

THE METROPOLITAN


dÉtroit


Comerica Park

Springtime in dÉtroit

OPENING DAY

By Anthony Brancaleone

Opening Day. My father would wake me early to let me know if we had tickets. We did. Whew. A quick bowl of Raison Bran, brush my teeth then check the weather outside. *Looks like it's gonna be a nice one.*

The energy was already palpable and I was only looking for my mitt. It was in my closet, somewhere, on my brother's toy chest, maybe. "Mom, where's my mitt!" "You're what?" "My mitt" "What do you mean?" "Where's my baseball glove?" "I don't know. Did you check under the bed?" *Under the bed.* Yep, there it was. How did she know that? *Probably put it there herself.*

Dad drove down 75, as we listened to voices on the radio discussing the game. Tickets were hard to come by and Dad could only get one pair. As it was, these came from my uncle. This usually left my younger brother at home, both of us feeling guilty, with Dad explaining how he'll try to bring Nick next year and that he was probably too young, anyway. To my brother's credit, he never complained. Just seemed happy for me. *Oh well, that's the way the cookie crumbles.*

For me, Opening Day began in Greektown, usually Hellas, sometimes Mykonos - where Uncle Don would hand me singles to give to the belly dancers, but that's another story. Though Don was actually my mother's cousin he was everybody's *Uncle Don.*

He'd hold court early, providing friends and clients with drinks and plenty of lamb, grape leaves and sweets before distributing tickets. Past players, like Gates Brown and Jim Price, were there; sometimes, Denny McLaine, though I was too young to know who they were. Uncle Don asked about my mother, Nick and would give us baseballs, autographed the entire team. In my eyes, he was larger than life. Had one of those mustaches that curled up on the ends, and a genuine laugh unlike any other.

From there, Dad and I drove to Tiger Stadium. We'd park the car in his favorite lot - which I learned later had more to do with price than aesthetic - and walked over the bridge toward the towering white structure. People moved quickly, while others purchased pennants and peanuts from vendors calling out their wares. "Tickets! Tickets!" a voice rang out.

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American Coney: 1 up and 1 loose with everything

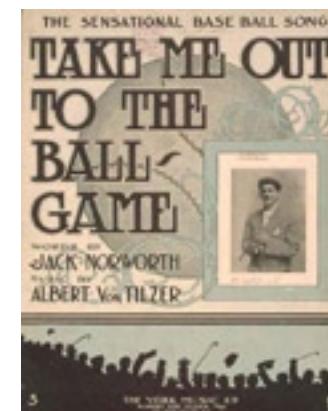
LAFAYETTE VS AMERICAN CONEY ISLAND *Two Up With Everything*

By Anthony Brancaleone

For years, there has been debate over which Coney Island offers Metro-Detroiter the best hot dog, *Lafayette* or *American.* Today, the argument still lives, playing itself out on a national stage of 'late-to-the-party' magazines and cable TV food shows.

Recently, *Man vs. Food* explored the streets of Detroit food culture, taking a bite out of *Slow's BBQ pork triple threat sandwich*, before host, Adam Richman, in an effort to resolve our region's longest running rivalry, turned his sights on *Lafayette* and *American Coney.* Good spot but, in the end, Richman tossed TV land a curve, leaving audiences wanting, from the kind of edge-of-the-seat, cliffhanger not seen since *J.R. got shot in Dallas.*

Continued on page 7



Take Me Out to the Ball Game

Nelly Kelly love baseball games,
Knew the players, knew all their names,
You could see her there ev'ry day,
Shout "Hurray," when they'd play.
Her boy friend by the name of Joe
Said, "To Coney Isle, dear, let's go,"
Then Nelly started to fret and pout,
And to him I heard her shout.

"Take me out to the ball game,
Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and cracker jack,
I don't care if I never get back,
Let me root, root, root for the home team,
If they don't win it's a shame.
For it's one, two, three strikes, you're out,
At the old ball game."

Nelly Kelly was sure some fan,
She would root just like any man,
Told the umpire he was wrong,
All along, good and strong.
When the score was just two to two,
Nelly Kelly knew what to do,
Just to cheer up the boys she knew,
She made the gang sing this song.

"Take me out to the ball game,
Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and cracker jack,
I don't care if I never get back,
Let me root, root, root for the home team,
If they don't win it's a shame.
For it's one, two, three strikes, you're out,
At the old ball game."

1927 Version
Author: Jack Norworth ©
Composer: Albert Von Tilzer
Published on: 1908, 1927
Published by: York Music Company

Letter from the Editor

A Metropolitan Springtime



Awoke this morning to the sound of the neighborhood woodpecker announcing his return. He seemed pretty serious about it too. Stepped outside and breathed in the fresh air. Hello chipmunks, hello squirrels, hello little birds singing little bird songs. Walked to the edge of the yard and spotted my neighbor, Connie, walking Rookie, her frisky Pug.

Two cats chased each other through the brush beneath the trees that separate one home from the next. The beginnings of flowers poked their way up from the ground that recently held snow. I headed down the walk and caught the faint sound of a train off in the distance, whole notes from its deep and steady horn floating by on the wind.

Children were playing with a ball in the yard, a boy and a girl, laughing. A delivery truck stopped just ahead of me and I watched as the deliveryman gathered his material. We addressed one another in passing. I began to sing, humming a sequence of notes that were musically pleasing. A lovely young woman skimmed by on roller blades, the muscle of her inner thighs taut, while the sun, the glorious sun, followed our every move.

When I turned the corner and headed in the direction of the park I was nonplussed with the sudden aroma of fresh bread. From where did it come? A metropolitan springtime. Upon return to our maisonette, I glanced up to observe The Sun King warming himself on the sill.

Anthony Brancaleone

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Last days of Tiger Stadium

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Emails to the Editor

Tony,

Allow me to relay a story to you of chance and possible oblique string theory harmonization. I was working at Arts on a weekend and was wearing my Megadeth tshirt that says "I met the band and you didn't" on the back. There was this table back by the jukebox with these cool cats I was waiting on and they made mention of the tshirt and some conversation ensued that lead to this guy telling me he was in a band and when I asked him the genre he said "like kinda modern/fusion rock" or something to that effect and I said "like King Crimson?" and he about sh*t, then, knowing he was in the music scene I asked him if he'd heard of you guys and he sh*t down the other leg of his jeans, it was funny. Real nice dude, dark haired, bleary eyed (at the time), dark tshirt wearing dude, I'm sure you know of whom I speak. Simply press shift pause break for the supersentient program. The Phage isn't bad, good effort, needs to come out of the pupa stage and see the beautiful bug in its own reflection in a raindrop that has landed on a birds beak coming at him at seemingly a million miles an hour, "who are you, you look cool, let's do some stuff, oh sh*t, better figure it all out, here comes a bird to eat me..." Getting old is like being in an unknown rock band, I finally figured it out. Write me back or use the sentient keys to communicate, my heads about to explode, must be our orbit.

Dave Dilley
Glen Arbor, Mi.

Anthony,

Well you were right. We went to The Old Shillelagh after the fight for an hour before they closed and had a great time. Just got back today and I was going thru your paper. Very well done and keep up the good work. I agree about Anthony Bourdain. Any chance I could get a jpg of your October 2009 city of tomorrow cover photo? I really like that.

Check out WJLHradio.com. It is a site dedicated to all things michigan. Music, food, cars, movies, etc. If you are ever in Kalamazoo let me know and the next time I'm in detroit I would like to pick your brain on some detroit history.

Have a pint for me.

Jason Harter
Editor
WJLH Radio
Portage, MI

Tony...be a fan...keep the Detroit Belle Isle Aquarium ...GOING!!!!

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Mei Mei

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"Six: A Salute to Al Kaline"

Book captures what "Mr. Tiger" meant to baseball

DETROIT - Nobody impacted the game of Tigers baseball to the degree that the legendary Al Kaline did. "Mr. Tiger" established himself as the face of the franchise during his 22 seasons with the Tigers and in 1980, became just the 10th player ever to be elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame during his first year of eligibility.

Now Tigers fans can relive his outstanding career with the fourth book in Olympia Entertainment's Legends series: "Six: A Salute to Al Kaline." This unique collection of articles and never-before-seen photographs captures what Kaline has meant to the storied Tigers franchise, his teammates, a legion of loyal fans and the entire baseball world. Each book is individually numbered, making it a must-have Tigers collectible.

"Six: A Salute to Al Kaline" features more than 150-pages chronicling "Mr. Tiger's" illustrious baseball career, including photos from Kaline's personal collection. The book retails for \$25 and is currently available at Joker Marchant Stadium and will be available at Comerica Park during the regular season.

Kaline's 22 seasons with the Tigers is matched only in longevity by the legendary Ty Cobb. He was selected to 18 all-star games, the most in Tigers franchise history, including 13 consecutive seasons (1955-67). The outfielder won 10 Gold Gloves in 11 years from 1957-67 and led American League outfielders in fielding percentage in 1966 and 1971.

He came back from a broken arm suffered earlier in the season to bat .379 against the St. Louis Cardinals during the 1968 World Series, leading the Tigers to their third Series title.

On September 24, 1974, Kaline recorded his 3,000th career hit, becoming just the 12th major league player to reach the milestone. He finished his career with 3,007 hits and remains as the only other Tigers player aside from Cobb to have amassed more than 3,000 hits.

Kaline had his uniform No. 6 retired by the Tigers on August 17, 1980, the first Tigers player to receive this honor. Following his outstanding playing career, he spent 26 seasons providing color commentary for Tigers television broadcasts. Kaline is currently serving in his ninth year, 58th with the organization, as a special assistant and advisor to Tigers senior management.



The Art of Baseball



Hard Ball III, Robert Moskowitz, 1993,
Oil on canvas. Detroit Institute of Arts.
Image courtesy of Moskowitz.

Game Day Exhibit

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OPENING DAY

Continued from Cover

As we neared the gates, the stadium seemed to grow in size. Throngs of people bottlenecked to get through the turnstile. The faint murmur of sounds inside the ballpark, music, fans, the loudspeaker all combined to form one distinct resonance that is only audible on game day. Once our ticket was checked a feeling of security fell over me and I could finally collect myself from the whirlwind of activity that aroused the senses.

Dad and I would spend a little time looking at the souvenirs. It was always a tough decision determining which item I would take home to my brother. "We'll get one on the way out", Dad would say. "Let's find our seats."

Entering the stadium itself was the most intense experience of the day. The tunnels leading inward were dark, and once through we found ourselves in a moving stream of people, flowing steadily this way and that, concession stands, hot dogs, pop, cracker jack, a flash of sunlight from inside the park, more pennants, jerseys, little baseball bats, stuffed tigers and people moving quickly, spilling beer, as they sipped from their cup.

"Do you need to use the bathroom?" Dad would ask. "Yeah," I'd say. He taught me to go in through the out door and I remember thinking that it wasn't any more organized than it was in the corridor. "Who's pitching?" someone blurted out. "Roxy!" a voice replied. "Can you believe how much they want for a beer?" shouted another. "They gotcha comin' and goin'"

Back in the corridor, dad led the way to our section, stopping first to pick up a program, which was always my favorite souvenir. I grasped it tightly as we stepped out into the open air of the greatest ballpark ever made. It was majestic; lush green grass, surrounded by the deep, dark green wood of the structure.

Finding our seats, we sat down and readied ourselves for a long afternoon. "Who's playing?" I asked. Funny, how who was playing meant a lot less than simply being at the game with your Dad. "Red hots! Get your red hots here!" Dad waved the hot dog man over and bought us each a dog with mustard. *Nothing like em' anywhere.* Wrapped snuggly inside Tiger Stadium, the outside world seemed to disappear for a while.

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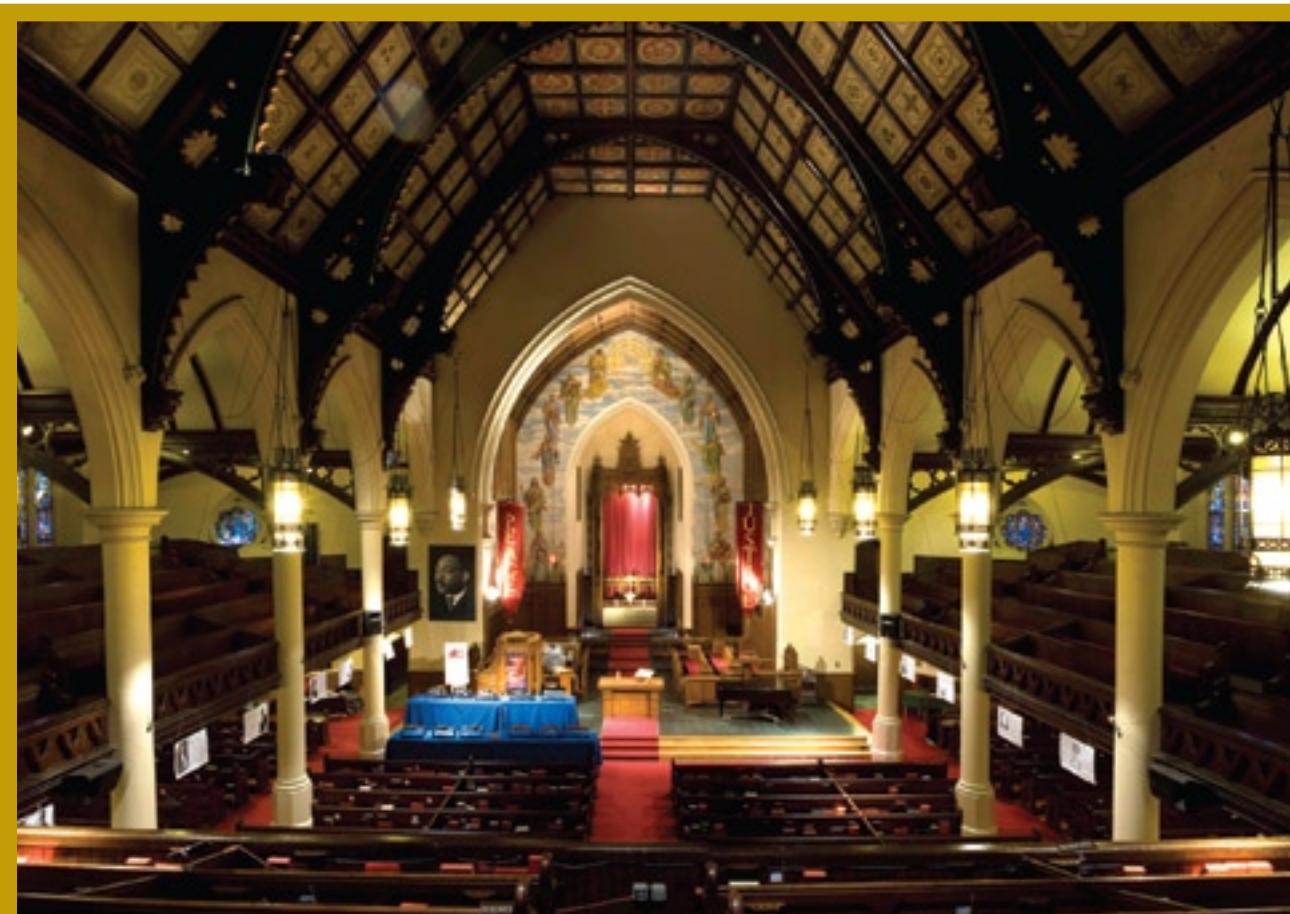
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Central Methodist Church Detroit

Photos: Paul Hitz

CENTRAL METHODIST CELEBRATES 200 YEARS OF CHURCH HISTORY

Detroit was considered the Wild West in 1804, when Rev. Daniel Freeman, a circuit-riding pastor (traveling on horseback) became the first Methodist to preach a sermon in Michigan. For a hundred years prior to that Detroit was French and exclusively Catholic. Rev. Nathan Bangs the next circuit rider to come that year called Detroit "a most abandoned place." Bangs wrote that he "left shaking the dust off his feet in testament against them." This dissuaded further circuit riders until 1809 when Rev. William Case came to town. He complained to his bishop about "the difficulty of finding any serious people" in Detroit. When that next circuit rider, Rev. William Mitchell, came to Detroit in 1810 seven believers formed The First Methodist Society of Michigan, (still Central's legal name), the first protestant congregation in the Michigan territory, (statehood would not arrive until 1837). The congregation met in the government council house for the first few years, then in 1818 built a log church on the Rouge River in what is now Dearborn. By 1826 the congregation had its own building back in the city of Detroit. Some stayed at the log church and formed First Methodist Church, Dearborn. Finished in 1867, the present sanctuary is the sixth building occupied by the congregation.

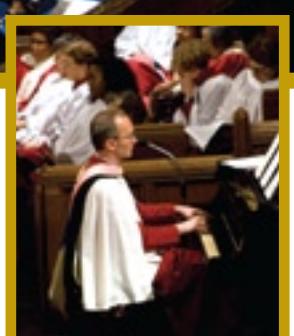
Central has had a long history of activism in the struggle for peace and justice. In 1830 when Central was located near the present Compuware headquarters, its roof served as a prime viewing spot for the throngs that gathered to watch the execution of William Simmons, who killed his wife in a drunken stupor. The sheriff, a member of Central, resigned his post rather than violate his Christian convictions by participating in the hanging. Simmons reportedly sang a hymn to the tune of Old Hundredth before he was hung. The crowd was so horrified by the gruesome spectacle that they stormed the river, threw the flogging post into the river and demanded an end to capital punishment. It is believed that many Central members were in that throng that insisted that Michigan become the first English speaking territory in the world to abolish capital punishment.

In the 20th century, Central also pushed for formation of the League of Nations and the United Nations, became an integrated congregation in the 1950s, established a draft counseling center during the Vietnam War era, and continued to be at the forefront of nonviolent protest for peace and racial justice. Peace rallies and marches in Detroit often started at Central. Central has also attracted many nationally and internationally known leaders in the struggle for peace and justice. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. often preached at Central, the last time just two weeks before his assassination. In fact Dr. Henry Hitt Crane, senior minister at Central from 1938-58 and personal friend of King's, tried to get King to assume the senior pastorate when he retired. King reportedly turned down the opportunity saying that his busy schedule would be unfair to the congregation.

www.centralumchurch.com



Jesse Jackson's visit on January 24, 2010



CONCERTS FEATURE GRAMMY NOMINEES TILLERY, HERSCH

Detroit - Central United Methodist Church, Michigan's oldest Protestant congregation continues its bicentennial celebration this spring with two concerts by Grammy-nominated musical artists.

At 7 p.m. Sunday, April 25, the church will host Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir from Oakland, California. At 8 p.m. Saturday, May 8, New York-based jazz pianist and AIDS activist Fred Hersch performs with special guest jazz saxophonist George Benson.

The Cultural Heritage Choir (CHC) is a Grammy-nominated, percussion-driven vocal ensemble whose mission is to help preserve and share the rich traditions of African-American roots music. Its music is rooted in the Deep South and strongly connected to the choir's West African and Caribbean origins.

Native San Franciscan Linda Tillery is a Grammy-nominated vocalist, producer, arranger, speaker and self-taught ethno-musicologist. For the past 16 years, she has dedicated her artistic life to the research, teaching and performance of the great African-American oral tradition of song, stick and story – the precursor of today's American popular song.

In 1992, Tillery founded the Cultural Heritage Choir to carry out this important mission. She and the CHC tell the story of slavery and its lingering effects from the point of view of the slaves, for whom music was often their only voice.

Pianist and composer Fred Hersch has been called "one of the small handful of brilliant musicians of his generation" by Downbeat magazine and has earned a place among the foremost jazz artists in the world today. From the late 70's onward, as a sideman to jazz legends including Joe Henderson, Art Farmer and Stan Getz, he has solidified a reputation as a versatile master of jazz piano, as well as a relentlessly probing composer and conceptualist. He is widely recognized for his ability to steadfastly create a unique body of original works while reinventing the standard jazz repertoire – investing time-tested classics with keen insight, fresh ideas and extraordinary technique.

Tickets for both concerts – \$20 for adults and \$10 for students – are available by phone at 313-965-5422 and on the church's website at www.centralumchurch.com.



HOUSES OF THE HOLY

- **Masonic Temple on Saturday, April 17 at 2 p.m.** – Bring your walking shoes! On this tour, guests will explore one of the largest and most complete Masonic buildings in the world. This temple, designed by George D. Mason and Company, has more than 1,030 rooms and 12 million cubic feet of space. The cost of this tour is \$20 for Detroit Historical Society members and \$30 for guests.
- **I Am My Brother's Keeper Pilgrim Church on Saturday, April 17 at 11 a.m.** – Guests on this tour can explore this historic house of worship that was highlighted in Mitch Albom's latest book "Keeping the Faith." Until recently, the hole in the roof was so large the congregation was forced to hold worship services under a tent inside the church. The cost of this tour is \$10 for Detroit Historical Society members and \$20 for guests.
- **St. Sabbas Monastery on Saturday, April 24 at 11 a.m.** – Founded in 1999, this men's monastery boasts six acres and includes the Monastery Katholicon, a library with more than 6,000 books, the Abbott's quarters, the trapeze, a gift shop, candle shop and bakery. Also featured are gardens, fountains, and mosaic shrines in the style of the ancient monasteries of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, and Romania. Enjoy a three-course lunch following the tour! The cost of this tour is \$40 for Detroit Historical Society members and \$50 for guests.
- **The National Shrine of the Little Flower on Thursday, April 29 at 1 p.m.** – Established in 1925, this Royal Oak church gained national attention under the leadership of Father Charles E. Coughlin. Because of its stunning architecture and the many stories it has to share, this church is one of the area's most popular attractions. The cost of this tour is \$10 for Detroit Historical Society members and \$20 for guests.

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Laffayette & American

Continued from Cover

When I was kid, *Lafayette* was the only way to go. Our family was a *Lafayette* family, simple as that. It was there my father introduced my brother and I to the words *two up with everything*, and they stuck. We never ordered them any other way. In fact, I'm not even sure we knew *two up with everything* was just one way to order Conies. It was the name of a dish, like *Osso Bucco* or *Crème Brûlée*, for all I knew.

We loved the action inside *Lafayette*, the hustle and bustle of a vibrant, downtown working establishment, people yelling orders over one another, the clack of cups and plates bouncing off tiled walls, bells ringing every time someone entered or left the building. Dad would hand down tradition, through stories of his glory days at *Lafayette*, and taught us how not to embarrass ourselves by ordering French fries or ketchup - something *Lafayette* once stood staunchly against. We listened, we ate, and that was that.

The first time I actually noticed there was a second Coney sitting alongside *Lafayette*, my father was leading me by the hand, as we crossed the street, in the direction of our car and away from another pilgrimage. A guy in a white apron, wearing yellow stains on front, was yelling at us in broken English. "What's that?" I asked, looking behind and over my shoulder. "What's what", he said - and he meant it. Try as he might, the guy in the apron would remain an enigma.

Years later (and, I forgot the exact details of the situation) my brother came home with tales of chili fries in a place called *American Coney Island*. I listened with wonder as Nick described his discovery. "They served *two up with everything*, just like *Lafayette*. They had loose burgers and windows that wrapped around the entire building and...ketchup."

What was this place? How did it exist without my knowledge? "Is it better than *Lafayette*?" I queried. "I don't know. It's pretty good" Nick replied. I thought a moment, took his words in. "Nooo . . ." I murmured, in disbelief, and left the room.

Pretty soon, everywhere I went I overheard reports of people who had recently been to *American Coney*. Chili fries, everything was suddenly chili fries. The world was becoming a different place. I was half way through the seven

stages toward acceptance when word hit the street that *Lafayette* decided to offer chili fries as well. For a moment, I thought of telling my father, then decided against it.

Needless to say, I have been to *American* and *Lafayette* many times since and love them both. As it turns out, *American Coney Island* is one of the oldest family owned and operated businesses in downtown Detroit. Established in 1917 by Constantine Keros, it was actually his brother, William, who opened *Lafayette*. Both have been operating side-by-side, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, for over 75 years. But, it is a third generation Keros, Grace Keros, who is most responsible for the recent explosion of *American Coney Island*.

In 1989, Ms. Keros expanded *American* into the corner building, giving the Coney one of the best views in the city, and she has maintained only the highest quality ingredients, using Dearborn hotdogs, 100% ground beef loose burgers, while continuing to use Detroit Chili, a Keros family recipe.

Lafayette, on the other hand, while no longer owned by a member of the Keros family, maintains much of the same feel it did when I was young. They use pork dogs, found in Eastern Market, National Chili and Spanish onions, which give the Coney its distinctive sweet flavor.

Recently, my brother and I stepped into both *Lafayette* and *American Coney Island* in order to compare and contrast the two offerings. We decided, having watched an episode of *Food Wars*, on the Travel Channel, to not make the same two blunders that show does during their competition. For one, we did not do a 'blind' taste test, believing firmly in the sense of sight, as it relates to our subject. Two, and perhaps more importantly, we decided to rate the Coneys only after eating them whole, rather than rating a single bite, as we feel confident one comes closer to the truth when confronting a 'real life' situation - who eats a single bite of a Coney?

First up, *Lafayette*. Having stopped in for lunch, we were not surprised to feel immediately at home. A handful of people ate quietly inside and we could hear the ventilation system humming and the appliances buzzing, voices softly echoing off the walls. Having matured, we each ordered 1 up with everything and 1 loose with everything. "Coke?" the waiter asked. "Sure," we said.

Our meal came quick, warm and went down smooth. Both the Coney and the loose have a faint yet certain sweetness to them that, combined with a matinee or after hours romp, give the whole experience a modest degree of naughtiness. We were stealing away to enjoy comfort food and, from the look of the two couples seated nearby, so was everybody else. 1 up with everything: \$2.40, 1 loose with everything: \$2.80, the experience . . . priceless.

After cleansing the palette, Nick and I stepped into *American* the following week to complete our study. The interior of *American* is louder than *Lafayette*, bursting with colors of red, white and blue, boasting a 'wall of fame' and offering wrap around views of the city - clearly, the more commercial of the two enterprises and, perhaps, the most popular. Usually, these are traits that give us pause.

Again, we each order 1 up with everything and 1 loose with everything. Again, our meal comes quick and warm, but upon first bite we immediately notice a difference. Our decision to rate whole coneys proves to be a good one. *American's* coneys are meaty, bold and lend themselves more to a feeling of eating something substantial. Well drained of any liquid, firm and satisfying, possessing the right amount of zing, from Dearborn mustard, with almost zero guilt attached, *American Coney* screams quality through and through. 1 up with everything: \$2.36, 1 loose with everything: \$3.15, the experience . . . very surprising.

After one week of reflection, Nick and I compared notes and decided that Adam Richman may have a point. What's the sense of determining which of these two Detroit landmarks is best? They exist to make one another better. Though they may be different they are both perfect. What's more, they are both ours. Enjoy them.

Lafayette Coney Island, 118 W Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226 Phone: (313) 964-8198

American Coney Island, 114 W Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226 Phone: (313) 964-6542

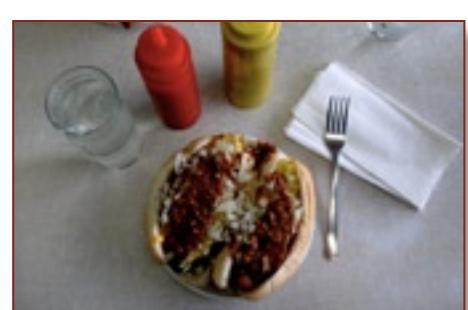
* See *Lafayette* and *American Coney Island* featured in the Brancaleone Bros documentary, *A Detroit Thing* - www.adetroitthingmovie.com



American Wall of Fame



Lafayette interior



Lafayette: 1 up and 1 loose with everything

Photos AB

5 Tips for Using a Travel Agent

Every travel agency is different and accordingly, some are better suited to a given consumer than others. Here are some tips provided by ASTA on choosing a travel agent who is right for you:

1

GO WITH THE PROS: Look for the ASTA label. Through its continuing education and training programs, ASTA prepares its members to operate high-caliber, competitive businesses.

2

ASK AROUND: Tap friends, neighbors and relatives who use an agent they trust. You may want to visit or call several agencies to find the one that best suits your needs. Consider everything from the appearance of the office to the agent's willingness to listen and answer questions. The best agents want to establish a long-term relationship with a client, not just make one sale.

3

ASK ABOUT FEES: Good agents will notify their clients of any additional fees, including service fees, up front. Doing otherwise is pointless, as the fee will appear as a separate charge on the client's credit card bill.

4

CHECK CREDENTIALS: Many agents have been trained in business management, travel and tourism or geography. Others have supplemented their agency experience with extensive education and training courses. Some travel agents are Certified Travel Counselors (CTC) through the Travel Institute or Master Cruise Counselors (MCC) through the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).

5

CUSTOMER ADVOCACY: If you have a problem with a particular part of your travel experience, the agent is there to act on your behalf to see that restitution is made. ASTA, for example, is the only travel industry association aggressively fighting to improve the travel experience, and air transportation in particular, for all consumers, not just those with access to the Internet.

Marquette to Haiti: Aviators, Doctors, Nurses make quite a team

By Raymond Rolak

MIAMI, Florida - It was a team effort for a Michigan commercial pilot and a group of twelve doctors and nurses from Marquette, as they tried to get several tons of donated supplies from the US to Haiti.

Headed by Dr. Dan Harde, the group teamed with *Partners in Health*, a Haitian health provider that assists a hospital in Les Cayes, Haiti.

Delta Airlines pilot, Stuart Sarasin got in contact with long-time Albatross owner Bill DaSilva of Tecumseh, Michigan. DaSilva is a veteran Delta Air-lines Captain, who is based at Detroit Metro.

DaSilva's plane was already in Florida for the winter. He agreed to donate his time and aircraft to get these doctors and nurses to their destination.

The Grumman Albatross is a slow flying work-horse, capable of carrying a 4,000 load from Miami to the waters off of Haiti and returning without having to refuel.

The plane, originally developed to pick up downed fighter pilots in the open ocean, was restored and painted in original U.S. Navy colors and livery. Without the albatross the mission would have been scrubbed.

The first flight took off from Opa Locka, Florida near Miami and lasted almost five hours. Fully loaded and against head winds DaSilva said, "We were just making over 120 knots at times (135 mph), it was an effort."

Their biggest problem was how to get through the crowded Port-au-Prince Airport. Had they gotten to the capitol, the roads and the lack of infrastructure would have kept them from contributing to the relief efforts.

The volunteers from Marquette funded their own shelter and food, as well as providing fuel for the first round-trip to Haiti. They also provided much needed medical assistance at the Hospital Immaculate Conception in Les Cayes.

Delta Airlines provided air travel to Miami. Other generous donors stepped in to buy fuel for an additional round trip at a cost of \$6000.

Paul and Lynda LeVeque came from California to provide additional piloting and maintenance support, while Miami based *Sea Planes International-LLC*, along with Chuck Kimes, who flies commercially for American Airlines, provided flight planning.

Several additional flights are anticipated.

Even with the donation of the crew, each trip costs several thousand dollars in fuel and aircraft operation costs. More financial help is needed to cover costs.

The relief activities are being coordinated with the *Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church* to help process donations.

AIRPORT

Aviation Professionals Donate

CHICAGO, Illinois - In a generous example of humanism, charity and solidarity, five local union members went above and beyond the call of duty.

United Air Lines Flight Attendants, Meg Mikesell, Paul Antuna, Kathy Browne, Tony Retkowski and Gerald Sermana donated their time on a recent Haiti relief flight. All are members of the Association of Flight Attendants-Communications Workers of America. An AFL-CIO affiliated union.

Their example is a reminder that calls attention to the relief efforts of the American Red Cross and other individual volunteers.

The five AFA members helped usher aid workers and supplies to Haiti and returned with some who lived through the earthquake and its horrific aftermath. "I am unable to contribute a lot of money, but I was able to give my time," said Tony Retkowski. "I hope my contributions inspire United's passengers and others around the world to give all they can for these beautiful people. The experience of letting someone know they are cared for is an incredible reward."

In the aftermath of the January 12, earthquake that struck Haiti, relief in many forms is still desperately needed. Financial contributions can make a life-saving difference. Donations to help the people of Haiti can be made by visiting the American Center for International Solidarity at www.solidaritycenter.org and clicking on 'Haitian Earthquake Victim Relief'.

Raymond Rolak is a Michigan based aviation writer.



CULTURE

5 Reasons To Use a Travel Agent

1

EXPERT GUIDANCE: Travel agents, unlike instructions on a Web page, are experts in understanding and deciphering the myriad travel information and codes out there. It's what they've been trained to do and they do it every day.

2

PERSONALIZED SERVICE: Instead of an impersonal voice thousands of miles away, travel agents are your neighbors. They know what you want and what you value in your travel experience.

3

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE: Travel agents are there to make sure you get where you want to go, when you want to go and for the lowest price.

4

TIME: Instead of checking a long list of travelWebpages, which only provide rates and fares for the companies that have contracted with them, why not go straight to the source? A travel agent has all the information at their fingertips, saving you a few hours in front of a computer screen.

5

UNBIASED INFORMATION: Agents work for their clients, not for a travel supplier. It makes sense that a happy customer will be a repeat customer.

Find out an Agency's Track Record visit ASTA.org to see whether a member agency has had a complaint against it in the prior six months. Check with the local Better Business Bureau, which keeps records of agencies that have had reports filed against them.



ASTA, ITSA File Comments Regarding Obama's signing of the Travel Promotion Act & Proposed Passport Fee Increases

Alexandria, VA - ASTA along with the Interactive Travel Services Association (ITSA) filed comments with the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, requesting that it show restraint in implementing increases in passport fees. The State Dept. recently proposed an increase in the cost of new passports (up from \$100 to \$135) and passport renewals (up from \$75 to \$110).

"As was confirmed with the recent signing of the Travel Promotion Act by President Obama, America's travel industry is in desperate need of an economic infusion. Contrary to the belief that increasing passport fees serves to keep travel spending contained within the United States, the reality is that when an American chooses not to travel abroad, U.S.-owned airlines, tour operators, hotel chains and car rental are all harmed," said ASTA President and Chair Chris Russo.

In their comments, the organizations said:

While the economy is beginning to show signs of life, it is early days and we have a long way to go before travel returns to anything resembling sustainable growth. This is, therefore, an especially poor time to increase the cost of travel. Respectfully, it is definitely not the time to impose outsized increases in the fee burden for new and repeat travelers which are the groups most affected by the proposed fee increases ranging from 27 percent for an adult passport book, 100 percent for the security surcharge, to an infinite increase (0\$ to \$82) in the cost of new pages. ...

Increases of the amounts proposed will place the government at cross-purposes with itself, working, on the one hand, to stimulate business and support the special needs of small businesses for capital and cash flow and, on the other hand, de-stimulating travel by adding costs to the essential instruments of international movement. ...

Travel can be a natural stimulus, driving economic growth and job creation. The last thing that should be done is increasing prices, and thereby the chances of dampening this engine of growth, in a severe recession.

Two Soldiers Come Home



Announced at the 2010 Michigan Airport Conference, the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Bureau of Aeronautics and Freight Services awarded its Airport Sponsor of the Year Award to Oakland County. Pictured from left to right, Rick Hammond, MDOT; Karl Randall, Oakland County International Airport; H. David VanderVeen, Oakland County; Rob Abent, MDOT; and Leon Hank, MDOT.

Airport Sponsor of the Year



Announced at the 2010 Michigan Airport Conference, the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Bureau of Aeronautics and Freight Services awarded its Consultant of the Year Award to Jacobsen/Daniels Associates, LLC (JDA). Pictured from left to right: Rick Hammond, MDOT; Mark Rutyna, JDA; Brad Jacobsen, JDA; Rob Abent, MDOT; and Leon Hank, MDOT.





WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART'S -Don Giovanni-

DETROIT - Michigan Opera Theatre presents Mozart's brilliant *tour de force* of musical perfection, ***Don Giovanni***, in a five-performance engagement April 10-18, 2010 at the Detroit Opera House.

Deemed by critics to be the greatest opera ever composed, Mozart's brilliance shines through in this drama giocoso, a subtle comedy and moral tragedy surrounding the historic lover Don Juan. The opera will be sung in Italian with English subtitles projected over the stage.

In the opera, ***Don Giovanni*** is an infamous womanizer who moves from conquest to conquest through Seventeenth-Century Spain with his hapless servant Leporello. Two women, a dazed peasant girl, her outraged fiancée and the spirit of her murdered father join forces to punish the incorrigible rogue, interested in only adding names to his lengthy list of "achievements."

Some of the most noted arias in the opera include "Là ci darem la mano" and "Il mio Tesoro." The music of ***Don Giovanni*** has been featured in a number of movie soundtracks, including *It Happened in Brooklyn*, *Kind Hearts and Coronets* and *Babette's Feast*.

The role of ***Don Giovanni*** will be alternately performed by **Randal Turner**, making his U.S. operatic debut, and **Robert Gierlach**, who will be returning to Michigan Opera Theatre, after making his U.S. debut with the company in the 2002 production of *The Marriage of*

Figaro. Turkish bass-baritone **Burak Bilgili** (10, 14, 17) will return as Don Giovanni's servant Leporello, alternating in the role with American baritone **Jonathan Lasch** (16, 18m).

The role of **Donna Elvira** will be alternately performed by **Kelly Kaduce** (10, 14, 17), who made her MOT debut in 2005 as Caroline Gaines in *Margaret Garner*, and Detroit native **Kimwana Doner** (16, 18m), who made her MOT debut in 2008 in *La Rondine*.

(10, 14, 17), also a Detroit native, will alternately sing the role of **Donna Anna** with **Jennifer Rowley** (16, 18m), who will be making her MOT debut. Mexican tenor **David Lomeli** will make his MOT debut as **Don Ottavio** and bass-baritone **Rod Nelman** will also make his MOT debut as **Commendatore**.

The MOT orchestra will be under the baton of regular Metropolitan Opera guest conductor **Christian Badea**. British artist **John Pascoe** will stage his own production, for which he designed the sets and costumes for MOT. Pascoe most recently designed sets and costumes for the world premiere of David DiChiera's *Cyrano* in 2007.

MICHIGAN
OPERA
THEATRE

Ticket prices range from \$29-\$121. Tickets may be purchased in person at the box office (1526 Broadway, Detroit), by calling 313-237-SING, or online at www.MichiganOpera.org. Tickets may also be purchased at Ticketmaster.com, at any Ticketmaster outlet or by calling 800-745-3000.

Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit, MI 48226
April 10-18, 2010

A Night at the Opera with Kelly Kaduce

By Anthony Brancaleone

According to *Opera News*, Kelly Kaduce has been swiftly gaining national recognition for her "plangent, amber-toned soprano, glamour girl looks and artless, affecting dramatic style", while Entertainment News has adorned Ms. Kaduce with thunderous praise for her star-making turn in David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* (Florida Grand Opera and Opera Theater of St. Louis) calling Ms. Kaduce's effort an "authentically great performance."

With a grueling 2009-2010 schedule, Ms. Kaduce prepares for her role as **Donna Elvira**, in **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's tour de force *Don Giovanni*** (April 10, 14, 17 - Detroit Opera House), concerning herself first with pitch before fine tuning her style. "I always work on improving" Kaduce says, "especially with opera, where the acting needs to be integrated vocally."

This becomes increasingly more impressive when one considers the range of roles performers like Ms. Kaduce field in a typical season. This season alone, the songbird with the "velvet vocals" has returned to her signature role of Mimi in *La Bohème*, had her debut as Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, performed the title role in *Suor Angelica* and will open the Santa Fe Opera's 54th season in a new production of *Madam Butterfly*.

"It's great when someone wants to hire you but half way through I get so tired and think that maybe I should have stayed at home rather than work," Kaduce offers with a laugh. "But then I remember how much I love what I do and how I enjoy traveling with this community of actors."

The troupe is always trying something new, seldom repeating a production exactly, which, according to Kaduce, "usually winds up better with age." In ***Don Giovanni***, for example, it has been decided to play **Donna Elvira** as a counterpart to **Don Juan**, equal emotionally and physically. The two are in love but **Don Juan** can't settle down. Ultimately, the relationship is unsuccessful.

Performing in an opera composed by Wolfgang Amadeus

Mozart must have seemed far away to Ms. Kaduce who grew up in a small town in Minnesota. Her first solo came on Christmas Eve at the age of four where she remembers wondering if it was "normal" to do so. Having a love of singing, Kaduce performed in *Annie* when she was twelve, took piano lessons, "loved music", tried out for *All State Choir*, "got in" and continued to pursue her musical studies.

"I came in college as a biology major," Kaduce remembers. At Boston U. she grabbed a brochure for light opera, began meeting singers from Manhattan College, Julliard, as well as Boston, and from that point one thing led to another until, *Voila!*

"Boston U. huh? - Ever heard of the Pixies?" I ask. "No idea who that is," Kelly replies. "That's ok," I reassure her. "Mozart never heard of them either..."

"I like Brandi Carlile!" Kaduce quickly points out. "Me too," I respond. "What's that song called . . ." *The Story*, we say simultaneously. "Her voice in that is just amazing." This, from a woman whose attributed with delivering "high notes that thrill" and possessing a "creamy middle range."

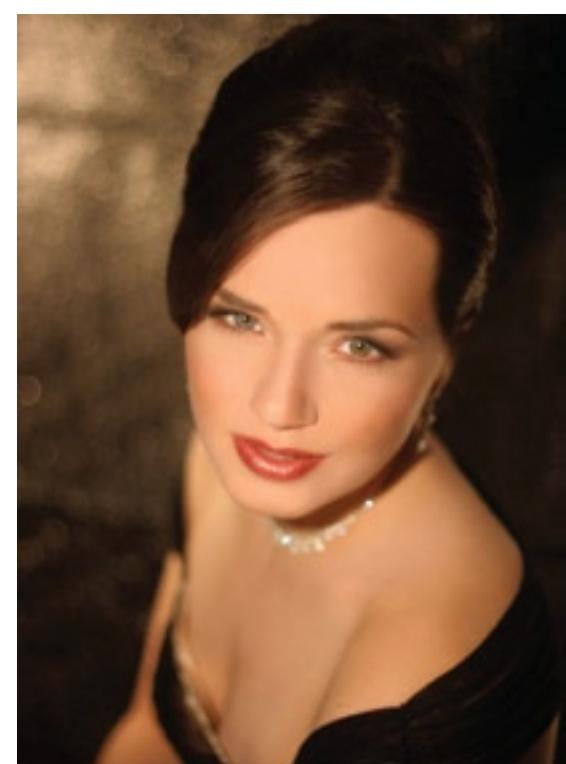
Kelly also likes movies, particularly those from Martin Scorsese and, she shyly admits, to loving *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*. But, it's live opera that Ms. Kaduce responds to most. "When the orchestra comes soaring in and that first singer opens her mouth, it's a visceral experience."

"What's it like when you're on stage?" I ask. "Is it also visceral?" Pause. Breath. "It's an intimate experience. Even if the house is full. It's freeing in some way. You get to take a break from your own life and lose yourself in the life of someone else."

"Are you happy with your career at the moment?" I inquire. "Yes and no, with the premise that the grass is always greener." Reveals Ms. Kaduce. "I would love to sing at The Met and La Scala but I also realize how lucky I am to have work and a career. You have to separate ego and reality because, in truth, it doesn't matter where you perform."

The cast and crew will be rehearsing six hours a day, six days a week, from now until opening night. Some days are reserved for music with the conductor, some for staging, while others are set aside for costume fitting. The rest of Kelly's time will be spent walking Lulu, her Bichon Frisee.

Ms. Kaduce performs Donna Elvire April 10, 14, 17, with Detroit native Kimwana Doner on-stage April 16, 18.



What's all the Hurlyburly?

1980'S HOLLYWOOD EXPLORED IN LATEST
WHO WANTS CAKE? PRODUCTION

Ferndale, Mi. - **Hurlyburly**, David Rabe's tour de force play, is a shocking and brutally comic reflection on a decade of decadence. Welcome to Eddie's world. It exists at the very juncture where Hollywood meets the mountains, where the almost-rich and the not-yet-famous live on cheap thrills and heady ambition. Here, Eddie and his partner/roommate Mickey, along with wanna-be-producer Artie and hitman-turned-actor Phil, engage in a wild life of witty repartee and snappy come-backs, of ex-wives and future lovers, of hard partying and late nights, of sex, lies and self-obsession.

David Rabe has been hailed as one of America's greatest living playwrights. He is the author of many widely performed plays, including *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel*, *Sticks and Bones*, *In the Boom Boom Room*, *Streamers*, and *The Dog Problem*. Four of his plays have been nominated for Tony Awards, including one win for Best Play. He is the recipient of an Obie Award, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, Drama Desk Award, and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, among others. His numerous screenwriting credits include *I'm Dancing as Fast as I Can*, *Casualties of War*, *Hurlyburly*, and *The Firm*.

Hurlyburly runs April 2-26, 2010 and tickets are \$20.00 on Friday and Saturday nights at 8PM, \$15.00 for Sunday matinees at 3PM and Monday 8PM performances are HALF OFF normal ticket price at \$10.00 a ticket. Reservations may be made by phone at **248-545-5545** or online at www.WhoWantsCakeTheatre.com.

The Ringwald
22742 Woodward, Ferndale, MI 48220, (248) 556-8581
April 2 – 26, 2010



Stephen Blackwell is surrounded by (left to right) Jamie Warrow, Ashley Shamon and Cassandra McCarthy. Photography by Colleen Scribner.

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Detroit Mayor Dave Bing

Photo courtesy of Finer Arts Photography

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WINNER OF 8 TONY AWARDS® INCLUDING BEST MUSICAL

DETROIT — Set against the backdrop of a repressive and provincial late 19th century Germany, **Spring Awakening** tells the timeless story of teenage self-discovery and budding sexuality as seen through the eyes of three teenagers. Haunting and provocative, **Spring Awakening** celebrates an unforgettable journey from youth to adulthood with a power, a poignancy and a passion you will never forget.

Spring Awakening swept the 2007 Tony Awards® winning eight out of its eleven nominations, including Best Musical, Best Director (Michael Mayer), Best Book (Steven Sater), Best Choreography (Bill T. Jones), Best Orchestrations (Duncan Sheik), Best Lighting Design (Kevin Adams), Best Featured Actor (John Gallagher Jr.).

Hailed as the "Best Musical of the Year" by the NY Drama Critics Circle, the Drama Desk, the Outer Critics Circle and hailed as a "diamond in a bed of rhinestones" by Detroit's notorious theatre critic, Gay Paris, **Spring Awakening** has emerged as the most talked about new musical on Broadway.

Based on the infamous 1891 Frank Wedekind play, **Spring Awakening** features an electrifying score by Duncan Sheik, book and lyrics Steven Sater, direction by Michael Mayer and choreography by the award-winning Bill T. Jones.

On sale at the Fisher Theatre box office, all Ticketmaster locations, by phone at **1-800-982-2787**, and online www.ticketmaster.com.

Detroit's Fisher Theatre
3011 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit, MI 48202-3096, (313) 872-1000
April 20 – May 9, 2010



DIA 46th Annual Bal Africain® Gala

THROUGH AFRICAN EYES: THE EUROPEAN IN AFRICAN ART
1500 TO PRESENT

Through African Eyes: The European in African Art, 1500 to Present is the focus of this year's Bal Africain® fundraiser at the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA). April 10 from 6 to 10 p.m. beginning with a VIP cocktail reception from 6–7 p.m. A strolling dinner is available from 7–10 p.m., and dancing begins at 8 p.m.

Guests will be treated to a live performance by Jerry LeDuff, Mark Stone and Kofi Ameyaw, American and African musicians that unite American-jazz sounds of vibraphone, drums and electric bass with the richness of African marimba, kalimba and hand drums.

"In addition to enjoying delicious food and lively entertainment, this year's guests will have the pleasure and privilege of being the first to see our ground-breaking exhibition *Through African Eyes*," said Graham W.J. Beal, DIA director. "Dr. Nii Quarcoo, DIA curator of African art, has brought together some of the best African art in the world, including many of our own objects, to illustrate how African artists expressed their dynamic interactions with Europeans and Westerners over 500 years."

Through African Eyes will be open for viewing throughout the evening. The exhibition provides riveting visual commentaries on five centuries of interactions between Africans and Europeans and Westerners—from early commercial relations to founding of European permanent settlements to European colonial rule to recent post-independence interactions with the West. By casting the European as the cultural "other," the exhibition reverses longstanding Eurocentric perspectives that have dominated African art studies. African voices, heard through recorded oral histories and personal experiences of African elders and artists, provide their own perspectives on the meanings of the objects and motivations behind their creation.

Tickets for Bal Africain are \$200, and \$350 for the VIP cocktail reception. For tickets, call 313-833-1049.



Chess Practice: Detroit City Chess Club: Fridays, 4–8 p.m.

The club's mission is to teach area students the game and life lessons. Members have won state, regional, and national competitions. People wanting to learn how to play chess should show up between 5–7 p.m. There will be no teaching between 7 and 9 p.m., but visitors can play chess.

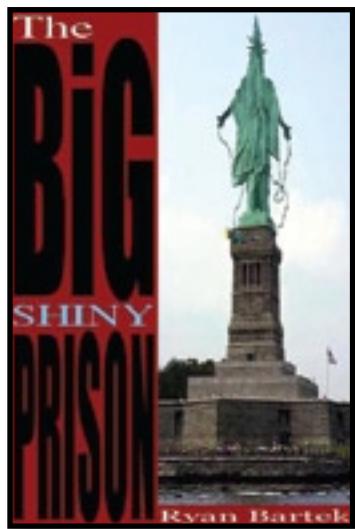
Friday Night Live, April 9, Music: The Northwood Improvisers: 7 & 8:30 p.m.

For more than 20 years, tucked away in the wilds of rural Michigan, the Northwoods Improvisers have been making wonderful music that resists easy classification. Their music is a unique blend of avant-garde jazz, modern classical, late-60s Michigan rock, and World Music.

Brunch with Bach, April 18 @ 10:30am & 1pm: Nancy Stelmann and Jonathan Feldman

Nancy Stelmann has been the principal cellist and frequent soloist of the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra since 1990. She has performed with the Opera Theater of Chicago, the Chicago Lyric Opera, the New York City Ballet, and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. She is joined by the head of the Collaborative Piano Department at the Juilliard School, Jonathan Feldman.

Detroit Institute of the Arts
5200 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, MI



unable to get a book deal? Because, Bartek has authored an entertaining and informative piece of underground Americana - and, the kid can write...

Brancaleone: Congratulations on the completion of a fine endeavor. What can you tell me about the book?

Bartek: *The Big Shiny Prison* is a panoramic study of American Counterculture that combines underground music journalism with the classic autobiographical road novel. In short, years of experience & influence exploded like a volcano, sending me flying off like a cannonball. I'd reached age 25 and realized that it was "now or never," since my situation was so hopeless in Detroit. Since I'd secured the gig writing for Metal Maniacs (*as well as AMP, Hails & Horns, PIT Magazine*), such exposure had upped my credibility to a sizable degree. So in December '06 I quit my band A.K.A. MABUS and hopped a Greyhound for San Diego, using that "commune" as a base of operations over the next year. I'd work a kitchen job two months, horde every penny, then hit the road for months until broke. The campaign lasted from December 21st 2006-October 13th 2007, having traversed 32 states and spending 606 hours on Greyhounds, all while interviewing hundreds of musicians/artists.

Brancaleone: Why is this book important? Who needs to read '*The Big Shiny Prison*'?

Bartek: *The Big Shiny Prison* is not a "music book" – it is a "Trojan Horse" intended for an audience that generally doesn't read, and a literary academia that would otherwise be disinclined. While at first glance it may appear some metal/punk niche thing, it is rather an epic commentary on the absurdity and irrationalism of our times. Every fringe in America is touched upon, and every "interview" is meant to be read as the dialogue of a linear narrative. Each chapter is like an individual tarot card painted in heavy symbolism, contours framed by organic, pulsating environment... My art communicates not a specific agenda, but rather something primordial – I am seeking to incite change by example of direct action. I'm reaching out to a certain mindset, a specific vibe -- people that feel more like "elementals" than they do humans, if you will.

Brancaleone: The idea of packing a bag and booking it cross-country seems very old school. I also like the added touch of recording interviews using a cassette recorder. Where do you belong in the current landscape of writing?

Bartek: I'm old school, absolutely. A) It's what I'm used to, and B) I like wrapping a tape recorder on my chest with electrical tape. Adds a great effect... I don't trust digital recorders because SKYNET hates me and will erase my interviews somehow... To the larger question you ask – years ago I willingly aced myself from the life which I was bound and simply wandered off a living

ON THE ROAD WITH RYAN BARTEK

AUTHOR OF "THE BIG SHINY PRISON"

Brancaleone - After a year of riding Greyhounds, fine dining from garbage cans and sugar-stepping the advances of desperate meth addicts, Detroit expat, Ryan Bartek, releases his great American road journal, sans publisher, via the web. Why feature a writer

Brancaleone: You have compared yourself to Kerouac, Hunter Thompson and Henry Miller. I recognize Kerouac and Thompson but Miller? If I had to choose a third, I would select Chuck Klosterman.

Bartek: I've never read Klosterman and the pompous bombast of Thompson is brilliant -- but Henry Miller is the king. There is nothing I can say about the human experience that isn't already summarized better in *Tropic of Capricorn* and *Tropic of Cancer*. Most have never heard of Miller, or have some vague notion about the aspects of sexuality in his writing. The sex stuff bores me – the Miller I consume is the Emerson-crazed, word drunk Miller; the anarchist street hustler. At age 20 *Capricorn* was like a sledgehammer. All of Detroit was reduced to rubble and reformed in an organic, surreal way. Mid-way through reading that book 9/11 happened,

and I just set it down and walked off into my own living novel (*To Live and Die on Zug Island*). From thereon I lived totally in this dimension of ebb & flow, falling into my own art. One thing leads to another... In Kerouac I embraced the quintessential Beat notion, as it was screamingly relevant to my Detroit upbringing. I'm a great believer in the Kerouac school of trance writing, yet also a fanatical editor opposed to slop-jobs. Kerouac is grand slam or strike out, yet perpetually worthwhile...

Brancaleone: You also designate yourself a "Pan-Tribal Internationalist", rather than a "scenester", yet your book takes place entirely in America and it seems to cover a particular music 'scene'.

Bartek: "Counterculture Internationalist" is more appropriate, but not in some angry 19 year old punk rock way. I throw my lot in with the freaks, per se, but in a broad historical context. I simply believe that there is a larger framework, a consistent movement of awareness that transcends divisions. Music and art scenes are simply incarnations of a continual awakening. At bottom I recognize the Counterculture as resistance culture – but an apolitical resistance. It is manifested in endless forms, evident in all cultures, yet it takes root in one basic notion -- the emancipation of the spirit. Mankind by nature is a foraging, tribal species – yet we've reached a static future of mass populism encased in a nightmare of concrete. That, I feel, is the underlying premise of all of this – man expressing this divorce... In terms of "music scenes," certainly when younger I gravitated to the heavy stuff, but I worship Morbid Angel as much as I do Frank Zappa or Danny Elfman. I'm into everything that is genuine and innovative. *The Big Shiny Prison* is an American road

book, so naturally that's the focus. The European book is scheduled for Summer 2011, and I've already been offered shelter/mobility in Dublin, Croatia, Hungary, Moscow, Belgrade, Paris, London, Berlin, Austria, Amsterdam, Oslo, Gothenburg & others.

Brancaleone: Describe your lowest point on the road and how you made it through.

Bartek: What most would describe bottom barrel terror I'd describe as fleeting inconvenience. During this book campaign I lived on the streets, sometimes for weeks – just showing up to some random city alone, sleeping in parks, alleys, whatever. I had little cash and often had to eat out of garbage cans. There were dozens of times where I should have died or was nearly attacked by meth-enraged street crazies or desperate junkies... For the most part the homeless cling to me like a magnet, because they instinctively know that I am not one of "the other people" ... The street is the only world I feel real in. All else is an abstraction.

Brancaleone: Has your life as your a Detroiter influenced you as a writer? How does the current Detroit music scene rate against the rest of the country?

Bartek: The most important lessons I ever learned from Detroit

were that A) Environment dictates everything and B) Never underestimate the power of ignorance... I think I speak for a sizable chunk of the music/art community when I remark that the essential difference between my work and, say, a Kid Rock or an EMINEM, is that where they glorify everything comprising Metro, the entire basis of my spiritual & artistic quest is to escape everything that nightmare of concrete was. That much said, I also

supremely admire its vileness and am proud to have endured it. In fact the greatest people I've ever known have all sprung from the territory – but also the biggest tools... You know, after all I endured there – once I finally got to Seattle and realized what could have been – I wept in the streets, especially having known so many that committed suicide because grim Detroit reality (*not REAL reality*) did them in. Make no mistake -- I am of the Enemy Camp... My message to any Detroiter reading this is to abandon ship or simply cause supreme mischief. If you really want to wait around another 50 years for a sustainable existence, be my guest. You know, the fun thing about my work is that it's all inclusive – which means anyone enamored by the world in which I operate is free to join, starting with the European Sequel of "*The Big Shiny Prison*." Literally, whoever wants to come – all you need is a passport and a one way plane ticket. Just meet up with us in April 2011 and the rest is all on you ...

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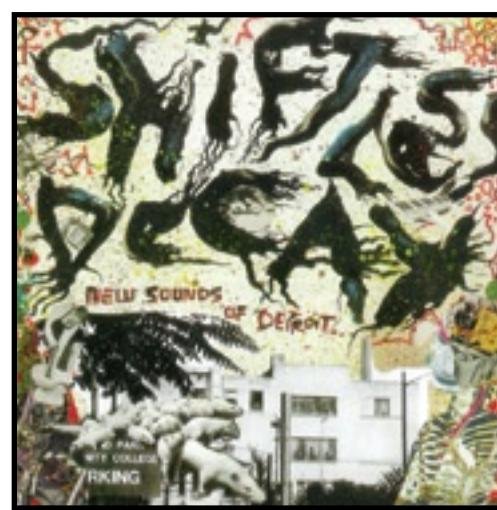
SHIFTLESS DECAY: New sounds of Detroit – X! Records 2009

According to the liner notes, written by Scott Dunkerley, *Shiftless Decay* "is" the context "we", as a region, must face on a daily basis" Apathy, neglect, fear, greed, desperation and the fact that, again, according to the liner notes, "half the people living in the central city are functionally illiterate" are the facts and emotion that define it.

Dunkerley continues, explaining that "we are the only major metropolitan area without a mass transit system, we're the murder capital on and off" and that "unemployment recently rose above 10%"

He writes about the "racial separation" that defines our area, the mess that is the central city public school system and the city government trapped in an entangled web of corruption.

But, Dunkerley believes, that it is the people "creating and acting on their own terms" who will be the ones responsible for realizing the "new visions" to help move us forward. One of the ways this will be achieved is through music, "because the fact is that Detroit area culture is one of the last attractions we have going as a region"



I'm not sure if I hear all of this political and social commentary, within the scope of the 12 tracks offered on the 2009 release, but I do recognize the influence of, what is by now, an all too familiar cityscape continuing to force its way into our music.

With tracks by *Tentacle Lizardo*, *Human Eye* and *Terrible Twos*, *Shiftless Decay* is a loud and raucous, stripped down and beaten up, slice of Detroit Punk Rock City circa 2005-2009, somewhat resembling the late 70's LP, *Burning Ambitions*, which captured much of the punk scene coming out of London at the time. Other artists include *Johnny Ill Band*, a mesmerizing blur by Little Claw and a hypnotizing end trip through the 'Gum Coup Follicle" by Odd Clouds.

Though, the content of *Shiftless Decay* probably won't repair any of the damage its producer passionately rails against, it just might have kids in London, Berlin or Tokyo dreaming of the far off desolate lands, of dark frustration and raw amplification, known as Detroit. -AB

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REVIEWED BY

Gay Paris

THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATOO

Forty years ago, Harriet Vanger disappeared from a family gathering on the island owned and inhabited by the powerful Vanger clan. Her body was never found, yet her beloved uncle is convinced it was murder and that the killer is a member of his own tightly knit but dysfunctional family. He employs disgraced financial journalist Mikael Blomkvist (Michael Nyqvist) and the tattooed and troubled but resourceful computer hacker Lisbeth Salander (Noomi Rapace) to investigate.

When the pair link Harriet's disappearance to a number of grotesque murders from almost forty years ago, they begin to unravel a dark and appalling family history. But the Vanger's are a secretive clan, and Blomkvist and Salander are about to find out just how far they are prepared to go to protect themselves.

I was right there with writer Stieg Larsson, who suddenly died in 2004, and director Niels Arden Oplev, until the very end of this beautifully shot film, where our female lead, Lisbeth Salander (Noomi Rapace) makes a completely useless turn, in a tale that needed no further twisting, unless, of course, Oplev plans to be around to shoot an unnecessary sequel.

3 out of 5



REVIEWED BY

DharmhXcore

DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS

TSR/BIOWARE

After years of being a Bioware fanboy, one comes to expect certain things from their games. From the addictiveness of Baldurs Gate to the character creation of Neverwinter Nights, it should be understood that one takes steps forward not backward.

And, that is exactly what Dragon Age: Origins does. Steps forward. All the awesome storyline with the character creation and customization one wants, with a whole new set of stories, encounters, and epic monsters to slay.

It was strange for me to play a Bioware game not on my PC. I was accustomed to clicking everywhere and, on occasion, using exploits to get leet gear. This time I had no cheats, no walk through and no screen to minimize. There is something pure about not cheating through a 100-hour plus game.

They say this game is a continuation of Baldurs Gate, but I have to disagree. Origins stands on its own two legs and delivers. However, if you are not a fan of dialogue (in massive proportions) and loading screens you may want to stick with the Elder Scrolls series.

For those not in the know, Dragon Age is based on the D20 4.0 rules. The original game (Dungeons and Dragons) has been revised 4 times to get it to the smooth running, less confusing magnitude it is today. Oh yes, Dungeons and Dragons is still alive and kicking and, much like disco, has evolved to fit this generation.

From all the side quests and awesome characters, to game play and inventory screens, Dragon Age receives 4 out of 5 stars. It is truly a solid game. And, with multiple endings, expansions, and downloadable content one can keep the quests going as long as you want.

Besides, what game, other than some Japanese hentai, allows you to have a foursome?

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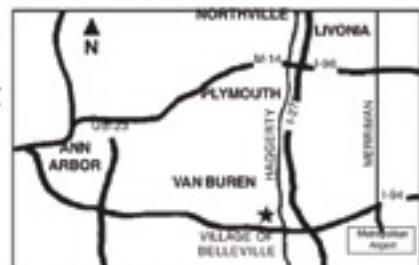
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