**Thomas Reid:**

Welcome everyone to White Stick Fest 2022, the Virtual Music Festival to celebrate International White Cane Day. That's a day that we set aside to celebrate not only the independence that comes with using the white cane, but also take time to salute and recognize the great contributions of blind people in general. My name is Thomas Reid. I'm a brown skinned black man with a smooth shaved bald head, a full neat beard. I'm wearing dark shades and a yellow button up shirt. I'm coming to you live and direct, sorta, from my home in the Poconos Mountains of Northeast Pennsylvania in the United States. It's only 90 miles from the place I'll always call home and that's the Bronx New York. I’m really excited for this chance to hang out with you today and kick off this celebration of White Cane Day Around the world is called White Stick Festival. We’re featuring some great music from blind and non-blind artists from four continents across the globe. Artists like Cobhams Asuquo, Blind Joe, Baluji Shrivastav, KT Tunstall, Sarah McLachlan, Raul Midon. Lachi and The Wiggles. We have a message of support from Dame Judy Dench and FYI, apparently, it's okay that I call her Dame, just saying, and now to talk a bit about his own experience with the white cane as well as give us a little something special. Let's welcome with our poetry snaps. Dave Steele, also known as The Blind Poet.

[Thomas snaps his fingers]

**Dave Steele:**

Hey everyone. Dave Steele, a blind poet here, come into you all the way from the UK to wish you all happy White Stick Fest. I hope you all have an amazing time today. You're gonna be entertained by some incredible performers and also it's all about celebrating all that's wonderful and amazing about our white sticks, our mobility canes. I want to share with you my own personal experience about coming to terms with a cane because coming to terms with a mobility cane is something that we all go through. We all go through a little process of feeling embarrassed to be seen outside with it. Uh, maybe leaving it home or not using it as much as we should, but once we actually come to terms with it, we realize how our canes are the things that open the doors to live incredible lives and really live our, you know, our independence to the fullest.

So, I wanted to write a piece of poetry about that and I had the idea to write a poem from the perspective of a mobility cane. So in the poetry, it's the mobility cane that's talking. So I wanna share this with you now and I hope you'll all relate to this. It goes like this.

You're not the only one who's felt embarrassed to be seen outside walking with me. This for many's always been a part of the whole process is together we will train, but in time you will realize you'll soon be proud again. I'm made to give you back the things that you may feel you've lost, like pride and independence, all the things that blindness cost. I'm not a sign of weakness. I'm a reason to be proud. Alleviate anxiety whilst you are in a crowd. Sometimes I'm left behind or folded up inside your hand, but I'll be ready for you. I won't judge. I understand. I know these things are natural. It's the way that people stare when you can still see something. But for blindness you prepare. You don't need to see nothing to be able to use me. That's not the way that blindness works. It fades so differently. I'm here to be a symbol and a signal that you're strong, a reason not to isolate, a reason to belong. So when you are feeling ready, I'll be with you day on night, unfold me, hold me confident and swipe me left to right.
Eventually you'll come to terms our partnership remain. It's me and you forever. I am your mobility cane.

Enjoy white stick fest everyone. See you soon guys. Take care.

**Announcer:**

This is White Stick Fest, the virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022. We cross now to Vancouver in Canada. Where Sarah McLachlan awaits us.

**Sarah McLachlan:**

Hi, I'm Sarah McLachlan and I'm coming to you from my home studio in Vancouver, Canada. I'm proud to join you on International White Cane Day to celebrate the achievements of the blind and low vision community. Happy White Stick Fest everyone. This song is for you.

[Sarah plays a piano and sings]

Spend all your time waiting
For that second chance
For the break that would make it okay
There's always some reason
To feel not good enough
And it's hard at the end of the day
I need some distraction
Oh, beautiful release
Memories seep from my veins
Let me be empty
Oh, weightless
And maybe I'll find some peace tonight
In the arms of the angel
Fly away from here
From this dark, cold hotel room
And the endlessness that you feel
You are pulled from the wreckage
Of your silent reverie
You're in the arms of the angel
May you find some comfort here
You're so tired of the straight line
And everywhere you turn
There's vultures and thieves at your back
The storm keeps on twisting
You keep on building the lies
That you make up for all that you lack
Don't make no difference
Escaping one last time
It's easier to believe
In this sweet madness
Oh, this glorious sadness
That brings me to my knees
In the arms of the angel
Fly away from here
From this dark, cold hotel room
And the endlessness that you feel
Oh, you are pulled from the wreckage
Of your silent reverie
You’re in the arms of the angel
May you find some comfort here
You’re in the arms of your angel
May you find some comfort here

Thomas Reid:
Wow. What a beautiful performance by the one and only Sarah McLachlan. That right there was just for us. You're only gonna find that here at White Stick Fest. 2022, the virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day. Next we had to Lagos, Nigeria for some afrobeats. I mean it's, it's time to get up. Move those hips. Shake what your mama gave you. Just let the rhythm inspire you. This next artist is a musician songwriter and UNICEF ambassador from Nigeria. His latest album features collaborations with various artists, including Erta(?) Boy, Get Ready for Cobhams Asuquo. Let's go brother.

Cobhams Asuquo:
Hello everyone. My name is Cobhams Asuquo and I'm reaching you from Lagos in Nigeria. I'm happy to be part of White Stick Fest this year. I'm a singer songwriter and music producer. I'm blind and I just want to, um, before I perform for you, I just wanna wish everyone a happy white stick fest.

[Electrical instruments play]
This song is titled Elephant Man
Whoa, na na na, na ya
Afro beats to the world, y'all. Let's go.
I pull up in a Rolls
I pull up in a 'Rari, Bentley, GT
That's how we roll
Omo the boy no dey joke, oh we
Call me the goat
Call me the freaking Elephant Man
'Cause my trumpet I blow
This not real life no be joke
Oh you're stepping to the five-star
Looking like a rockstar
Ever battle ready, me a dope, me a fighter
Show me the lighter
Omo make we light am
Anybody want bring me some beef not to bite am
Enemies dey fight am
Friends just dey like am
No be ordinary human being, I'm an icon
Move like a viper, sting like a python
Anywhere where you see me for street, fear the ah
I no dey move with Palasa
I do my thing and balance ya
Omo you already know, say we run it
London to Lagos to Atlanta, yeah,
I no dey play with Palasa, yeah
I do my thing like a Balenciaga
Ghana to Soweto, them de wait oh
'Cause them know say we Balencia, cia, cia
I pull up in a Rolls
I pull up in a 'Rari, Bentley, GT
That's how we roll
Omo the boy no dey joke, oh wey
Call me the goat
Call me the freaking Elephant Man
'Cause my trumpet I blow
This not real life no be person wey like to dey fope
Wey no get SPA 'cause you think it's a joke
Call me han man 'cause my bling it dey choke,
And dey freeze, and dey smoke, and dey hot, see dey cold
Ekso wey no dey wound me for throat
Ice on my neck
Ice on my wrist
Louis on my feet
All up in a G6
Chopping it, chopping it, , choppy
Choppy, choppy, choppy, hey
I no de play with Palasa, yeah
I do my thing like a Balencia
Omo you already know, say we run it
New York to Joburg to Alaska, yeah
I no dey play with Palasa, yeah yeah yeah
I do my thing like a Balenciaga
Ghana to Soweto, them dey wait, oh
Ha ha, come on
Where be my money 'cause there's no time for games
You think they funny but na you them go blame
Listen, I don't go Iponri just to give boys your name
They're saying he was a good guy
But he's starting to change
Well, I want to change
I pull up in a Rolls, pull up in a
I pull up in a yeah yeah, pull up in a
Whoa whoa whoa, whoa whoa whoa, whoa

Thank you so much. I had so much fun. Happy white fist white stick fest guys,

**Announcer:**
This is White Stick Fest, the virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022. We are now delighted to welcome Dame Judy Dench with a special International White Cane Day message.

**Dame Judy Dench:**
This is just to send my support for the International White Cane Day.

**Blind Joe:**

[Guitar playing]
Hello White Stick Fest. How are you man? Great to be back with you. It's Blind Joe here and I've got a brand new single out on Spotify and Apple Music. You can check it out by just searching my name. You'll find it, I'll play it for you right now. This is called Hardwood floor. I hope you'll like it. It goes like this.

Tonight. I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
I'm gonna drink and dance until my feet don't work no more
So, crank up that old corner jukebox,
Let the old number seven pour
Because tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
I put in a 40 hour weekend with 30 hours overtime
Busting my butt for a boss who makes a dollar, then he gives me a dime
Yeah, these old bones, they sure are aching
Matter of fact, my whole damn bodies sore. But still tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
I said tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
I'm gonna drink and dance until my feet don't work no more
So crank up that old corner jukebox.
Let the old number seven pour because tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
Now, the lady I love sees the hottest thing in our hometown
Every weekend like me, she likes to kick up her boots and throw down
Well, she just texted and said, Baby, I'm ready now. That's a message I ain't gonna ignore
So, tonight we're gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
I said tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
I'm gonna drink and dance until my feet don't work no more
So, crank up that corner jukebox.
Let the old number seven pour
Because tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor
Yeah you know, tonight I'm gonna raise hell on a hardwood floor.

Oh, thank you so much for listening and watching everybody. God bless you all and enjoy the rest of the show. I'm Blind Joe. Thank you.

Albi and the Wolves:
Hi, we are Albi and the Wolves from Auckland, New Zealand and we are recording this video in a beautiful garden surrounded by New Zealand birds and New Zealand ferns and trees. My name is Chris Dent, aka Albi. I have a big wide brimmed hat, a bushy white beard, and I play the guitar and sing in the band. Michael Young is standing next to me on my left. He's playing a long skinny double bass. He has a salt and pepper beard and a black bandana. To my right we have Pascal Roggen playing the violin. He's wearing a colorful jacket, big thick sunglasses and he has crazy frizzy hair. Thank you so much for having us White Stick fest. We are stoked to be here and this is our song Light After the Dark

[Albi and the Wolves play their instruments]
Hey Well, I've been thinking
About where I wanna be
And it seems like
I don't wanna change the single thing
Our troubles ended
Things felt kind of new
I can breathe in the fresh air
Walk through the morning dew
As if I didn't know it
As if I didn't think it would be hard
Just like I was hoping
All we'd ever need was a little heart, a little heart
Now we're here in the light after the dark
Yeah, have my reservations
Dreaming of airport queues
Thinking 'bout the places
I will travel to
Seems a little strange
You've got nowhere to be, yeah
Sometimes a little time
Is exactly what you need
As if I didn't know it
As if I didn't think it would be hard
And just like I was hoping
All we'd ever need was a little heart, a little heart
Now we're here in the light after the dark
In the light after the dark
In the light after the dark
In the light after the dark
As if I didn't know it
As if I didn't think it would be hard
Just like I was hoping
All we'd ever need was a little heart, a little heart
Now we're here in the light after the dark

[End of song]

Unknown Speaker:
How is that?

Chris Dent AKA Albi:

Unknown Speaker:
Yes. So how, what was that song about?

Chris Dent AKA Albi:
This song is all about living life after having been locked in our house the first time. Um, we got a whole new appreciation for just the simple things hanging out with our friends, having a coffee and a cafe.

[Birds chirp in the background]

Michael Young or Pascal Roggen:
Listening to the birds.
Chris Dent AKA Albi:
Yeah. Listening to the birds <laugh> listening to the birds. Yeah. And, and that freedom that we got to enjoy the song was commissioned by Song Broker Publishing and uh, yeah, that's, that's us. Nice simple <laugh>.

Thomas Reid:
Yes. Give it up for Albi and the Wolves. Now to be honest with you, I thought Albi Shore was making a comeback at first. Come to find out it's a whole different Albi and he along with the Wolves, they just killed that. Albi and the Wolves, Y'all. Give it up right here on White Stick Fest 2022, the virtual music festival celebrating International White Cane Day. I hope you all are having a great time. Maybe you're sitting with your feet up, a drink in your hand. I don't know. But look, if you're a proud user of the white cane, you believe and wanna show your support for the talent and abilities of those who are blind or have low vision, tell the world about it. Post your support and link to this video on your favorite social media platform. Use hashtag White Stick Fest. Let me spell that. Capital w h i t e capital s t i c k with the capital F e s t White Stick Fest. That's called Camel Case and that's an accessibility tool in a way. Cool. Think about it. Where else can you hop around the globe with such ease and access? All right, it's time to say peace to New Zealand and welcome our next artist who has top 20 hits like Black Horse in the Cherry Tree and Suddenly I See. Her music was featured in the film, Devil Wears Prada and on hit television shows like Ugly Betty and Grey's Anatomy. One of her songs was even used in the Hillary Clinton 2008 presidential campaign. Now look, the song bears no responsibility for the outcome of that race. I'm just letting you know that. Yet, I hear she is responsible for inspiring Ed Sheeran to start using a loop pedal. Time now to head to London, bro, to the home of Scottish artists. KT Tunstall. Take it away KT.

KT Tunstall:
Hi everyone, this is KT Tunstall coming from a apartment in London. I'm here working on some musical theater and I am thrilled to be joining you on International White Cane Day, to celebrate the achievements of the blind and the low vision community. Happy White Stick Fest everyone. This song is for you

[KT plays a guitar]
Over the sea and far away
She's waiting like an iceberg
Waiting to change
But she's cold inside
She wants to be like the water
All the muscles tighten in her face
Buries her soul in one embrace
They're one and the same, just like water
The fire fades away
But most of everyday
Is full of tired excuses
It's too hard to say
I wish it were simple
But we give up easily
You're close enough to see that
You're the other side of the world to me
And on comes the panic light
Holding on with fingers and feelings alike
But the time has come to move along
The fire fades away
Most of everyday
Is full of tired excuses
It's too hard to say
I wish it were simple
But we give up easily
You're close enough to see that
You're the other side of the world
Can you help me
Can you let me go
And can you still love me
When you can't see me anymore
The fire fades away
Most of everyday
Is full of tired excuses
It's too hard to say
I wish it were simple
But we give up easily
You're close enough to see that
You're the other side of the world
Ooh, oh, the other side of the world
You're the other side of the world
To me
Happy, Happy, happy International White came day and happy white stick vest. Have a great time guys. See ya. Bye.

Lucas Haneman:
Hello, this is Lucas Haneman from the Lucas Haneman Express. An award-winning blues band from Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. For those of you who care to know my visual impairment is retinopathy of prematurity. I have no vision in my left eye, but I do have partial vision in my right eye. But despite this, I've never let it hold me back from doing the things I love. And I always like to say I've been a full-time musician since I've picked up my first guitar at the age of six. So today you're gonna hear our band playing one of our songs called That's The Truth. The band is comprised of myself on lead guitar and vocals. Megan Laurence co-lead vocals, Val Nehovora Drums and Martin Newman Bass. Here's that's the truth. Thanks so much for having us. Enjoy White Stick Fest.

[Lucas Haneman Express plays their instruments]
[Lucas sings]
You play forgiveness.
I'll play for Keeps.
You'll say you'll be there
But all you do is cheat
Well, am I wrong
To invest my time in you
You left me high and dry baby
I don't lie, that's the truth
[Megan Sings]
Always want me home early
I never have my fun
But my head don't hit the pillow
'Til the night is done
Now I may not be faithful

But you never

No you never see me through

You left me high and dry, baby

I don't lie, that's the truth

[Lucas and Megan sing together]
Why does it feel so good, even when you don’t call my name

Why do we fuss and fight, so much, but still enjoy the pain.

We build our hope, hold past your dreams

But in the morning light, your’re still begging please.

[Long guitar rift]

[Lucas sings]

I’ve had enough of this thing called love

[Megan sings]

So sick of contemplating, push has come to shove

[Lucas sings]

Well, don’t you know I was wrong, baby?

[Megan sings]

You were wrong

[Lucas sings]

To invest my time in you

[Megan sings]

You left me high and dry, baby, that’s the truth

[Lucas sings]

You left me high and dry

[Lucas and Megan sing together]

But I like

[Lucas sings]

That’s the truth, baby

[Megan sings]
No that's the truth

**Announcer:**
This is White Stick Fest. The virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022. Next we are delighted to welcome the wonderful Beluji Shrivastav OBE. Beluji has actually recorded a 20 minute set for us, comprising two numbers. We're gonna show you the highlights now, but as with all the performances, you can find the whole thing on our website at whitestickfest.org.

**Beluji Shrivastav:**
Hello everybody, my name is Beluji Shrivastav. I am the musical director of Inner Vision Orchestra and today I'm going say a little piece based on Man from Stan in which I'll play three movements I love, which is the slow gradual improvisation and then, which is a temp improvisation and then, which is the rhythm improvisation. Thank you.

[Beluji plays instrumental sitar on the first set and hand held drums with a piano backup for the second]

**Thomas Reid:**
Okay, that was just a taste, a highlight of a two song set from Baluji Shrivastav. For the full videos of both of his performances, Head over to white stick fest.org. Make sure you do that cause I'm telling you. Beluji gets busy. Other music festivals are crowded hot, hella expensive here at White Stick Fest 2022, the virtual musical festival to celebrate International White Cane Day. You don't have to deal with any of that. Use the hashtag white stick fest. Tell us where you're joining from and how much you like what you're hearing. This next artist was actually fired for not being able to see well enough. He became houseless for a couple of years that made his way performing on the streets. Then last year he was on American Idol. Give a big white stick fest. Welcome to Murphy.

**Murphy:**
Hi white Stick Fest 2022. My name is Murphy and I'm excited to be here today. I'm a musician originally from Baltimore, Maryland and I do have monocular blindness of the left eye. So I wanted to talk just a bit before I started singing and mention that as much as anybody can tell you that you have, anyone has a handicap, you should never limit your imagination ever. We're very fortunate to have it and we can utilize it every day to make most situations a little bit easier to handle. And I do that by writing songs and I'd like to share one of those with you today. I hope that you like it. It's called Write Me Letters. It's about being cared for the old fashioned way.

[Murphy plays a guitar]
So write me letters
Send me photographs.
I’ll hang them on my wall.
Won't you save all your feathers
You’re gonna need them for the Fall
Oh no it gonna do you no good
Being made of stone
Oh it won’t do you no good
Being made of stone
Woo so write me letters
Send me photographs
I’ll hang them on my wall
I’ve been wondering darling.
Can you tell me?
Have you got enough feathers for your Fall.
Oh no it will do you no good
Being made of stone
But it don’t do you no good
Being made of stone
So write me letters
Send me photographs
And I will see you when I am home

Sean Harrington:
Hi Whites Dick Fest. My name is Sean Harrington from Leeds, England. I had Retinoblastoma Cancer in the Eye when I was three and lost my vision. And today I will be playing Pretty Girls, which is my most recent release. Thank you for listening and I hope you enjoy.

[Sean plays guitar]
I met a pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, Pretty girl last night
She told me she stopped out on into the world searching for Mr. Right
So then I figured, what the hell. And then I gave her quite a bit of my time
So she looked me in the eye and told me lover boy, You ain't my type
Well, God Damn It
And I'm sick of seeing all the pretty girls walk by
I'll never catch their eyes And I never catch their eyes
Oh, at times you know that really won’t feel right,
But buddy, that’s just life. Don't let it pass you by
So I'mma tell you something, fellas. Last week I swear that I struck gold
I made a swift approach
Because my mama always told me that fortune only favored the bold
I made a swift approach. Yeah, I was falling with her every blow
A pretty lady pushed me out of the light, I fell back in shadows said oh no
I’m sick of seeing all you pretty girls walk by,
I'll never catch their eyes. And I never catch their eyes
Oh, at times you know that really won't feel right, buddy, that's just life.
So come and live it right. Yeah, all right,
But I'm sick of seeing all the pretty girls walk by,
I never catch their eyes. No, I never catch their eyes
But at times you know that really don't feel right.
Ain't that's just life, though. Wanna live it right

**Announcer:**
The team at White Stick Fest, the virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022 would like to thank the partners that made this year’s event possible. Our media partners, Vision Australia Radio, our digital access partner, Oleb Media. And this year we are very excited to announce our partnership with the Foundation Fighting Blindness.

[Commercial for Fighting Blindness]

Speaker 1
Where I grew up, no one had vision loss, no one had the same condition.

Speaker 2:
The First person I ever met with Vision Loss was actually my brother.

Commercial Announcer:
The Foundation Fighting Blindness is asking those affected by blinding diseases to share their vision loss story. To celebrate this October Blindness Awareness month,

Speaker 3:
I was seven. When I was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa.

Speaker 4:
I knew I wasn't the only one, but I didn't know there was a whole new community of people.

Speaker 5:
The first time I met somebody else that had my condition of retinitis pigmentosa was 25 years after I was diagnosed.

Commercial Announcer:
We invite you to share your vision loss journey through written word, audio or video because your story is powerful and

Speaker 6:
Unique. My confidence has really, uh, increased because of the bouncing back and forth of, Oh, how do you, how would you deal with this? Yeah,

Speaker 7:
We all have a different story to share. It's literally all different.

Speaker 8:
Some people could have it where they could see an elephant across the room, but they're gonna trip over a pen on their way there.

Speaker 9:
Blindness isn't something to fear.

Speaker 10:
How are you gonna get to Tokyo? And you can't see <laugh>? And I'm like, I'm going. I wanna go <laugh>,

Several Speakers:
Share your vision.
Share your vision.
Share your vision.
Share your vision.
I encourage you to share your vision.
Now it's your turn to share your vision loss story

Commercial Announcer:
Share on social media. Using the hashtag share your vision. Go to fighting blindness.org/share your vision to learn more Foundation Fighting Blindness. Together, we're winning.

[End Commercial]

Connor Wink:
Hello everyone. My name's Connor Wink. I'm 23 years old and I'm a singer songwriter from Newcastle Australia, who was born with Leber's Congenital Amaurosis. Today I'll be sharing with you my latest original single called Deeper and Deeper Hope you guys like it. And thank you all for listening and enjoy Wide Stick Fest,
[Connor plays guitar with electronic rifts in the background]
Hello, hello
What am I doing here
Where did you come from
How did you appear
Fall apart, broken heart
Break at the seams
I don't know how this goes
What does that mean
Hello, hello
What am I doing here
I breathe in, I breathe out
I'm somehow lost in a dream
I'm screaming, I shout out
I'm falling deeper and deeper it seems
Oh no, you know, am I lost in this dream
I fell into madness, I'm spiraling
Realize, fight the tides, connected to you
Is this real, how I feel
Do you feel it, too
Oh no, you know, I'm connected to you, to you
I breathe in, I breathe out
I'm somehow lost in a dream
I'm screaming, I shout out
I'm falling deeper and deeper it seems
The warmth of your voice
I'm back in a day of September
The time of my life that I will always remember, yeah
I breathe, I breathe out
I'm somehow lost in a dream
I'm screaming, I shout out
I'm falling deeper and deeper
Lost in a dream
Deeper and deeper
What am I doing here
I'm falling deeper and deeper

Lara Nahkle:
Hi, I'm Lara Nahkle. I live in Sydney, Australia and I'm super excited to be part of this event. I was born completely blind. My eye condition is called Libras Congenital Amaurosis and I've got light perception. I actually have a black Labrador guide dog called Maxwell. He's so cute. He's not here right now, unfortunately, because I'm in the recording studio. The song that I'll be doing is called Love Left Behind, which I co-wrote, back in 2018 with Roxanne, Kylie and Steven Kylie. Hope you like it.
[Lara plays a piano]
You left in a hurry.
You didn’t stay
Or give me a reason
Why you walked away
I’m left here standing
Holding my heart
Hoping and wishing we won't stay apart
I’m reminiscing, thinking bout us
Talking bout everything, how we discuss
All the world's problems, what we could do
How we would solve them, just me and you
That's why I cry
You never told me what's on your mind
I'm searching through memories for things I can find
Looking at photos for tell-tale signs
But all I can see is the love left behind
Each morning I struggle to get outta bed
All of my messages you haven't read
I looked at my socials, nothing from you
Your profile says single, What did I do?
That's why I cry
You never told me what's on your mind
I'm searching through memories for things I can find
Looking at photos for tell-tale signs
But all I can see is the love left behind
That’s why, I cry
You never told me what’s on your mind
I’m searching through memories for things I can find
Looking at photos for tell-tale signs
But all I can see is the love left behind
That’s why, I cry

Announcer:
You’re watching and or listening to White Stick Fest, the virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022. Next, a special message from fashion designer and entrepreneur Brad Manning, who is one half of two Blind Brothers.
Brad Manning:

Hey White Stick Fest. Let's bring it in close. Okay. You know, we have eye conditions here. We like it up close. Anyway, it is Brad Manning, the older brother of the clothing brand. Two Blind Brothers, some say smarter brother, mostly just me since Brian's not here. But all I wanted to say is that, you know, this day, this event marks a big moment when Brian and I were growing up with our eye condition, Stargardt's Disease. The only person I knew with my eye condition was my brother. And now we have movements, We have, events like this. We have people that are starting to understand that the spectrum of different eye conditions. We have influential role models across the board in every industry. Um, maybe not pilots, but we're getting there. Um, actually wait a second. I did see a video of out of pilot who had eye condition. But anyway, this is incredible. You all are gonna have a great White Stick Fest. And, uh, just a shout out from New York City.

Robert Cini:

Hey everyone, it's Robert Cini here. I hope you're all doing well. It's a real honor to be a part of White Stick Fest for another year. So thanks so much for having me. I've actually just recently had my first introduction to using a white cane. So I guess you could say International White Cane Day this year has a bit extra personal significance. The song I'd love to play for you today is a song called Growing Up. It's an original song of mine. If you'd like to check out more of my music or know more about me, you can head to my website robertcini.com. That's R O B E R T C I N I .com. Or you can follow me on Facebook and Instagram and my music is available on all the streaming platforms. Take care guys. Enjoy the rest of White Stick Fest and Happy International White Cane Day

[Robert plays a guitar]
It's time to live, it's time to own
Outliving all my favorite types of clothes
Fortune is my life untold
Stories read only tell us so much
We have a chance to walk these steps
To take this sand
And build a place
Love every thing
'Cause we can
We don't know yet
The things we'll face
Whoa, oh oh, oh oh, oh oh
Growing up in the big world
Growing up in the big world
Whoa, oh oh oh
Whoa, oh oh oh, oh oh oh
Growing up in the big world
Growing up in the big world
Whoa, oh oh oh
Whoa, oh oh oh
We sing, we laugh, naive, we jump
The highest climb was on my dad's shoulder
And paint our faces like the sun
Running races till we have won
Whoa, oh oh, we have a chance
To walk these steps
Take this sand
And build a place
Love everything
'Cause we can
We don't know yet
The things we'll face
Whoa, oh oh, oh oh, oh oh
Growing up in the big world
Growing up in the big world
Whoa, oh oh oh
Whoa, oh oh oh, oh oh oh
Growing up in the big world
Growing up in the big world
Whoa, oh oh oh
Whoa, oh oh oh
And if you slip and fall
Or have your heart broke
Just stitch that part
Repairs and know
That hurt builds you strong
Whoa, oh oh, oh oh, oh oh
Growing up in the big world
Growing up in the big world
Whoa, oh oh oh
Whoa, oh oh oh, oh oh oh
Growing up in the big world
Growing up in the big world
Whoa, oh oh oh
Whoa, oh oh
Growing up
Growing up

**Rachael Leahcar:**

Hi everyone, Rachael Leahcar here. And I'm so excited to be performing for White Stick Fest. Once again, the white cane is very important to people who are legally blind because it really helps us to be more independent and get out in the community and make the most of our lives. So I hope you enjoy my performance dedicated to International White Cane Day of my new song Crowns
[Piano plays]
Cut away our safety nets
Walking the tightrope alone
Our hands are tied behind our backs
The balance is all but gone
We all wear our masks all the same
Connection was lost years ago
Riddles are winding their way through my town
Answers are chasing them down
Healing the world, comes at a cost
Feel what you have, and let go of the loss
The wounded don't bleed, but we'll learn how to fight
At a time when togetherness just feels so right.
Don’t bury the dead in crowns
Don’t bury the dead in crowns
Don’t breathe where life has been
Life has the scent of grave
Keep walking around to the Sun
Maybe we’ll catch it someday
Zooming so fast in slow motion
Touching our lives with devotion
Notes catch the wind
And fly through the court
Carried away by the law
Healing the world, comes at a cost
Feel what you have and let go of the loss
The wounded don’t bleed, but we’ll learn how to fight
At a time when togetherness just feels so right.
Don’t bury the dead in crowns
Don’t bury the dead in crowns
When this is all over
We’ll fall back into our games
Hoping we’ll learn from the memories
The World will never be the same
Healing the world, comes at a cost
Feel what you have and let go of the loss
The wounded don’t bleed, but we’ll learn how to fight
At a time when togetherness just feels so right.

Don’t bury the dead in crowns
Don’t bury the dead in crowns
Don’t bury the dead in crowns
Don’t bury the dead in crowns

**Vernon Barnard:**

Hey everyone, it’s Vernon, Barnard here from South Africa. I’m a 29 year old singer and motivational speaker and I’m blind. I was born with Glaucoma and it’s my third year being a part of the White Stick fest. So, we are really growing and it's just a pleasure and a privilege to be a part of this awesome function once again. Um, guys, this year I’ll be singing one of my original songs, One that will be released just about now and it's an Afrikaans song. So you guys in Australia will know you have quite a few ex-South Africans over there, so you'll know Afrikaans, uh, maybe a few words. And the song is called Letses, it's the Afrikaans word for scars. And the message of the song is basically, basically that we all have scars, but it's a sign of overcoming our difficulties, not of defeat. So, we can look on those moments and say, okay, those are our battle conquers those scars. So hope you guys enjoy it and have a wonderful White Stick Fest. Uh, cheers.

[Instrumentals, piano and snapping fingers]

[NOTICE: THIS SONG IS IN THE LANGUAGE OF AFRIKAANS, DUE TO TIME RESTRAINTS A COPY OF THE LYRICS AND ASSOCIATED TRANSLATION OF THIS WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF TRANSCRIPTION]

**Shayy Winn:**

Hi Guys! My name is Shayy Winn and I'm from season 17 of American Idol. And for those of you who don't know, I am legally blind as well. And I am from Richmond, Virginia, which is in the USA. And this here is my new song Energy. Hope you like it.

[Electronic Soulful Background plays]
Tired of these fake friends
Making false statements, testing my patience
False accusations
All in my face and please make it mazes
Don't hear my lineup for nothing
Tensions between us inflated
The words got the buzz
Then playing these girls like it's nothing
They can't stand to see you shine
End of discussion
Protecting my energy from all the hating
The jealousy
They asking, why is it me
I'm chasing my destiny
Why, why, why you keep playing these games
All the time, all this time you ain't changed
Why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, throwing dirt on my name
Why, why, why you keep playing these games
All the time, all this time you ain't changed
Why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, throwing dirt on my name
I was just there when nobody cared
I let you unload all your baggage
When you couldn't bear it
And look what I'm left with
You're worse than the devil, the devil's a liar
Your time is expired
You can't be my homie, you fraudulent phony
You hated, now you wanna act like you know me
Protecting my energy from all the hating
The jealousy
They asking, why is it me
I'm chasing my destiny
Why, why, why you keep playing these games
All the time, all this time you ain't changed
Why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, throwing dirt on my name
Why, why, why you keep playing these games
All the time, all this time you ain't changed
Why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, throwing dirt on my name
It's funny how when you start to grow
People switch up and then claim to know
Who you are and how your story goes
But you're the only one that's in control, so
Protect your energy
From all the hating, the jealousy
They gonna ask, why is it me
I'm chasing my destiny
Why, why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, all this time you ain't
Why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, throwing dirt on my name
Why, why, why you keep playing these games
All the time, all this time you ain't changed
Why, why, why you smile in my face
All the time, throwing dirt on my name

That's my song Energy and I'd like to thank everyone in Australia for having me this year, third year in a row. White Cane Day. Let's go.
Thomas Reid:
Go ahead Shayy Winn. Let me tell you, I was bouncing over here to that beat and listening to those lyrics because sometimes yeah, there are forces who wanna try to block our success and that could come in so many forms and whatever it is Shayy just told you, protest yo energy. I like that. I really do. <laugh>, I hear that at her first American Idol audition she made Lionel Richie cry. Yeah, well you made me smile Shay and I thank you. After all, today’s a celebration. I’m talking about International White Cane Day and White Stick Fest 2022, the Virtual Music Festival. I first saw this next group when my then six year old daughter almost lost her mind. The television was on and she ate her breakfast when a song came on. This little one jumped up and ran to the TV and just started dancing. I told her, You better go and finish your breakfast. She said, Daddy, it’s the Australian music sensation. I said, Wait, you talking about The Wiggles? She said, Yeah. Ladies and gentlemen, 30 years in the business returning to White Stick Fest for the third year in a row. Welcome the Wiggles

The Wiggles:
Hi, where the Wiggles. And we are thrilled to join you once again for International White Cane Day. Let’s all sing Rock-a-bye Your Bear together.

[Happy Electronic Children’s Song Music Play]
Everybody clap
[Wiggles clap]
everybody sing
<La La La La La>
Bow to your partner
[Wiggles bow]
<Oh Good Day>
Then you turn around
[Wiggles Turn around]
<Cheering>
Hands in the air,
Rock-a-bye your bear
Bear is now asleep
<Sh Sh Sh>
Bear is now asleep
<Sh Sh Sh>
Everybody clap
[Wiggles clap]
everybody sing
<La La La La La>
Bow to your partner
[Wiggles bow]
<Oh Good Day>
Then you turn around
[Wiggles Turn around]
<Cheering>
Hands in the air,
Rock-a-bye your bear
Bear is now asleep
<Sh Sh Sh>
Bear is now asleep
<Sh Sh Sh>
Bear is now asleep
<Sh Sh Sh>
Bear is now asleep
<Sh Sh Sh>

**Announcer:**

This is White Stick Fest de virtual music festival to celebrate International White Can de Day 2022. At its heart, White Stick Fest is about helping young blind and low vision artists to share a stage with the names you may recognize more. This year we've delighted to be able to share with you this incredibly confident performance from 17 year old Sirine Jahangir.

**Sirine Jahangir:**

Hi everyone. Happy White Can de Fest. My name is Sirine and I'm joining from London. I was born and raised here despite having an American accent. A little bit about myself. I'm a singer and songwriter and I got into music once I lost my sight at 11. My parents found out that I was completely blind from one eye when I was five years old. And I gradually lost it. And I was really into dancing, but I found that really difficult once I lost my sight. So, music was my outlet for getting out my emotions, you know, the cliche stuff, but it really is true. And I'm 17 now and well I don't think, as cliche as it sounds, I really don't think I'd be able to do or be the person that I am without, without music because music is something where you can turn a beautiful and a painful experience into a melody without any shame. And so today I'm gonna be singing my song Came To Say Hello, that I collaborated on with a family member. And it's about coming back to yourself after a long internal struggle and saying hello to somebody different. So I hope you enjoy.
[Piano plays]
The words are always uttered
Moments last just when they matter
But all we have are memories in a photograph
I spend my life chasing dreams
Always live beyond my means
My shallow life is summarized in a paragraph
But I, I'd like to let you know
Although the years have flown
I'm standing here alone
So far away from home
I came to say hello
Just to say hello
I needed you to know
I'm feeling so alone
I came to say hello
Just to say hello
I needed you to know
I took a while to realize
I wish that I could turn back time
So here I am
I'm drawing circles in the sand
But I, I'd like to let you know
Although the years have flown
I'm standing here alone
So far away from home
I came to say hello
Just to say hello
I needed you to know
I'm feeling so alone
I came to say hello
Just to say hello
I needed you to know
But I had it all
I walked away
I walked away
And I was set in stone
I let it go
I let it go
I came to say hello
Just to say hello
I needed you to know
I'm feeling so alone
I want you to know
I just came to say hello
I came to say hello
Kirsten Busby:
Hi. My name is Kirsten Busby and I'm joined by organist Asher Waters Cowan from Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia. And I first off like to wish everybody a happy White Stick fest, which celebrates a very important mobility tool for the blind and vision impaired known as the White Cane. I have one myself due to a eye condition I was born with called Optic Nerve Hypoplasia. And although I hated it as a child before I got my guide dog Violet, I was using this and looking back on it in hindsight, it did bring me freedom and independence as it does with so many other people. Today we'd like to perform you a piece by Gabriel Faure, which is the fourth movement from his requiem Pie Jesu.

[Organ plays in the background and Kirsten sings an Opera]

[NOTICE: THIS OPERA IS SUNG IN LATIN, AND DUE TO TIME RESTRAINTS COPY OF LYRICS AND A TRANSLATION WAS UNAVAILABLE AT TIME OF TRANSCRIPTION]

Announcer:
This is White Stick Fest the music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022. Next we cross to the United States for a message from entrepreneur, advocate and sensory evangelist Dr. Hoby Wedler.

Dr. Hoby Wedler:
Well, hello everyone. I hope you all are doing very well and I am here first and foremost to wish you a very happy White Stick Fest. I hope you have an absolutely wonderful time. I know I'm gonna be here virtually enjoying the event. I thought I'd tell you a little bit about myself. My name is Dr. Hoby Wedler. I am from California, from the United States and I live in a little town just north of San Francisco By about 70 kilometers or so. I was born completely blind. And I actually totally love my life and embrace my life as a blind person. I have no desire to ever have sight because I've learned how to live in the world and how to do life as a blind guy. And if I got my sight now I'd have to relearn how to do life. And I kind of kinda like the way I do life anyway. Enough about me. It's all about you all. Enjoy the heck outta White Stick Fest. Have a really nice evening, a happy day, enjoy. And I look forward to meeting each and every one of you at some point on our paths. Cheers,

Caitlin Smith:
Kia ora, I am Caitlin Smith, From New Zealand, and thank you so much for inviting me to be part of White Stick Fest again and happy White Stick Fest. The cane, I wanna make the cane sexy again. I was trained in mobility from a very young age, um, legally blind since birth and I didn't use it for a long time, but started using it again about 10 years ago when I was traveling internationally. And I've gotta say it is the best thing. It's the Merlin's wand. It's magical. It gives you so much more confidence about being in the world and, um, it's like a divining rod. It's, it's um, it's, it's so many things. And so I really, really hope that more people and encourage more people to use their canes and pimp them up and, and put lightning rods down the sides. And, um, I've also got a CD to display since last I was part of the Fest and
that is Brave Caitlin Smith's Imaginary Band. And the name of the CD is You Have Reached Your Destination and that's in contracted braille on the front cover. And then it's got a tactile labyrinth you can trace inside. And so if anyone wants some of that caitlinsmith.com. Um, I'm gonna play a song for you called Line in the Sand.

[Caitlin plays the piano]
I've been feeding little piggies on sweet strawberries
But I'm not doing that anymore
I've been staying too long where I don't belong
But I'm not doing that anymore
There comes a time when you realize
You've got to draw a line
In the sand, yeah, yeah yeah yeah, yeah yeah
I've been procrastinating what I should do today
But I'm not doing that anymore
I've been making excuses to keep on using
But I'm not doing that anymore, no
There comes a time when you realize
You've got to draw a line in the sand, yeah yeah yeah
And if you cross that line with me, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
There'll be consequences beyond belief, ah ah ah
I do care
I'm gonna go color lies
I'm sick and tired of wanting you
I've been denying the truth
Thrown out and down abuse
But I'm not doing that anymore
I've been overtime eating other people's hate
I'm not doing that anymore
'Cause there comes a time when you realize
You've got to draw a line in the sand, yeah yeah yeah, yeah
I know the tide will wash away every mark I'll make
But I'm scared of attack
I'll push back
I'm, I'm too afraid to stay
What's really going on
Is that I've gotta change
Step up to the plate
Be brave
I've been feeding little piggies on sweet strawberries
But I'm not doing that anymore
I've been staying too long where I don't belong
But I'm not doing that anymore
There comes a time when you realize
You've got to draw a line in the sand, yeah yeah yeah,
You've got to draw a line in the sand
You've got to draw a line in the sand, yeah, yeah, yeah
Pixie and the Gypsies:
Hi White Stick Fest. My name’s Taylor from Pixie and the gypsies. I’ve been registered blind since birth. My eye condition is called Lebers Congenital Amaurosis. I’m a white cane user. I find that the cane gives me so much more independence. It allows me to lead my everyday life with more confidence and freedom. And the song that we’re gonna do for you now is called Honey Trap. It’s the title track from our first album and we hope you enjoy

[Several string instruments are played by the band, including a violin and guitar]

[Taylor sings]
Love's for the birds
Honey's for the bees
You're the only one for me
But it could come undone if someone gets stung
And I hope it isn't me
Nectar so sweet
You're stealing like a thief
And I'm singing
Oh, I can't resist
I got a buzz from the touch of his fingertips
And I never felt so alive
I got a taste of the honey now I want the hive
And the way he does his thing
I gotta be careful to avoid the sting
And perhaps I should walk away
But this trap's so good that I just stay
One sting would hurt
But any more and it gets worse
And I'll need a remedy
And I know I've been warned
Not to anger the swarm
But I love this sweet honey
Nectar so fine, and I need you to be fine
And I'm singing
Oh, I can't resist
I got a buzz from the touch of his fingertips
And I never felt so alive
I got a taste of the honey now I want the hive
And the way he does his thing
I gotta be careful to avoid the sting
And perhaps I should walk away
But this trap's so good that I just stay
Ho, ho, you know I can't resist
And I get a buzz from your fingertips
And I never, ever, ever felt so alive
I gotta taste of the honey and now I want the hive
And oh, I can't resist
I got a buzz from the touch of his fingertips
And I never felt so alive
Got a taste of the honey now I want the hive
And the way he does his thing
I gotta be careful to avoid the sting
And perhaps I should walk away
But this trap's so good that I just stay
I just stay
I just stay

**Announcer:**

This is White Stick Fest, the virtual music festival to celebrate International White Cane Day 2022. The next artist to step onto our virtual stage is the Magnificent, the Mighty Lashi.

**Lachi:**

Hey everyone, it's me Lachi, She, Her, Black, Woman Cornrows. I am wearing a silver mini dress with cute little black and silver shoes, silver jewelry and gold makeup. And I've got my silver and red White Stick fest cane at my side and behind me. I have a black piano open and ready to go because I'm about to sing some songs for y'all to celebrate White Stick fest. Thank you White Stick fest for having me. Everyone knows that Lachi thinks the white cane is sexy because it helps amplify independence and it shows that you are not afraid to be yourself and identify as you need to identify. I am out here trying to let people know that, Yo, I'm cute and I'm blind and that's fine. So I'm really excited today to sing one of my originals. It's Our Time for y'all today and I really hope y'all enjoy. Thank you.

[Lachi plays piano and sings]

We just want a piece of the pie
So we pack our bags and run
Said we pack our bags and run
Trying to walk on the water
'Cause there's nothing we cannot overcome
Nothing we cannot overcome
They don't realize
They don't realize
We gonna take our turn
We gonna rule the world
'Cause it's our time
Our time to shine
We gonna take our turn
We gonna rule the world
'Cause it's our time
Our time to shine
They're not gonna take us alive
They must not know how we do
They sure don't know how we do
'Cause we gonna fight to survive
They will not knock us off our groove
They will not knock us off our groove, yeah
They don't realize
They don't realize
We're gonna take our turn
We gonna rule the world
'Cause it's our time
Our time to shine
We gonna take our turn
We gonna rule the world
'Cause it's our time
Our time to shine
They'll see with their own eyes, yeah
We'll climb the mount most high
We'll climb the mount most high
We're gonna take our turn
We gonna rule the world
Rule the world
We're gonna take our turn
We're gonna rule the world
'Cause it's our time
Our time to shine
We're gonna take our turn
We're gonna rule the world
'Cause it's our time
Our time to shine
We'll shine
Shine
It's our turn
It's our turn
It's our turn
It's our turn

**Thomas Reid:**

Give it up for Lachi. Now lemme tell you, Lachy definitely shows love for the white cane. Sometimes can's a extra colorful and they always glammed out with that extra bling bling. <laugh>. Thank you Lachi and thank you all for allowing me to celebrate International White Cane Day with you here at White
Stick Fest 2022, the Virtual Music Festival. I had a lot of fun you guys, I really appreciate it. And you know, I hope you all did too. If so, let the world know by shouting out the festival on social media with the hashtag White Stick Fest. My name is Thomas Reid and so there's no confusion. I always like to let people know how you spell that. It's real simple. It's R to the E I D Now don't go anywhere because we are not done. I'm telling you, we are not done. It's time now for our headline act. This next artist is such a talent. He's a jazz guitarist, singer, songwriter, and much, much more. If you're not familiar with his work, I'm talking about 11 albums. He's a two time Grammy nominee whose work with artists like Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder, Bill Withers. He's contributed to records by Queen Latifah and Snoop Dogg. Look, after this performance here, do yourself a favor. Type his name into YouTube and check out more of his amazing live performances. I'm telling you, you will not be disappointed. Closing out the White Stick Fest 2022. Mr. Raul Midon. Peace.

Raul Midon:
Hi, I'm Raul Midon. I'm in my sitting room right now, which the walls are painted green, decorated beautifully by my wife. This is where I listen to music. I have a studio where I record music. We have two beautiful Sono speakers here. And it's a very, very pleasant place to listen to music. So, I wanna wish everyone a happy White Stick Fest and I'm gonna play a song I hope you'll enjoy. This is called Pedal to the Metal.

[Raul plays a guitar]
I don't drive, but if I did
I'd be a racecar driver
And I don't dive but if I did
I'd be a deep sea diver
Backup plan, I'm not your man
Just in case doesn't win the race
Won't get your buried treasure with compromise
And half-measures
Push on through till you get to the other side
And keep the pedal to the metal
Oh yeah, keep the pedal to the metal, all right
Keep the pedal to the metal now
I don't believe but if I did
I'd be a true believer
Yes, I would
I don't deceive but if I did
I'd be a wily dealer
Backup plan, I'm not your man
Just in case doesn't win the race
Won't get your buried treasure
With compromise and half measures
Push on through till you get to the other side
And keep the pedal to the metal
Oh yeah, keep the pedal to the metal, metal, metal
Keep the pedal to the metal now
Keep the pedal to the metal
Some say it all comes to nothing
No sense in trying at all
But I'd rather wind up with something
So I'll get up when I fall
Till I've given it all
And keep the pedal to the metal, huh
Oh yeah, keep the pedal to the metal
Now keep the pedal to the metal now
Keep the pedal to the metal, yeah yeah yeah yeah
Keep the pedal to the metal
I'll keep the pedal to the metal
Keep the pedal to the metal, metal, metal

Thank you very much once again. Happy White Stick Fest.