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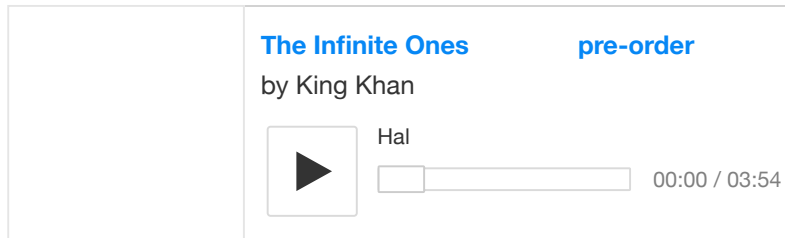


## King Khan Memorializes Hal Willner on New Song

*Arish Ahmad Khan shares “Hal,” a jazz track dedicated to the late American producer.*

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by **Danielle Chelosky**

Arish Ahmad Khan, the artist behind the longstanding **King Khan** project, has a lot to write about. Along his musical journey, he's made a lot of friends, like producer Hal Willner who passed recently due to COVID-19. Khan wanted to memorialize him with a new soothing jazz track called "Hal," from his forthcoming album which features members of Sun Ra Arkestra and Calexico. You can stream that eulogy below, and read on for some words on Willner from Khan.



*The song "Hal" is a requiem I wrote for my old buddy Hal Willner who was one of the first American victims of COVID. I met Hal in 2010, when he was curating the Vivid Festival at the Sydney Opera House with his best friends Lou Reed and Laurie Anderson... I couldn't believe that the three of them were such big fans of my music, it blew my mind to bits.*

*I discovered Laurie Anderson's Home of the Brave when I was ten years old—I watched it like it was Sesame Street, and it resonated with me for the rest of my life. I never thought binary code could be so complex! Lou Reed's music infected me at the age of fifteen, and completely mutated my brain. I had also discovered Naked Lunch at this time, so William S. Burroughs and Lou both invaded my youthful mind and basically changed the way I perceived the world...*

*One month before I met Lou, Laurie, and Hal, I was invited to the home of Alejandro Jodorowsky, whose films and teachings equally messed with my biology. Meeting these heroes all within the same month, coupled with the death of three great friends, spiraled me into a very serious bipolar manic episode. Getting recognition as an artist from them, as well as being accepted as a peer, really shook my foundations. I literally had to check into a psychiatric emergency clinic and get on meds...thank the creator for my wife and kids who really helped me heal in this crazy existential crisis...*

*Hal asked me to finish producing a Burroughs record he started twenty years back, Let Me Hang You, and always invited me to participate in his many crazy happenings. He was more than just a buddy, he shared his visions with me and always made me feel at home, even while sharing a seafood hot pot in London with Lou Reed and Kim Catrell.*

*The song "Hal" was made for him, and behind the weirdness there is an ocean of love... I am so grateful that I was able to share so many wonderful moments with Hal and Lou before they passed, and I will be forever in their service to bring harmony and dissidence together in one foul swoop, creating without fear 'til the day that I join them in the afterlife.*

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