

Ralph McDaniels Honored With Trailblazer Award by Manhattan Neighborhood Network

*Artists, Actors and Producers Salute
Legendary Director for His Contributions
to Television Music History*

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, March 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) honored legendary producer Ralph McDaniels for his contributions to entertainment and community media on Wednesday, March 22 in its new multimedia facility in midtown. His award-winning show, Video Music Box (VMB) has aired on public access television for over the past four decades and has helped to launch the careers of countless artists in Hip Hop and R&B.



Left to right: Herb Boyd, Damian Benders, Rachel Watanabe-Batton, Dan Coughlin, Ralph McDaniels, Saemus Rodriguez, Emily Miller, Jim Fenhagen, David Aviles. Photo by Rowena Husbands.

Guests were thrilled to visit the new facility during an evening of celebration at the media center's new midtown facility. MNN recently launched a 23,651 square feet multimedia space at 509 West 38th Street with the help of Mayor Eric Adams, NYCEDC, Flushing Bank and other key stakeholders. The organization showcased two new floors dedicated to its current and future emerging media programming.

“

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Ralph McDaniels

In 1982, McDaniels approached a local TV station with an idea to host the music-video show. The station was not entirely enthusiastic about his idea at first, because the show concept did not exist. The station took a chance and

after a year, viewership really began to grow. It was not long thereafter that the 60-minute program began airing six days a week, quickly becoming a leader in its time slot in New York City,

second only to The Oprah Winfrey Show.

Since then, VMB has launched countless careers of many artists in music and television. Most notably, it was instrumental in producing videos for such greats as Public Enemy, the Notorious B.I.G, Big Daddy Kane, Nas, SWV and Wu-Tang Clan.

Today, VMBs library consists of over 20,000 hours of historic video footage and is consistently accessed by other major programmers such as CNN, MTV, BET, TV One and VH1 whenever and wherever music stories are told. His content is seen on all social networks around the world.

McDaniels was joined by Grammy-winning artists such as DJ Wiz of Kid N Play and Jeff Redd, whose careers were originally impacted by the invaluable exposure received on VMB throughout New York City during the late 80s and early 90s. To this date, McDaniels still airs their music videos during his weekly programming and they all have continued to work with each other throughout the decades.

Actor Malik Yoba showed his support as a recording artist who also benefited from VMB, which famously highlighted some of the music played during his mega hit television show New York Undercover which ran on Fox Television from 1994 to 1999.

McDaniels happily recounted his early days as a renegade who was determined to become the first host of a concept such as VMB. He was moved by the honor but subsequently took the time to share the

motivations behind his life's work. "It's about the next generation of Ralph McDaniels and others that are here, that have done so amazingly over the years. You never know who's going to be the next person to break the doors down and do other things. These spaces take us to many



Left to right: Dan Coughlin, Kavery Kaul, Ralph McDaniels, Zenaïda Mendez and Damian Benders. Photo by Rowena Husbands.



Left to Right: Saemus Rodriguez, Jeff Redd, Dan Coughlin, Ralph McDaniels, Malik Yoba and Damian Benders. Photo by Rowena Husbands

different places. My first film that I worked on was Juice. That's only from working in places like this. And from being around people that do this type of stuff. I worked on documentary directed by Nas and it popped up on Showtime and it was amazing. The year before that I produced a film for a girl whose first video I shot. A 16-year-old girl named Roxanne Shante, a film for Netflix. You know, these are the things that come your way when you stick to the plan."

MNN has long served as a multimedia learning, production, and distribution hub that promotes creative expression, independent voices and community engagement. The center partnered with Kostow Greenwood Architects to build out the 23,651 square feet located in Henry Hall, a mixed-use building, which is also home to one of the city's latest dining hot spots, Legacy Records Restaurant.

The public access channel was located for decades on West 59th Street, which is slated to be high-quality transitional housing for working women experiencing homelessness. This exchange with the Department of Homeless Services and Project Renewal proved to be another clever example of how this current mayoral administration is finding ways of creating affordable housing.

MNN's President and CEO Dan Coughlin was grateful for the event turnout and the opportunity to showcase the space with artists and other television industry professionals. He is hopeful that the new facility will continue to assist in the creation future media pioneers such as McDaniels. He knows that the affordable and accessible programming makes it easier for talented New Yorkers to have a true shot at success. "Every time a new filmmaker, producer or director shows up in our facility with the desire to create something, anything, we welcome them with open arms. MNN has been a home for decades to some of the best and brightest and for that we are truly grateful," says Coughlin. "We can't wait to see what the future brings."

MNN specializes in Manhattan public access television, offers state-of-the art equipment open to all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, faiths and religions, abilities, and regardless of socio-economic status.

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