

# A man and his music

Montclair musician  
**Daniel McBride**  
aka Dalien or 13 Hands  
explores the healing  
power of music

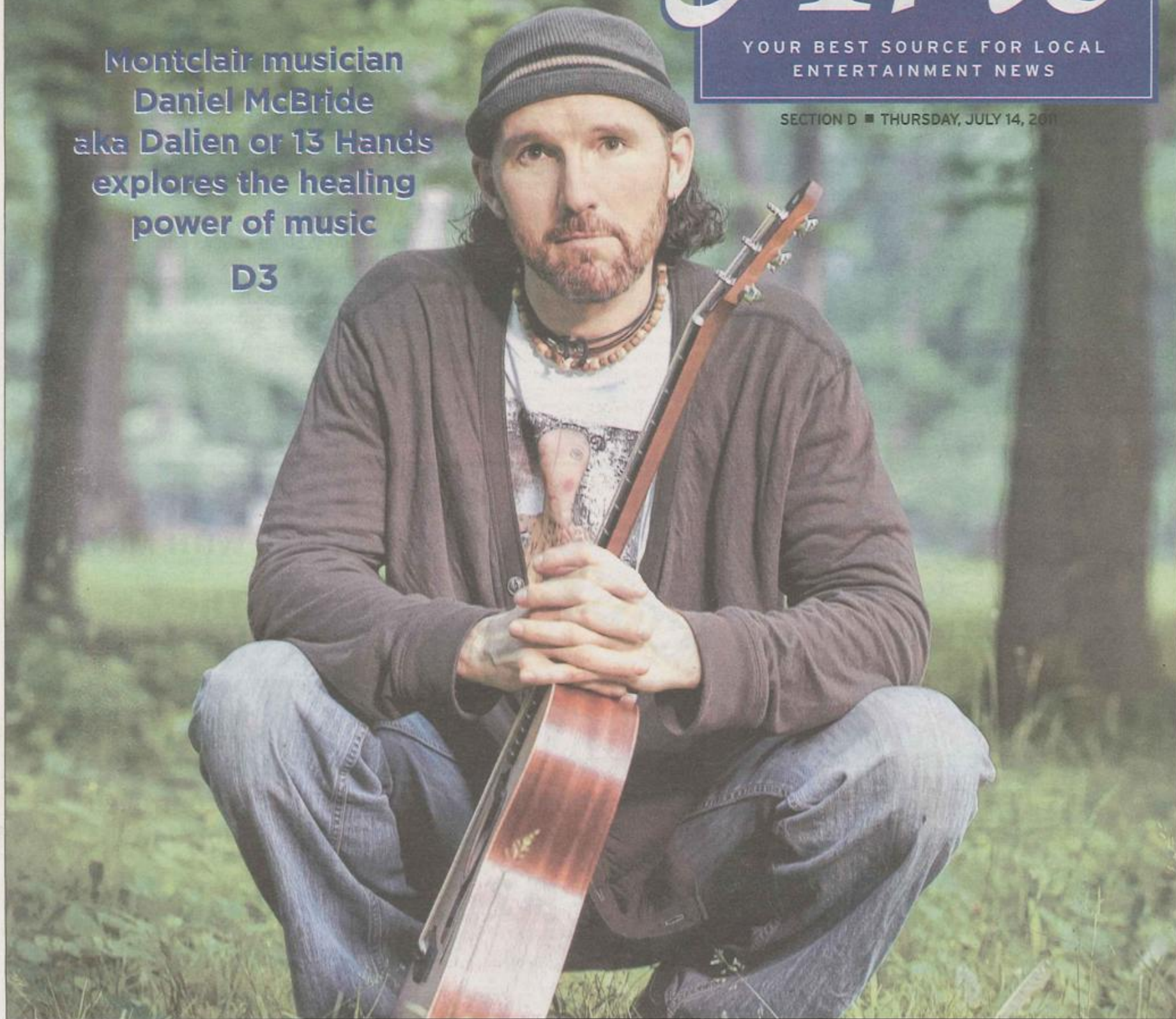
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# Arts

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# Dalien weaves a healing thread throughout his music

BY JOAN FINN  
OF THE MONTCLAIR TIMES

Daniel McBride is a man with a mission – a mission to explore the healing powers of music to help others.

Professionally known as Dalien or 13 Hands, he is a man of many talents – a Grammy-nominated musician, a teacher of yoga, a health and personal development provider, a post-traumatic stress disorder specialist, a sound healer, and even a sprout farmer. He is also a performer who entertains at local cafés, restaurants, yoga centers and community events.

Weaving together a life that involves many different aspects of music, healing, yoga, education and social service may sound overwhelming, but Dalien manages to balance it all. He gives credit to his mom for having him take clarinet lessons back in the third grade, then piano in the fourth, and evolving toward the guitar in the seventh grade.

“That was the spark, the musical spark that never let go of me,” he told *The Times*. “I was a quiet kid, introspective, shy and was always hearing melodies in my head. Music was the most pivotal outlet and doorway to my self-development. In seventh grade, I was able to negotiate my way out of giving a book report and sing the very first song I wrote instead. That’s when I knew my mission was clear – and by the way, I got an A.”

Fast forward decades later and Dalien finds himself playing more than 20 instruments, ranging from guitar, bass, drums, piano, and harmonica to various Eastern instruments such as the harmonium, tabla, hand percussion instruments, crystal bowls, native flutes, zither, gongs and other offshoots that he uses for both musical performances and the healing applications of sound.

“Every thought, message and impulse going on in our brain resembles what I call a ‘neuro-lymbic symphony orchestra,’ of detectable wavelength and frequency,” Dalien pointed out. “That’s why we respond so powerfully to sound and music.”

He noted that certain sounds and frequencies can be used in a focused way to bring about a calm, relaxed parasympathetic nervous system response that trains us to breathe more deeply, and reprograms the way the mind and body react to stress – just as yoga, shamanism and certain martial arts meditation practices do. “All these methods have the

## Go and Hear

Montclair musician and Grammy nominee Daniel McBride (aka Dalien or 13 Hands) will perform on Saturday, July 23, from 6:30 to 10 p.m., at the Garden State Yoga Center in Bloomfield. He will take center stage on Wednesday, Aug. 25, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., at Trumpets Jazz Club, 6 Depot Square.

On Saturday, Aug. 6, and Sunday, Aug. 7, Dalien will lead a two-day workshop on crystal bowl meditation training at the Starseed Center for Yoga Healing, 215 Glenridge Ave. On Friday, Oct. 21, he will be the opening act for singer-songwriter Shawn Mullins, at the Outpost in the Burbs.

Dalien’s latest EP, “The Legend of Pepper Mary,” scheduled to be released on Aug. 1, will be available digitally at his website ([www.13hands.com](http://www.13hands.com)), and on iTunes, and via a download card available at Events Now. To receive his newsletter, call his office at 13 Hands/NomadYoga at 973-783-9642, or visit his website at [www.13hands.com](http://www.13hands.com).

potential to bring awareness to disarm and release negative issues, inner pain and past hurt, all while opening you up to a sense of calm, newfound trust and self-awareness.”

The name Dalien came about when he misspelled his name by mixing up the “N” and the “L” in Daniel which became Dalien. “I thought it sounded sort of cool,” he said. “It had a ‘Bono’ edge to it, that suited me as a musician. So I adopted it.”

The name 13 Hands originates from a Malaysian form of martial arts. It focuses on the positions of how the hand is held in a movement or strike. It is believed that these hand and finger positions transmit energy – a positive energy force that he applies in the practice of yoga.

Any given week, you can find Dalien (or 13 Hands) teaching yoga, providing therapeutic sound exercises and healing concerts at



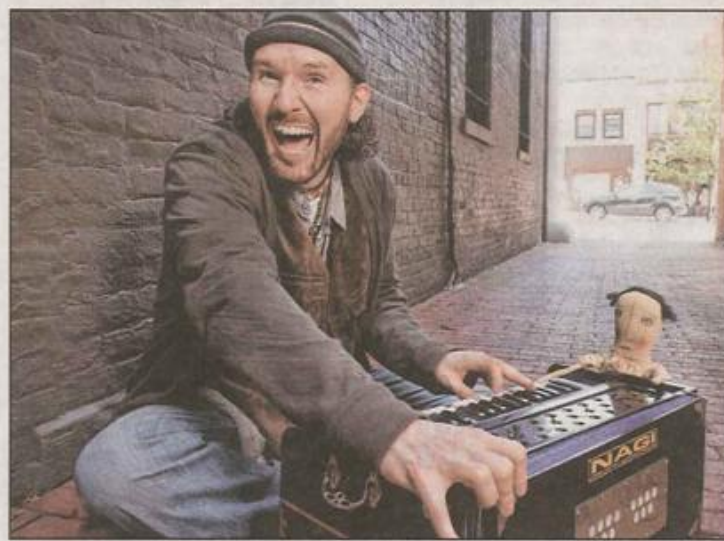
PHOTOS COURTESY OF BILL BERNSTEIN

Above, amid a grove of trees in Brookdale Park, Dalien takes time out to relax and unwind from the pressures of teaching and performing. Below, accompanying himself on the harmonium (small accordion) in an alleyway off Bloomfield Avenue, he has fun jamming as a street musician as he performs a series of Kirtan chants from India.

nursing homes, and for adults and children with autism, PTSD, brain injury or other challenges to personal development, along with stress-reduction programs for business and corporate staffs.

In 2006, 13 Hands was Grammy nominated in two categories for his release, “The Johnny Introspective.” The categories were Best Pop Male Vocal for “Big Lie” and Best Instrumental Recording with Vocal Accompaniment for the entire CD. That album created an awareness that enabled him to create a symbiotic relationship between his contemporary music and his yoga outreach work.

His new release, “The Legend of Pepper Mary & Assorted Tales, Chants & Meditations,” will be out in early August, along with a music video release for the lead single, “Pepper Mary.” The song, inspired by the name of a Bloody Mary drink, is a story-based song with Pepper Mary as the main character. The opening verse, “Pepper Mary was a girl who thought she could save the world, she doesn’t hear or speak a word,” creates a compelling visual alongside the symbolic message that inside us all is an amazing potential to heal, support and be of service to one another. This EP follows his last release, “You Are



What You Leave Behind,” and again integrates both the alternative folk music alongside the world, meditative chant music which has proven to be a successful combination.

When Dalien performs his concerts – which number about 100 shows a year – he provides a combination of instrumental, world-healing music such as Kirtan (that originated in India) which involves chanting or mantras, along with alternative contemporary folk/rock songs. There’s something for everyone at his

events, and they tend to be very interactive and communal, as he transforms his audience into his “band” at different points throughout the performance.

As with every musical endeavor, creating a relaxing response is always an integral part of these concerts, so people usually leave feeling very centered and energized as they become part of his growing “13 Hands tribal family” as Dalien likes to call it.

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