

PROVIDED PHOTO BY ROBERT GERTLER Singer-songwriter Danielle Ponder plays the Toulouse Theatre on May 13.

Soul antidote

Singer finds solace in music

BY JAKE CLAPP **Gambit Weekly**

Danielle Ponder has had some major moments in the last few years since leaving her job at the Rochester, New York, public defender's office to pursue music full time. The soulful songwriter and powerhouse vocalist released her debut full-length album, played "Late Night with Seth Meyers" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live," and toured with Marcus Mumford on his solo venture.

One of the biggest moments, though: Appearing on "General Hospital." Ponder made her acting debut on the long-running soap in April, performing her epic groove 'Someone Like You.'

"That's where I was like, 'Oh man, I'm really on TV, TV.' This isn't 'Tune in, I'm on Jimmy Kimmel.' I'm entering other people's worlds," Ponder says from the car on her way to New Orleans.

Ponder last week joined Karl Denson's Tiny Universe at the Orpheum for a tribute to Amy Winehouse, and she returns this week for a headlining show on Saturday, May 13, at the Toulouse Theatre.

The "General Hospital" appearance put Ponder in front of a wider audience — for good and bad. Ponder has been playing music for more than two decades, fronting the soul band Black August and R&B group The Tomorrow People, and is a beloved part of the Rochester music community.

She's seen her share of comments worthy of cocking an eyebrow over, but a larger platform has come with more

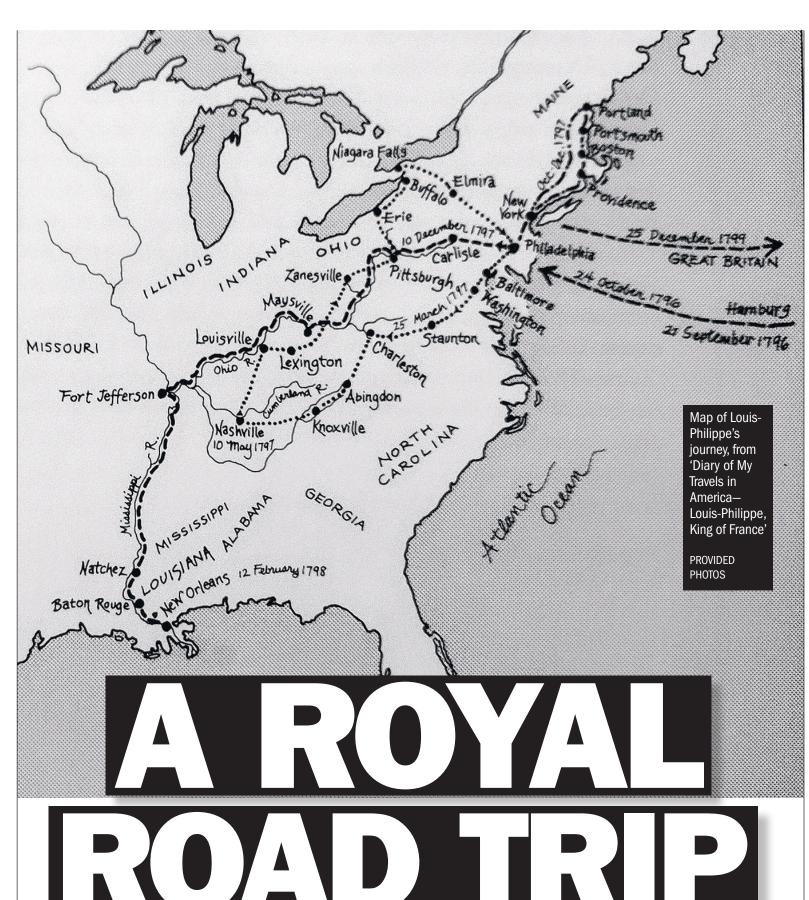
"I come from a very supportive city, and I still am getting 90% supportive feedback, but you just open up the flood work for all types of people to start commenting on your content," she says. "That's been something I've been like, 'Huh, OK this is a little bit of an adjustment."

Ponder grew up in Rochester as the sixth of seven kids, and her father is a pastor who sang and played piano. Ponder didn't perform music in church, but she also learned to play the piano and sing at home and found early influence in gospel singer Shirley Caesar. As she grew older, she took in a wide range of music, from Big Mama Thornton, Aretha Franklin and Nina Simone to Portishead and East Coast hip-hop.

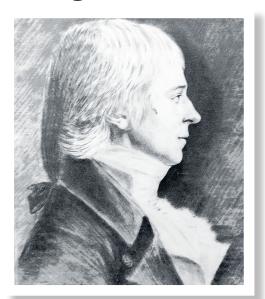
When she was 16, Ponder joined her cousins in a family band, playing guitar.

But that same year, her brother was sentenced to a 20-year prison term, an event that sent her down a path of criminal justice advocacy. Ponder earned her law degree, and she has been a tireless activist in Rochester — a

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1790s journey of 'Mr. Orleans' and his brothers brought France's last king to Spanish New Orleans



Louis-Philippe in 1795, two years after he was forced to flee France. He eventually made his way to America, where he met up with his two brothers and went on an exploratory trip.

BY RICHARD CAMPANELLA

Contributing writer

The French royal namesakes of our city and state — Philippe II, the Duke of Orleans, and King Louis XV — never set foot in what would become New Orleans or Louisiana.

But a great-grandson of Philippe II — Louis-Philippe, who was born in 1773 and became king of the French in 1830 — did both, during a circuitous tour in the late

His travels bring to mind those of other French aristocrats who toured and assessed the new American nation in this era. But Louis-Phillipe's visit began not as an inquiry but an exile, and in retrospect, he was biding his time as much as being inquisitive.

As a royal, Louis-Phillipe found himself in a precarious position at the outbreak of the French Revo-



lution. Historian Henry Steele Commager wrote that the young prince "had tried, briefly, to accommodate himself to the Revolution," joining the Jacobins and serving as a lieutenant general.

But he stridently opposed the Republic's decision to execute King Louis XVI in 1793, a policy that eventually sent his own father to the guillotine, at which point the title of Duke of Orleans held two generations earlier by the namesake of New Orleans passed to Louis-Phillipe.

Unsure of his own fate, Louis-Phillipe fled to Switzerland, Germany, Denmark and Norway.

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Affirming picture book celebrates gender diversity

BookTrib.com (TNS)

Juno Dawson — the bestselling author known for her groundbreaking YA title "This Book is Gay" — is back with her picture book debut, "You Need to Chill!" (Sourcebooks Jabberwocky) on sale May 2 and geared for ages 4

In "You Need to Chill!," no one can find Bill. Is he lost in the park? Has he been eaten by a shark? Is he on vacation in Barbados or Bra-

As Bill's sister shares, "The truth

is that my brother Bill is now my sister Lily ... She's still clever and funny and kind and cool. She's one in a mil, and if people have a problem, we shout YOU NEED TO

CHILL!" "The discourse around trans children was getting poisonous and weaponized politically," said Juno, remembering when she first decided to write the book. "And it felt like with a lot of these arguments, the best response is to chill! Meet a trans person!"

According to the Cooperative Children's Book Center, just half

of one percent (0.5%) of children's and YA books had a trans protagonist in 2019.

Of the 1,648 books tracked in Pen America's banned book index, 674 titles (41%) explicitly address LG-BTQIA+ themes/feature primary or secondary LGBTQIA+ characters. This includes the 145 titles -9% — that include transgender

According to the Washington Post, "more legislation has been filed to restrict the lives of trans people so far in 2022 than at any

other point in the nation's history,

with trans youth being the most frequent target of lawmakers." In 2022 alone, 155 new bills have been

Juno's ultimate hope for "You Need to Chill!" is that it finds its way to the kids who need it, including trans children and allies.

"I think in the next 10 years, there won't be many classrooms in America where there isn't a gender-diverse child, and how do you manage that? You manage it like the child in the book does: with kindness and humor and inclusion and with playfulness."

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 9, the 129th day of 2023. There are 236 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history: On May 9, 1994, South Africa's newly elected parliament chose Nelson Mandela to be the country's first Black president.

On this date:

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson, acting on a joint congressional resolution, signed a proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

In 1945, with World War II in Europe at an end, Soviet forces liberated Czechoslovakia from Nazi occupation. U.S. officials announced that a midnight entertainment curfew was being lifted immediately.

In 1951, the U.S. conducted its first thermonuclear experiment as part of Operation Greenhouse by detonating a 225-kiloton device on Enewetak Atoll in the Pacific nicknamed "George."

In 1962, scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology succeeded in reflecting a laser beam off the surface of the

In 1974, the House Judiciary Committee opened public hearings on whether to recommend the impeachment of President Richard Nixon. (The committee ended up adopting three articles of impeachment against the president, who resigned before the full House took up any of

In 1980, 35 people were killed when a freighter rammed the Sunshine Skyway Bridge over Tampa Bay in Florida, causing a 1,400-foot section of the southbound span to collapse.

In 2019, Pope Francis issued a groundbreaking new church law requiring all Catholic priests and nuns to report clergy sexual abuse and cover-ups by their superiors to church authorities.

Ten years ago: Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who had irked Washington with his frequent criticism of U.S. military operations in his country, said his government was ready to let the U.S. have nine bases across Afghanistan after the withdrawal of most foreign forces in 2014. A 72-foot-long, high-tech catamaran sailboat capsized in San Francisco Bay while practicing for the America's Cup races, killing English Olympic gold medalist Andrew "Bart" Simpson.

Five years ago: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo arrived in North Korea to finalize plans for a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Three Americans who had spent more than a vear in prison in North Korea were freed during his visit and left North Korea aboard Pompeo's plane. Five officers and one prisoner were killed in a riot at a police detention center near Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. Authorities alleged the facility was being targeted by Islamic militants

One year ago: Russian President Vladimir Putin marked his country's biggest patriotic holiday, Victory Day, without a major new battlefield success in Ukraine to boast of, as the war ground on through its 11th week with the Kremlin's forces making little or no progress in their offensive. The Washington Post won the Pulitzer Prize in public service journalism for its coverage of the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Ray Scott, who helped launch professional bass angling while popularizing the conservation practice of catching and releasing fish, died at

Today's birthdays: Actorwriter Alan Bennett is 89. Actor and politician Glenda Jackson is 87. Producer-director James L. Brooks is 86. Musician Sonny Curtis (Buddy Holly and the Crickets) is 86. Singer Tommy Roe is 81. Singer-musician Richie Furay (Buffalo Springfield and Poco) is 79. Actor Candice Bergen is 77. Pop singer Clint Holmes is 77. Actor Anthony Higgins is 76. Singer Billy Joel is 74. Blues singer-musician Bob Margolin is 74. Rock singer-musician Tom Petersson (Cheap Trick) is 73. Actor Alley Mills is 72. Actor Amy Hill is 70. Actor Wendy Crewson is 67. Actor John Corbett is 62. Singer Dave Gahan (Depeche Mode) is 61. Actor Sonja Sohn is 59. Rapper Ghostface Killah is 53. Actor Chris Diamantopoulos is 48. R&B singer Tamia is 48. Actor Daniel Franzese is 45. Rock singer Pierre Bouvier (Simple Plan) is 44. Actor Rosario Dawson is 44. Rock singer Andrew

W.K. is 44.

Vice may be dealbreaker

Dear Annie: My dad died of lung cancer a few years ago, and because of that, I abhor smoking in all its forms. The problem is I

just discovered my boyfriend, who is a nurse, has been secretly vaping behind my back. I was shocked and upset not so much that he did it (which is bad enough) but that he went through great pains to hide it from me. Plus, he works in the medical

Annie Lane DEAR ANNIE

field and should know better! He promised to discontinue

when I confronted him and that he did it only because of the immense pressure he is under. Recently, I found newly bought vaping pens in his apartment. The smoking and lying have devastated me. Do I break up with him? - Betrayed

Dear Betrayed: It sounds like your boyfriend is addicted and

ashamed. He clearly knows better, but he is having trouble doing better. He might also feel uncomfortable asking for your help, given your disdain for smoking and your father's health history. Instead of abandoning him and getting angry, help him find support groups for his addiction and healthier coping mechanisms for his stress.

Dear Annie: My serious boyfriend of three years ended things with me very unexpectedly last week. He told me it's him and wasn't me, but that's such a cliché. When I pushed him for an answer, he told me he feels like our spark has just died. He also explained he has not been feeling like himself lately and has decided to go to therapy and heal himself from his childhood trauma, as he believes this is the root cause of his issues with love and relationships.

I am aware of some of the childhood trauma he's been through and have supported him through

all of the times he's confided in me. However, out of the blue, he said he now needs to be alone to do this because he needs to focus on himself 100%. I feel blindsided and have been crying nonstop.

I miss him and truly feel like he's the love of my life. All I want to do is reach out to him again. Do you have any advice on how to handle this situation? - Broken and Blindsided

Dear Broken: My heart goes out to you. After three years with this man, it must feel like you've had the rug ripped out from under you.

It's a painful realization, but the person you're meant to be with would never treat you this way. He's right; it is him. It will take time to heal, but I urge you to move forward and not contact him again. Imagine if you were married with children and he did this.

Send questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

Dust builds up in interior of dryer

Dear Heloise: My Whirlpool dryer belt recently broke. Since it's old and older appliances tend to last longer than newer models, I decided to have it fixed. I did some research and discovered it's very easy to open it up and get to the guts of the dryer. Unbelievably, there was a lot of lint and dust built up inside! Prior to repair, I was able to vacuum the entire

I would encourage everyone to look into their dryers and see if they need vacuuming. - Bev, Spokane, Washington

Saving on lotion

Dear Heloise: The tube my hand lotion comes in is about 7 inches long, so when it gets near the end, it's impossible to squeeze

the lotion from the tube. So, I cut it approximately 3

inches from the top, so I end up having two parts of the tube. There's an abundance of lotion inside that I'd previously been unable to reach; however, when the tube's

been cut in half, I'm able to get all of it out

Hints from

Heloise

When I'm through using it, I then just put one half back on top of the other half. That will preserve the leftover lotion and keep it nice and usable. I estimate there are about 20 applications of lotion left inside the tube that I'm then able to use. - Barbara K. Hoch, San Antonio

Reusing pillowcases

Dear Heloise: When I read your suggestions recently about reusing pillowcases, another use close to home came to mind. My wife has wreaths for every season/ holiday period. She hangs the wreaths on the wall on the front porch. I am going to suggest to her that if she decides a pillowcase is no longer suitable for one's head, she can use the pillowcase to store the wreaths.

The only wreath that would not fit a pillowcase is the very large Christmas wreath we have. We use a 30-gallon trash bag for that. Best regards and smiles. - Tim

Davis, Kettering, Ohio

Email Heloise@heloise.com.

SOUL

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city with a deep history of activism as the home of Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass and Emma Goldman.

Over the years, Ponder's music career has led her to tour Europe and opened for George Clinton and The Roots.

But it wasn't until 2018 that she decided to take the leap into pursuing music full-time.

Last year, Ponder released her debut full-length solo album, "Some of Us are Brave," which takes its name from a Black feminist text, "All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Men, But Some of Us are Brave."

The eight-track album plays like an encapsulation of Ponder's heart, weaving in psychedelic soul, alternative R&B, trip-hop beats and exhilarating moments of release. Similarly, Ponder is singing from her heart, sharing intimate feelings about romance, heartbreak and racial injustice.

"I like to say that I'm talking about the things that have personally impacted me, that have brought me pain. That is what songwriters write about," Ponder savs.

"The interesting thing to me is that writing about race is always separate, as something different, because white artists don't write about it.

"But Black people, I'm experiencing pain from racism, just as I'm experiencing pain from heartbreak, from anything else in my life. And my antidote to that pain has always been mu-

Danielle Ponder plays at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 13, at Toulouse Theatre. Tickets are \$22 via toulousetheatre.com. Find Ponder's music at danielleponder.com.

Email Jake Clapp at jclapp@ gambitweekly.com

ROYAL

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He eventually joined up with his two brothers, the 22-year-old Duke of Montpensier and the 17-year-old Count of Beaujolais, and made plans to flee to Amer-

Bearing Danish passports and pockets full of cash, the three brothers made their way individually across the Atlantic and "met in Philadelphia," wrote Commanger, "in time to witness the inauguration of John Adams to the presidency" in March

Romance and curiosity

Louis-Phillipe reveled in the excitement of what was then the political and cultural center of the United States, hobnobbing with elites and dabbling in l'amour with a banker's daughter. A souring of that liaison led Louise-Phillipe to trade romance for "romantic curiosity" and go see the country.

Having splurged a thousand dollars on horses and tack, the three young princes - without a kingdom, but with a valet donned buckskin breeches and departed on the 1790s version of the American road trip. "But in their saddlebags," noted historian Morris Bishop in an American Heritage article, "they carried white satin suits with lace

Off galloped the threesome, to places like Baltimore; Wilmington, Deleware; and the nation's new capital of Washington, D.C., under construction at the time. ("I fear that its architecture will appear heavy when the scaffolding is removed," wrote Louis-Phillipe of the White House; "the front entrance seems to me ridiculously small.")

After visiting Georgetown and learning of its residents' jealous view of the rising new capitol, the three princes headed down the "Potowamack" (Potomac) River to pay their regards to former President George Washington.

It was there at Mount Vernon that Louis-Phillipe expressed his disdain for slavery, seeing "about 400 blacks scattered among the different farms" belonging to the father of the American nation.

As for the former president, the courtly Virginian welcomed the trois frères and, upon hearing their interest in exploration, traced out a suggested itinerary on a map. "Years later," wrote Bishop, "King Louis Philippe liked to impress American visitors by unfolding his map and pointing to the red line drawn by the hand of the great Washing-

Plucky people, bad coffee

The route took the Frenchmen over the Montagnes Bleues the Blue Ridge Mountains where settlers were fewer, forests prevailed over fields, and the western frontier beckoned.

While they readily used their pedigree to gain access to better accommodations, the brothers mostly stayed at rustic inns and embraced ordinary Americans, who called them "Mr. Orleans," "Mr. Montpensier" and "Mr. Beaujolais."

Like other visiting French elites, Louis-Phillipe came to admire Americans for their snirit and pluck, though he did not hesitate to critique. He recoiled at frontier fare, which, while served with hospitality, typically ran along the lines of "fried fatback and cornbread" accompanied by "coffee everywhere, but bad, very weak."

Through Knoxville and Maryville, Tennessee, they rode, past the Smoky Mountains and through Native territory, where Louis-Phillipe eagerly documented details of Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw and Chickasaw cultures.

On to Kentucky

In May 1797, the brothers veered westward to Nashville and north to Bardstown in Kentucky, where it is said that, many years later, Louis-Philippe gifted the town's Catholic Church with

paintings and a clock still inside. Alas, that is where Louis-Philippe's diary ends, subsequent volumes having been lost. But we can continue the voyage courtesy of "Mr. Montepensier," the middle brother, who later recounted the next leg and sketched a number of scenes.

After leaving Bardstown, the brothers "relaxed for several days in Pittsbourg," made their way to Niagara Falls, "cascade[ing] from a prodigious height," and proceeded throughout New England.

But while in Boston, they happened upon alarming news: their mother, the Duchesse of Orleans, long viewed suspiciously on account of her kin, had herself gotten deported from France to Spain.

The brothers resolved to join her, "but there was a difficulty," wrote Bishop. "England and Spain were at war, and communications between America and Spain were cut off. The princes saw only one possibility — to make their way to New Orleans, then held by the Spanish, and embark on a Spanish blockaderunner.'

Meeting a young Marigny

In December, the trio made their way to Pittsburgh, hired a keelboat and sailed down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. After dodging snags, shoals, bandits, ice and frigid temperatures, they docked at New Orleans on Feb. 17, 1798

The city's Creoles, who tended to be outspoken supporters of all things French in spite of their Spanish governance, welcomed the exiled Bourbons with open arms. The Marigny family, epitome of the Creole elite, regaled the princes at their plantation mansion at what is now the foot of Elysian Fields Avenue, and pressed a loan upon the brother to aid their quest to restore their

According to the historian Commager, it was Bernard Marigny who advanced the loan, though he was only 12 at the time. Later writers have viewed this regal encounter as having transformed the youth into the lordly bonyivant we remember today, founder

of the Faubourg Marigny. According to another proud French Creole, Charles Gayarré, the three brothers also paid a visit to the plantation of Gayarré's famed grandfather, Etienne de Boré, known for his 1795 experiments to granulate Louisiana sugar cane juice.

"In the beginning of 1798," wrote Gavarré, "the Boré plantation was visited by three illustrious strangers, the Duke of Orleans and his two brothers, the Count of Beaujolais and the Duke of Montpensier, of the royal house of France, who, driven into exile after the death of their father on the scaffold, were striking examples of those remarkable vicissitudes of fortune. ... Little did (Etienne) de Boré dream that the day would come when three princes of the blood would be his guests on the bank of the Missis-

sippi." The guests would have landed at what is now Henry Clay Avenue off Tchoupitoulas Street, where Children's Hospital now stands, and proceeded on to Boré's house farther up Henry Clay, near present-day Magazine Street.

The succor they received in New Orleans buoyed the Bourbon brothers as they departed for Havana, where according to Commager, "they received a splendid welcome" for sharing "the same blood as Philip V," the former Bourbon king of Spain.

Viewed with suspicion

Spanish authorities, however. viewed them nervously and ordered them expelled from Cuba. Another exile ensued, this one more harrowing than romantic,

and after hopscotching around the Atlantic basin, they ended up in England in 1800.

Life's vicissitudes only intensified. Montpensier and Beaujolais both died young of tuberculosis, while Louis-Phillipe managed to stay healthy and pay off his debts (including to Marigny, in 1813). He married his way back into a regal position in Sicily, which enabled him to return to France during the Bourbon Restoration.

The July Revolution of 1830 set the stage for Louis-Philippe to ascend to the throne, becoming King Louis-Philippe I of France — a remarkable redemption for a man who once slept three in a bed at a Tennessee tavern, and had to relieve himself out a window for want of a chamber pot.

King Louis-Philippe's reign was hardly illustrious, but he at least eschewed the sort of ostentation that breeds resentment. He long remembered his American supporters, among them Marigny, who, according to the Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana (1892), "was handsomely received and entertained" by the king in Paris in 1830. "On his return to New Orleans," they noted, Marigny "repeated many of the jokes, witticisms and conundrums which occurred at the royal board.'

A road trip remembered

As for King Louis-Phillipe I, "he gave France eighteen years of peace and prosperity," opined Bishop, "but in the end his people wearied of peace and prosperity," and during the 1848 Revolution, insurgents drove him into one final exile, in England, where he died in 1850.

France's last king had his share of faults, but he partly credited his many attributes to his long-ago American road trip. "My three vears' residence in America," he wrote, "have had a great influence on my political opinions and on my judgment of the course of human affairs.

His journals were discovered in a London bank safe in 1955. translated to English by Stephen Becker, edited by Commager, and published in 1977 under the title "Diary of My Travels in America: Louis-Philippe, King of France, 1830-1848.

Richard Campanella, a geographer with the Tulane School of Architecture, is the author of "Draining New Orleans; "The West Bank of Greater New Orleans,' "Bienville's Dilemma," and "Bourbon Street: A History." Campanella may be reached at http://richcampanella.com, rcampane@tulane.edu. or @nolacampanella on Twitter.