

# DOWNTOWN MONITOR

## Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix Roars Through Belle Isle



By George B. Eichorn

It will be a new member of the Detroit Lions who gets to voice the famous words, "Gentlemen, start your engines" when the *Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix presented by Lear* returns to Belle Isle, June 2-4.

Grand Marshal TJ Lang, the new offensive guard for Detroit, will signal the Verizon IndyCar Series drivers this Saturday, June 3 shortly after 3:30 p.m. on The Raceway at Belle Isle Park street circuit. Lang came to the Lions from rival Green Bay this spring and is a Birmingham Brother Rice and Eastern Michigan University graduate.

Besides the IndyCar event, the *Chevrolet Dual in Detroit* features the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, the high-flying trucks of the SPEED Energy Stadium SUPER Trucks and the Trans Am Series presented by Pirelli. Friday, June 2 is *Free Prix Day* for fans of motorsports!

Besides the world-class racing, there are a number of entertainment events in the Meijer Fan Zone. The MotorCity Casino Hotel Entertain-

ment Stage will feature live music all weekend, headlined by Country music duo Montgomery Gentry, at 6 p.m. on Saturday, and Jody Watley featuring Shalamar Reloaded, at 1 p.m. on Sunday. There's food and beverages at the Bud Light Beer Garden and Food Court, featuring the Taste of Detroit with local vendor trucks. The popular Detroit Sports District returns featuring interactive displays from Detroit professional sports teams with appearance from former and current local athletes. Tickets for the Grand Prix start at just \$45. For information and tickets, see [DetroitGP.com](http://DetroitGP.com), call (866) 464-PRIX (7749) or visit the Grand Prix office in the GM Renaissance Center, 300 Renaissance Center Drive, Suite 2311, in Detroit.

The *Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix* will take place on Greater Detroit's oasis of natural beauty, Belle Isle, located on E. Jefferson Ave, near Mt. Elliott, in Downtown Detroit.

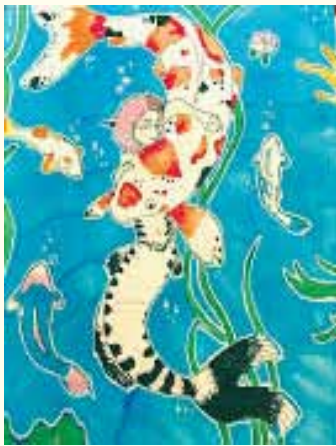
## SHOWINGS

### Northville Young Artist Art Fair



Northville Art House will present its very first *Young Artist Juried Art Fair* on Saturday, June 17, from Noon to 5 p.m.

Over 25 children from Northville, Novi, South Lyon, Ann Arbor, Salem, Garden City, Dearborn and Detroit will showcase their diverse talents and have both original artwork and reproductions available for sale. Featured work will include watercolor and acrylic paintings, photography, mixed media, fiber art, ceramics, jewelry, fleece pillows and drawings. Each young artist will have a 6-foot table



under a 40 x 60 foot tent, located on the grassy area of the northwest corner of Cady and Wing Streets in downtown Northville. (Left, Art from 13 yr. old Peri Wolff).

Young artists in grades 3 through 10 had an opportunity to meet one-on-one with a mentor from the Northville Art House to receive feedback on their work and valuable selling and display advice.

The Young Artist Juried Fair is part of the Arts & Acts 2017 Festival. The festival takes place in downtown Northville, June 16-18 and features Art in the Sun, the 29th annual juried fine art show, the Sandbox Play Festival presented by Tipping Point Theatre, the Short on Words literature contest sponsored by Preservation Dental, the 5th annual Northville Art House Chalk Festival and a variety of enticing gourmet food trucks, live

musical acts and other children's activities.

For more info contact the Northville Art House at (248) 344-0497 or see northvillearthouse.org. The Northville Art House is located at 215 W. Cady Street, in Northville.

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## CITY SCENE

### Annual Indian Village Home & Garden Tour

Laydell Harper

People all over town are talking about the new developments Downtown. But let's not forget the neighborhoods, especially those grand old historic neighborhoods that continue to be the highlight of many of the Greyline city tours in and around the City. Exciting things are happening... recently, Hill Harper, the actor and TV star, loved Detroit so much that after working here on location, he purchased a home in one of our grand old neighborhoods of Detroit and has decided to live here.

It's a great time in Detroit and on Saturday, June 10 and Sunday, June 11, historic *Indian Village's Annual Home and Garden Tour* only adds to all of the excitement.

If you'd like a bit of Detroit history coupled with some great hometown flair and hospitality, you'll love the Indian Village Home and Garden Tour, just 10 minutes from Downtown. This year will be the 44th year for this great Eastside tradition. The event has become a labor of love for Indian Village dwellers who work together to make the home tour a success.

Celebrating the 122nd anniversary of this elegant, historic neighborhood, the tour is full of surprises and this year will be no exception. As you stroll down the tree-lined streets Seminole, Iroquois and Burns, it will be easy to slip back in time to the turn of the century when many of these stately historic homes were built. Restoring them is a passion for villagers. The original gaslights strategically placed along the sidewalks in front of each home only add to the ambiance. Its name chosen purely for its romantic appeal, Indian Village is situated within walking distance to the Detroit River.

Today, this elegant historic residential neighborhood bounded by East Jefferson Avenue to the south and Mack Avenue to the North consists of 352 households, four churches, and two elementary schools. Historically, the neighborhood is best known for



its connection to the automotive industry. Many of the homes were exclusively built and designed for some of the great auto barons and titans of industry.

On Saturday, June 10 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, June 11, from 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., visitors will delight in viewing ten elegant homes and two beautiful gardens. Each home has its own unique history. What you'll see is not just a collection of wonderfully appointed, magnificently decorated neighborhood houses, but a well selected collection of historical treasures that open the door to the wonderful rich history that is unique to the city of Detroit.

It's one experience to drive through the neighborhood and see these elegant homes from the outside, but seeing their interiors and learning the history from well informed docents and in some cases, the home owners, offers a rare opportunity.

This is a first for the John Owen House located on Seminole. It has never been featured on the tour. According to the home's history, this home is the last of six homes that John Owen and his wife lived in; Owen was the moving force behind the Cook Farm Co., developer of Indian Village. All three

floors will be open. The current owners have done major renovations to the home including a gut renovation of the kitchen and master bath as well as the extension of narrow three season room into a cozy den.

Another featured home is located on Iroquois and has a rich history of automotive executive occupants; Lynn McNaughton, Cadillac Sales VP (1925-1932) and Roscoe C. Hoffman, Packard VP, from (1935-1941) and others. Two of the three floors will be open. This home is loaded with original details such as; hardwood floors, built-ins, French doors and leaded glass.

You don't want to miss this exciting opportunity to see some of the finest architectural homes in the city.

Advance tickets for a single day tour are \$22.50. Tickets for the two-day tour are \$40.50.

Tickets are also available on-site, at \$25 for a single day tour, and \$45 for a two-day tour, (Tickets at Nichols School, 3000 Burns). Guided tours are an extra \$10 per ticket with limited availability.

For more information or tickets, see [HistoricIndianVillage.org](http://HistoricIndianVillage.org), or call (313) 922-1736.

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## SYMPHONIC NEWS



### Ruth's Music Notes...

Ruth Crystal-Zaromp

The University Musical Society in Ann Arbor is having a retirement celebration to honor Ken Fischer for his many years of service as President of UMS. This will be taking place at the Rackham Building (915 E. Washington Street in Ann Arbor) on Thursday, June 1, from 4-6 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. For the past 30 years, Ken Fischer has overseen extraordinary growth at UMS. Under Fischer's visionary leadership, UMS greatly expanded and diversified its artistic programming beyond classical music and introduced education and community engagement programs on U-M's campus, as well as including residencies with the Royal Shakespeare Company and New York Philharmonic.

Michigan Opera Theatre has announced the next season of young artists for the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio residency program. The artists include tenor, Michael Day; soprano, Monica Dewey; baritone, Harry Greenleaf; bass-baritone, Erik Van Heyningen; and returning Studio Artist mezzo-soprano, Briana Elyse Hunter. Celebrated American tenor Richard Leech continues to lead the program as Director of Resident Artist Programs with the support of coach/accompanist Tessa Hartle.

On this coming weekend of June 1-3, the DSO will be performing at Orchestra Hall a program that features the DSO premiere of Wynton Marsalis' *Violin Concerto*. Marsalis is primarily known as a world-class trumpet player, but composing has been among his several other activities. Nicola Benedetti for whom this concerto in D was composed suggests that the overall theme is the American story and the integration of cultures. Benedetti will be the violin soloist in this program and James



Gaffigan will be conducting. The program also includes Stravinsky's *Circus Polka* (ballet for young elephants composed for the Ringling Brothers & Barnum & Bailey Circus). The main section of the program includes Tchaikovsky's *Fifth Symphony* (composed in 1888). It has a cyclical structure where the main theme recurs throughout the different movements. The 2017 Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival is around the corner and it features many rewarding events. This series will begin at the Seligman Center on June 10 and will continue through June 26.

Among the planned artists: The Emerson String Quartet, James Tocco, our concertmaster Yoonshin Song and renowned violinist Leila Josefowicz – that's only a partial list. Tocco was the founding Artistic Director of this series until replaced by cellist Paul Watkins a couple of seasons ago. As part of this series, the Shouse Institute presents younger exceptional musicians who are given the opportunity to work under the senior musicians of the festival. For example, a former Shouse ensemble, the Calidore String Quartet, has won chamber music's biggest award of \$100,000. The Calidore quartet will be performing together with the Emerson quartet on opening night (June 10)

in the formidable Mendelssohn's *Octet*.

The current season of the GLCMF places emphasis on music inspired by the spoken/written word. On Saturday, June 17, the world premiere of *Shostakovich and the Black Monk: A Russian Fantasy* will be performed. A series of short segments discussing the work are accessible on the Facebook website of the GLCMF. The story was written by Chekhov, an English translation of which is available online. Shostakovich' efforts to compose and publish an opera on this theme brought about interference from Stalin. In this production, the Emerson Quartet will be joined by a troupe of seven actors. The premiere will take place at the DIA, which is co-sponsoring the presentation.

Among other coming events: On June 6, 7:30 p.m., Tuesday Musicale is featuring Naomi Yamaguchi, (pictured) their 2017 winner of Ruth Laredo *An die Musik Award*, performing solo works by Beethoven, Menotti, Chopin, and Mozart's piano concerto K.488 with a chamber orchestra, Scott Hanoian conducting. Yamaguchi is a gifted, impressive 12 year-old, whom I have heard on several occasions. She is scheduled to perform next season with Promusica. For information check warmemorial.org/arts.



Greater Detroit's Cultural Events Weekly  
**DOWNTOWN MONITOR**

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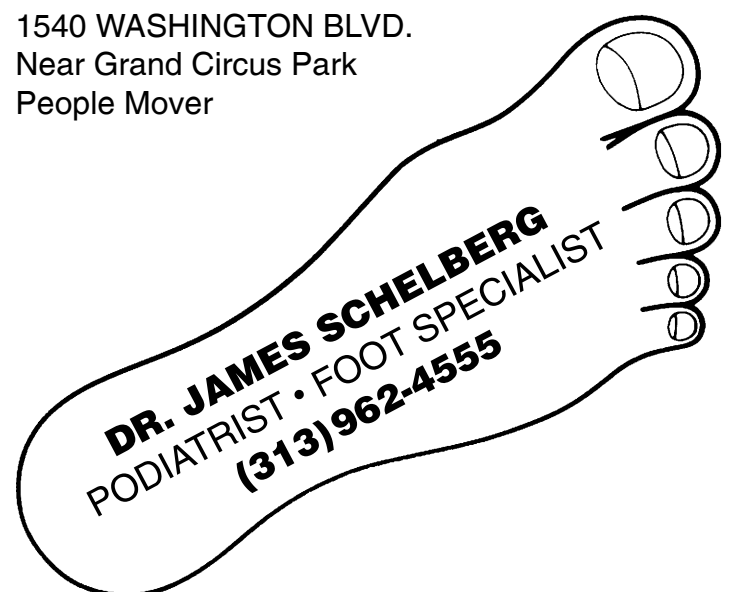
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## Motown Records: Made in Detroit Symposium

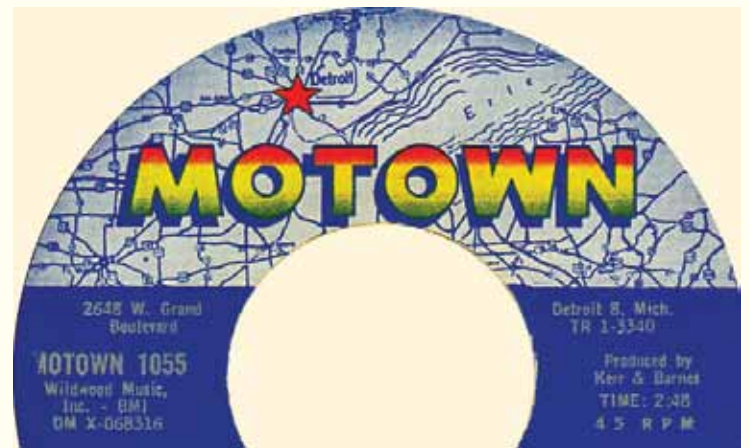
Plowshares Theatre Company will present *Motown Records: Made in Detroit*, a three-day symposium, to learn the significance and legacy of Motown Records.

The symposium takes place Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 6-8, at the MSU Detroit Center and is free. Only 50 spaces are available.

In recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the 1967 Rebellion, the symposium will include a section focusing on the music of Motown from 1967. On the final day of the symposium, educators will create digital media classroom resources to share with students and the general public. This event is recommended for

Michigan based 8th-12th graders, college educators & students and music enthusiasts.

For more information and to register for this event, call (313) 593-0926 or online at [www.plowsharestheatre.org](http://www.plowsharestheatre.org). The MSU Detroit Center is located at 3408 Woodward Avenue, just south of Mack in Downtown Detroit.



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## 6th Annual Juneteenth Health Fair

Ascension St. John Providence Community Health will present its 6th Annual Juneteenth Health Fair on Friday, June 16, from 12-3 p.m. on the quarter mile greenway, at Milbank Conner Creek.

This free event will include fitness demonstrations, nutrition information, food, fun and entertainment.

This year's event entitled, "Pride, People. Prevention" is meant to bridge the health disparities gap, recognize and build awareness towards cultural diversity and enhance community engagement. Radio One 105.9 Kiss personality Angie Starr will attend the event along with a guest DJ from Hot 107.5 radio.

This event gives families from the metro Detroit area an opportunity to access healthcare resources from agencies including Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, UnitedHealthCare Community Plan, My Urgent Dentistry, PLLC, American Diabetes Association, Wayne County SAFE program and many more.

The St. John Providence team will be on-site performing diabetes and blood pressure screenings while mobile units will service those seeking heart & vascular screenings and mammograms.

For more information or to schedule an appointment on the mobile unit, call Ascension St. John Providence at (313) 369-5600. Milbank Conner Creek Greenway is located at 4777 East Outer Drive, just east of Van Dyke and south of 8 Mile on Detroit's eastside.



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## Matrix Theatre's Dream Deferred: Detroit, 1967 World Premiere

The World Premiere of Matrix Theatre Company's *Dream Deferred: Detroit, 1967* will run June 2-25, on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and on Sundays at 3 p.m. Additional programming which includes discussions, Q and A sessions with artists and more, designed to allow audiences the opportunity to openly engage with the subjects and discuss themes will be offered as part of post-show events.

All performances are presented at the Maxtrix Theatre Company, located in the heart of Mexicantown and all post-show events are free with the price of admission.

Reflecting on a formative moment in Detroit's history, this original production unearths, for the first time, real interviews recorded by Dr. Xavier Nicholas following that summer's riot. *Dream Deferred: Detroit, 1967* gives voice to the unique experiences and perspectives of a cross-section of Detroiters to find out what really happened and how we can learn from the pain of our shared past. The post-show events are programmed around those themes.

Post-show events include the Opening Night Reception on Friday, June 2. *The Creation of Dream Deferred: Detroit, 1967* on Sunday, June 4, learn more about how this world premiere production came to be in a Q & A discussion with the creators. Dr. Nicholas and Dr. Harvey Reed will participate in the discussion.

A talkback with cast will take place on Friday, June 9. Join Melissa Beckwith, Joshua Brown, Katie Fullerton, Jonathan Jones and Mike Sandusky as they sit down with patrons to discuss the show.

In addition to regularly scheduled performances, the final dress rehearsal on Thursday, June 1 is a *Pay What You Can* performance. Tickets will be available that evening only on a first-come, first-served basis and cannot be purchased in advance. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. for the 8 p.m. performance. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students, seniors and the military.

For tickets and more information call (313) 967-0599 or see [matrixtheatre.org](http://matrixtheatre.org). The Matrix Theatre Company is located at 2730 Bagley Avenue, just south of Vernor, in Southwest Detroit.

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## LIVE THEATRE



## 'Foursome' Tees Off on Friendship

By Paul Arlon

The Tipping Point Theatre in picturesque downtown Northville is what a small, professional stage should strive to be. A community showplace that assembles top caliber theater talent, from set designers, costumers, lighting and sound directors to the large pool of seasoned actors and actresses that literally compete to perform their best work before an appreciative audience.

In my estimation, the Tipping Point's shows, while always in the same league as Greater Detroit's upper range professional stages (Meadow Brook, Purple Rose, Detroit Public, to name a few), has their most unqualified successes when presenting comedic fare.

I generally feel the same about live theatre as I do about cinema. I can appreciate dramatic tragedy and pathos, but, when made to decide upon what kind of emotion

I'll permit to enter my consciousness, I'll always decide to laugh rather than cry. Meaning, I can readily conjure up dark thoughts if I want to, without any help from a play or a movie or a book, or anything else. But, I don't want to. I really am my Mother's child – she always looked for the rainbow and never passed a flower without stopping to take in its fragrant beauty.

So, the new play at the Tipping Point, the Michigan premiere of *The Ladies Foursome*, deftly directed by Lynn Wilde Concannon, is the kind of material that rows my boat. Playwright Norm Foster's sequel to last season's Tipping Point hit, the all-male *The Foursome*, follows four ladies as they play a round of golf in honor of their recently deceased golf pal, Catherine.

Three of the friends-through-golf are keeping their weekly outing after Catherine's funeral, Connie (MaryJo Cup-

pone), a TV newscaster; Tate (Angela Kay Miller), a well-off surgeon's wife; Margot (Amy Morrissey), a construction company owner; and now, also, Dory (Sonja Marquis), a visitor from a remote Canadian resort, who has only joined the quartet for this one, significant, round.

At first highly suspicious of Dory, who as a stranger seems to know far more about Catherine than the three regular golf buddies, the other three women soon find themselves not only learning more about their dead friend, but, in essence, learning much more about each other than they'd ever known before. The group discusses life, love, men, sex, children, careers and everything else besides golf, leaving each one realizing how starkly shallow their relationships have been. Through eighteen holes of golf, the foursome shares secrets and life facts that changes each one for



L to R: Miller, Marquis, Cuppone and Morrissey

the better. And, best of all, it's funny.

Works for me.

*The Ladies Foursome* runs Thursday, June 1 through Sunday, June 24, with a special event at Walnut Creek Country Club on June 25. Curtains rise at 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays, with matinees at 3 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday. A special matinee performance takes

place on Wednesday, June 14 at 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$30 to \$40 for adults, \$28 to \$33 for college students and senior citizens. High School Students with a valid ID may purchase a ticket to any performance for \$10. For tickets or more information, call (248) 347-0003. The Tipping Point Theatre is located at 361 E. Cady St. in Downtown Northville.



## 'Countdown to the Happy Day' at DRT

By Marian Sakalauskas

The Detroit Repertory Theatre opened its world premier of Thomas W. Stephens's *Countdown to the Happy Day* to a packed house with the playwright in attendance. It made for a very exciting evening.

*Countdown to the Happy Day* is a two-person play that throws two unlikely characters together. Gertie (Casaundra Freeman) is a forty-something army veteran who makes her home on the street, under the bridge, on a park bench, wherever she can find a place to throw her blanket. She is extremely anxious and constantly on the move. As she explains at one point, "staying in one place makes you think." Clearly suffering from PTSD, she has much she does not want to think about.

The other character is Cervin (Calvin Biggs, Jr.), an oversized seventh-grade drop-out who is trying to take care of his ailing mother. When he meets Gertie, he asks her if she knows how to cook and convinces her to go with him to cook some chops for his mother, who he says is not doing very well.

Although these two characters are rather grim, their interaction is often hilarious. She has a smart mouth on her and he exhibits a kind of naïveté that is unexpected in a street-person. When Cervin's mother dies, he seeks to establish a relationship with Gertie. She tells him, "You and me – that's nothing but a fender bender." But she does turn around and scold him for not going to school; "You don't go to school, you gonna be at the bottom of the barrel."

They continue to trade insults,

many of which elicited peals of laughter from the audience. At one point, Cervin says to Gertie, "You like an ole tire. No tread but still spinning."

Even though both of these characters are in dire straights, they are both hoping that somehow they will be able to find a happy day. With the unseen guidance of Paston Roland of the Good Shepherd AMC, Cervin is taken in by a family who begin to school him with the hopes he will pass eighth grade. "I'm not going to be a dumb ass," he claims, "just a regular ass." And Gertie, who has refused to cash her veteran's checks from the army, sets up a trust in Cervin's name.

The language is gritty and the situation is bleak, but the laughter and the message of hope come through it all. At the end, Gertie explains, if you want to



Calvin Biggs, Jr. and Casaundra Freeman

find a happy day, "you got to gather whatever broken pieces you see and put them together."

Playwright Tom Stephens has written dozens of plays, many of which have been produced or developed at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center. A member of the Dramatists Guild, he is a winner of the Actors Contemporary Ensemble Playwriting Award and of the Charles M. Getchell New Play Award. *Countdown to the*

*Happy Day* was a winner at the Ashland New Plays Festival and a finalist for the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center's 2012 National Playwrights Conference.

*Countdown to the Happy Day* runs Thursdays through Sundays through June 25 at the Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit.

For tickets or information, call (313) 868-1347 or online at [detroitreptheatre.com](http://detroitreptheatre.com).



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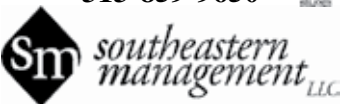
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