



History: Etienne Fredericks (left) speaking with George Gershwin in Detroit on Jan. 20, 1937.

DSO pays tribute to a music legend

The music of George Gershwin at Orchestra Hall dates back to the 1930s when, the legend himself, performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Gershwin's birth, the DSO will perform a tribute concert with five performances Thursday-Sunday, Nov. 5-8.

These concerts will offer a retrospective of Gershwin's most popular works including "Rhapsody in Blue" and "American in Paris," led by conductor Charles Floyd, along with vocalists Susan Hanson and Kevin Anderson, and pianist Christopher Taylor.

Born to Russian immigrants in 1898, George Gershwin left school at age 16 to work for the Tin Pan Alley publisher Remick's. A recording in 1920 of Gershwin's song "Swanee" by Al Jolson was a smash hit, counting record sales in the hundreds of thousands. With aspirations to be recognized as a composer of ability beyond Tin Pan Alley, Gershwin accepted a commission from the Paul Whiteman Orchestra for new work for piano and jazz band.

Premiered in 1924 with Gershwin as the pianist, the new work was entitled "Rhapsody in Blue." An immediate success, other commissions followed including the Concerto in F for piano in 1925 and "An American in Paris" in 1928.

Immensely popular, these works and a series of musicals and film scores, led to Gershwin's fulfillment of a long-standing desire to compose an opera. Begun in 1934, "Porgy and Bess" is based on the story of life on "Catfish Row" at the wharf in Charleston, South Carolina.

The same year "Porgy and Bess" debuted, Gershwin performed at Orchestra Hall with the Reissman Symphony Orchestra led by conductor Charles Previn (son of Andre Previn) in what music critic Herman Wise termed "one of the greatest musical events of the season." A frequent guest of the Orchestra Hall stage, fellow pianist-composer Sergei Rachmaninoff was among the audience attending this concert. Gershwin's last Detroit appearance came on Jan. 20, 1937 when he appeared with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra before a capacity crowd at Orchestra Hall. This was an All-American concert, featuring many of Gershwin's own works.

DSO Pops Series

What: Detroit Symphony Orchestra presents a tribute concert on the 100th anniversary of George Gershwin's birth.

When: 10:45 a.m. and 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5; 8:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 6-7, and 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8.

Where: Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit.
Tickets: \$13-\$45, limited number of box seats available from \$65, call (313) 576-5111.

Gershwin's ability to capture in his compositions the essence of the American experience ended with his untimely death at age 38 on July 11, 1937. Gershwin once remarked, "No composer knows what the next decade in music will disclose, to be true music and lasting, it must repeat the thoughts and aspirations of the people and the times. My people are Americans. My time is today."

Leading the DSO concerts Nov. 5-8 at Orchestra Hall is Charles Floyd, a frequent guest conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra and orchestras nationwide.

For the past five years Floyd has performed "Gospel Night at Pops" at Boston's Symphony Hall and Esplanade Pavilion. His work as a pianist includes Boston's PBS telecast of "Evening at Pops" featuring Patti LaBelle and Edwin Hawkins in a program of gospel music, and critically acclaimed performances of "Rhapsody in Blue" with conductor Keith Lockhart.

Pianist Christopher Taylor has been honored in several prominent piano competitions, winning the Bronze Medal in the 9th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 1996. Since his first solo recital at age 10, he has performed in many cities including New York (both at Carnegie and Alice Tully Hall), Boston, Washington, Denver and Los Angeles, as well as in Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Tenor Kevin Anderson is frequently in demand on the concert stage, including performances with the Cincinnati Pops, Indianapolis Symphony, and Naples Philharmonic.

ART BEAT

MCACA APPROVES GRANTS

Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs approved \$21 million in arts and cultural grants this year.

Funding will be distributed to programs in all of Michigan's 83 counties.

The 222 grants awarded were evaluated through a competitive, peer-panel review process with the recommendations made to the arts council.

Awards were based on geographic distribution, diversity, balance among funding programs, offerings to under-served communities, and services to all Michigan residents.

Approximately \$15.7 million of the \$21-million allocation went to institutions and culture-related organizations in metro Detroit.

In Oakland County, grants increased nearly 37 percent, from \$1.9 million last year to \$2.6 million. Locally, Cranbrook Academy received \$299,550, and funding to the Detroit Zoo was boosted to \$1,165,392.

A list of grants recipients is available on the CIS Media Relations Web site at: www.cis.state.mi.us/media

POLK ARTS COMPETITION NAMES WINNERS

Ten artists have been selected as award recipients in the second annual "Polk Competition: Art & Technology."

The awards were presented last month at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center. The three categories considered were student artist, faculty/alumni artist and open entry.

Among the student winners were Lenore Gimpert of Birmingham, and Michelle Hinebrook of West Bloomfield.

Lucille Procter-Nawara of Beverly Hills received an award in the open category.

PRINTS FROM SOSNICK COLLECTION AT DIA

Local art collectors Robert and Susan Sosnick are displaying their 105 prints by Terry Winters at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The exhibit, which includes Winters' early organic forms to his current abstractions, will run through Feb. 7.

Many of Winters' pieces are distinguished by a technical complexity. Some lithographs use multiple plates and overprinted the same images and colors to build texture.

Winters will lecture on the relationship between his prints and paintings at 8:15 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4, at the DIA Lecture Hall.

For information, (313) 833-9830.

MICH CLASSIC BALLET TO REPRESENT U.S.

Michigan Classic Ballet Company, located in Bloomfield Hills, has been invited to represent the U.S. at the Tanzsummer Festival of Performing Arts held in Innsbruck, Austria. The festival runs from June 15-25.

The purpose of the annual festival is to give pre-professional ballet companies the opportunity to perform and study in Europe.



Close up: The work of graffiti artist Crash is on exhibit through Nov. 28 at the Masterpiece Gallery, 137 W. Maple, Birmingham; (248) 594-9470.

Laser Eye Surgery

\$2,999! both eyes

LASIK Vision Correction is now available in Farmington Hills!



Thousands of people have traveled outside the United States to experience the life-changing miracle of LASIK vision correction. This painless, proven procedure can permanently correct nearsightedness and astigmatism.

The Farmington Laser Eye Center now brings Michigan's most advanced LASIK eye facility to you! Dr. Donald C. Flander, the center's Medical Director, is the most experienced practitioner of LASIK eye surgery in Michigan.

Here's what a few clear-visioned friends have to say:

I wore hard contacts since 1971. I could not even drive without corrective lenses before LASIK. After surgery my eyes adjusted very easily, and my vision is steadily improving. It is wonderful!

Mrs. Jean K. Weston
Kindergarten Teacher



I wore glasses all my life, and trifocals for the last 12 years. I was 20 X 350 in one eye! Now I can get by all day without glasses. My 21-year-old daughter is going to see Dr. Flander for LASIK as soon as possible!

Perrie Knorr
Psychologist



Special Limited Time Offer!

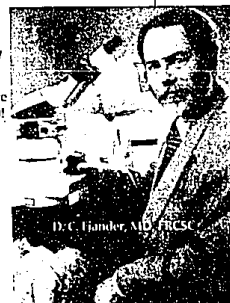
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Conversations from page C1

That was then.

Rose-colored glasses

Perhaps more than bridging the aesthetic distance between the decorative and fine arts, Tiffany combined utility with beautiful pieces of shaped glass.

While many sculptors, painters and glass artists - including a guy by the name of Steuben - were influenced by Tiffany's work, the broader impact has been on mass-marketed consumerism.

Tiffany has gone from the fashionable designs found in the socially elite to a generic reference to multi-colored light shades emblazoned with trade names like Coca-Cola, or Pepsi. To prove the point, Peter Hackett, installation director at Meadow Brook Gallery, carries around a page torn from a gift

catalog. He snickers as he shows it to Friedman.

It's a picture of a stained-glass turtle, entitled "Tiffany Turtle." It sells for \$10.99.

Collectively, the 35 pieces in "Tiffany: Essence of Light" have been valued at more than million dollars.

Another case of fine art reduced to a mere advertising backdrop. Or perhaps the ultimate case of beauty in the eye of the beholder.

It all depends, of course, on whether you're looking through rose-colored glasses.

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