Fortuna, bassist Vincent Cuevas and drummer Wilmer Hurtado) will re-create the hits of Argentine icons Soda Stereo and other rock en español stars at 7 p.m. Saturday at Fort Lauderdale's Holy Mackerel Small Batch Beers, just east of Five Points in Wilton Manors. Tickets cost \$20. Visit [Fortunarock.com](http://Fortunarock.com).

**'Time Warp' time:** This weekend brings the holiday version of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" at 11:45 p.m. Saturday at Paradigm Cinemas Gateway (formerly the Classic Gateway) in Fort Lauderdale. As always, the shadowcast screening will be hosted by The Faithful Handymen, a troupe whose DNA stretches back over more than 40 years of South Florida performances. They want to see your best ugly sweater, and whatever else you want to show off. Tickets cost \$7 at [ParadigmCinemas.com](http://ParadigmCinemas.com).

**Shrekno music:** Following in the footsteps of the recent SpongeBob Rave, the nationally touring, costumes-encouraged Shrek Rave dance party hits Revolution Live in Fort Lauderdale 8 p.m. Saturday. Tickets start at \$12.50 each as part of Live Nation's two-for-one holiday promotion. Visit [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com).

## Sunday

**News from Lake Wobegon:** PBS icon Garrison Keillor brings his Keillor & Company tour to The Parker in downtown Fort Lauderdale at 8 p.m. Sunday. Joined by vocalist Prudence Johnson and pianist Dan Chouinard, featured performers on his long-running public radio hit "A Prairie Home Companion," Keillor will share songs, poetry and updates from the little town where "all the women are strong, all the men are good looking, and all the children are above average." Tickets start at \$35+ at [ParkerPlayhouse.com](http://ParkerPlayhouse.com).

**Sunday blues:** Fort Lauderdale vocalist Kat Riggins & Her Blues Revival, fresh from dates in Europe, will perform her first local show since her return at 7 p.m. Sunday at the Arts Garage in downtown Delray Beach. Tickets start at \$30+. Visit [ArtsGarage.org](http://ArtsGarage.org).

## Looking ahead

**Holiday dish:** The Studio at Mizner Park in Boca Raton will celebrate its grand-opening weekend on Dec. 17 with "Holidays with the Housewives," featuring Bravo TV's "Real Housewives of..." stars Ramona Singer (New York City), Margaret Joseph (New Jersey) and Marysol Patton (Miami). The gabfest will include "Housewives" chatter and interactive holiday games with randomly selected audience members. Tickets cost \$69+, or \$99+ to include a pre-show VIP cocktail reception with the trio. The Studio at Mizner Park is the new name for the recently revitalized and rebranded Mizner Park Cultural Center. Visit [TheStudioAtMiznerPark.com](http://TheStudioAtMiznerPark.com).

Staff writer Ben Crandell can be reached at [bcrandell@sunsentinel.com](mailto:bcrandell@sunsentinel.com). Follow on Instagram @ [BenCrandell](https://www.instagram.com/BenCrandell) and Twitter @ [BenCrandell](https://twitter.com/BenCrandell).

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 at 6pm and 8:30pm  
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 Tickets start at \$39

YOUNG ARTISTS CLASSICAL SERIES  
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