

# 4 teen bands in 'win-win' battle before panel of pros

By Ilana Goldstein

The rafters of the former church that is now home to Purpl will be rocking with the sound of music tomorrow (June 13 at 8 p.m.), when the fourth annual Battle of the Teen Bands showcases four select student groups from across Westchester County. These bands are in the running to win a free recording session in Purpl's studio with a professional audio engineer.

Sarah Silbert Hinawi, founder and director of Purpl, started the competition when Purpl opened. "Not everybody's potential lies where their passion is, especially when it comes to music," she said, explaining her intent. With the battle of the bands, she added, "You can help match potential and passion. There are so many creative professionals in the Rivertowns that can support the creative energy here."

This year, about 10 groups submitted three samples of original music to the panel of judges, who chose the four bands that will perform. During the concert, they will be heard by the same panel of judges and receive constructive criticism. The winner will have the opportunity to record with Purpl co-founder and experienced producer Adel Hinawi, who is also Sarah's husband.

This year's top four groups are Annie DiRusso, Not Your Spaceman, Saya Santaquilani, and The First Law. DiRusso is from Croton-on-Hudson, Not Your Spaceman and The First Law are based out of Dobbs Ferry, and Saya Santaquilani hails from Scarsdale. Jack Cat-tabiani, a junior at Dobbs Ferry High

School and percussionist for Not Your Spaceman, said, "We're really excited for Saturday because we want a chance to get our stuff out for an audience not entirely comprised of friends. Also, we've wanted to record something for quite some time and this was actually the perfect opportunity?"

Lee Dannay of Ardsley, who has worked at Sony Music and Warner/Chappell Music and is currently president of GoodWorks Music and the consulting music producer for the ninth season of "America's Got Talent," will judge the competition for her second year. She said the event is a rare opportunity because it allows teenagers to "perform in front of people, but to also have industry-related critiques. Everyone has different backgrounds and for young artists trying to figure how to go forward in a career, this feedback could be really helpful."

The other two judges are Steve Addabbo and Barbara Prisament. Addabbo, a Grammy-nominated producer, musician, songwriter, and audio engineer with more than 40 years in the music industry, owns Shelter Island Sound. This year will be the Hastings resident's third as a judge for Battle of the Teen Bands. Prisament, who formerly worked at Chrysalis Records in marketing, at Capitol Music Groups as label director, and at Elektra Records in marketing, currently co-organizes Hastings' annual Take Me to the River Festival. She also blogs for the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts and owns the music licensing company One Stop Sync.

## Bands

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Prisament, a longtime Hastings resident, is also the Village's first Downtown Advocate, charged with promoting a vibrant economic and social scene in Hastings.

Dannay enjoys the competition and said that the fun part "is just watching." She recalled that "Last year I was so impressed with the caliber of musicianship. Everyone put on a great show. The evening is great, the audience, friends, and family members. The energy is fantastic. Everybody comes away a winner. My goal is always constructive criticism, so I think everyone wins."

Prisament, a member of the panel since the event's inception, said her favorite aspect of the program is that "you can't specifically prepare for it. Certainly your experience feeds the judges' ability to respond, but it requires you to be completely in the moment."

Purpl, originally called The Purple Crayon, opened in 2011 when Hinawi took over the management of the Saul Silbert Charitable Trust, her grandfather's fund for arts education. She "wanted to find a way to bring passionate ideas about education and help people take ownership of their passions, and create programs that would foster that in teens and adults," she said. "It's been a really meaningful journey helping all sorts of people — building community around music."

Prisament firmly believes that "Even though it's a competition, counting yourself in and having fun, to me, is the most important thing of all."

*Tickets for tomorrow's event can be purchased at the door, 52 Main St., Hastings, or online at [www.purpl.org/battle-of-the-teen-bands](http://www.purpl.org/battle-of-the-teen-bands). Admission is \$8 for students up to 18 years old and \$12 for adults.*

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