

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHOMIN

Concerts herald start of holiday season

If fighting the after Thanksgiving shopping crowds has left your holiday spirit as cold as Frosty the Snowman, join the fun by singing along with local choirs and orchestras as they greet the season. You'll be surprised how fast the blues disappear when you're humming "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer."

John Gajec and assistant conductor Dr. Joseph W. Lewis, Jr. of West Bloomfield lead the Redford Civic Symphony in playing excerpts from "The Nutcracker," traditional Christmas carols and a sing-a-long in the opening concert of its 43rd season Sunday, Dec. 6 at Thurston High School. Guest artists are vocalists Pat Mussin and Marilyn Churchill.

Gajec has been playing many of the standard tunes for most of his 80



PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

In the split: Conductor/musician John Gajec rehearses for the Redford Civic Symphony holiday concert.

years and never tires of them. In fact, he can't decide which he enjoys more — conducting or playing cello with the orchestra. The group of 50 musicians began rehearsing "Sleigh Ride," "Silent Night" and the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's "Messiah" in September.

"Conducting is the ultimate experience in performing the music the way I think it should be," said Gajec.

"Being a conductor is a special sport. You're dealing with the music and the performers. But on the other hand as a musician, you're performing for the audience. The concert is when we give our best performance but rehearsals are when we perfect the craft."

The holiday season is a time for music and there's plenty of it around the area. Here's where sleigh bells will be jingling and people singing:

Christmas Concert
Oakland University's Department of Music, Theatre and Dance presents its popular show choir, The Meadow Brook Estate, in an International Holiday Spectacular 10 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 4, 6:2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6 in Verner Recital Hall on the campus in Rochester. Tickets are \$12 general, \$10 seniors, and \$6 students, call (248) 370-3013 or Ticketmaster (248) 646-6666.

Music from the 1930s to the present day and representing the countries of Mexico, Austria and Ireland, in addition to the U.S., will be featured in the program.

The show choir is accompanied by Robert Sanders of Southfield on piano, Dylan Dunbar on electric guitar, and Jeremy Grenier of Troy on bass. Synthesizer is played by Philip Metzler and drums by Mike Gerbino.

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Gifts of Art

Ideas for holiday giving

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN

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Animation cels, Native American bear carvings, jewelry, and accessories for the home, are popular gift giving items this holiday season.

When you give a gift of art, it's one-of-a-kind.

In addition to galleries and gift shops, nonprofit art associations host a number of holiday shows. Among the largest are:

Birmingham Bloomfield Arts Center — The 17th annual Holiday Shop of ceramics, glass, jewelry, wood, fibers, ornaments, and paintings runs Monday, Nov. 30 to Saturday, Dec. 12 at 1516 South Crabbrook (Evergreen) and 14 Mile Road, Birmingham. Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Thursday, until 5 p.m. Friday-Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is free.

Preview Party 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29, tickets \$25. (248) 644-0866.

Detroit Artists Market — Holiday Sale, featuring 110 artists exhibiting jewelry, glass, ceramics, prints, photographs, posters, furniture, and sculpture, continues to 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24 at 300 River Place, Suite 1050, on Joseph Campau by the Detroit River. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday to Saturday, and until 8 a.m. Friday. (313) 393-1770.

Pewabic Pottery — Earthly Treasures offers tiles, vessels, jewelry, ornaments, and ceramic functional and sculptural ware by Pewabic and local artists as well as artists from across the country through Dec. 31 at the pottery, 10125 East Jefferson, four miles east of downtown Detroit. For collectors, Pewabic's released its fourth design of the woodland series along with a 6- by 6-inch reindeer tile. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Christmas and New Years eves. (313) 822-0054. Pewabic is accepting donations of canned and dried food throughout the holidays for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

Vessels, paperweights, and gazing globes are lovely gift items for the home. An internationally-exhibiting glass artist, Schneider's work is currently featured along with 24 bend makers at the Glas Museum in Ebelhof, Denmark. Schneider is also exhibiting his work in the Detroit Artists Market Holiday Show continuing through Thursday, Dec. 24.

From the earth — A ceramic chip n' dip set by Kathy Sandberg (Plymouth) and tiles by Nancy Guido (Livonia) are a few of the gifts available at

the third annual Village Potters Guild Holiday Show and Sale Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 3-5 at 340 North Main, south of Mill St. (Hilley), behind the Plymouth Landing Restaurant, (734) 207-8807.

Twenty members of the Guild will sell their platters, tiles, bowls, ornaments, jewelry as well as hand-built and raku decorative and functional wares. Prices range from \$3 for an ornament to \$160 for a ceramic art work. Hours are 9-9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 4-5. For a preview of the ceramic objects visit the Plymouth Library 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29.

"With that many potters, it's going to be diverse," said Kathy Sandberg. "There'll be functional and decorative ware, raku, tiles, Christmas ornaments, jewelry, and vessels, anything from a small plate to a large serving piece, in neutrals, pastels and vibrant colors, black and white because every potter has their own trademark glaze."

Native art — Go Southwest with Native West gallery, 863 West Ann Arbor Trail, (734) 455-8838 in Plymouth. Nearly all art works are hand crafted by Native Americans. In addition to paintings, sculpture and jewelry, the gallery sells decorative accessories, flutes, tiles, music, books, and sandstone coasters engraved

with petroglyphs. Metal candleholders from El Paso feature the sun or buffalo. "Items for the home are selling very, very well," said Annette Horn, who owns the gallery with her husband Ken. "Bears are real popular whether it's fetishes or sculptures, and we now have Pendleton Bears made in Taos, New Mexico. The metal candleholders are great for the home because the sun means happiness to the Native American and the candlelight brings warmth to the home. The buffalo means abundance."

Ornaments ranging from a Navajo grandmother storyteller to a Santa painted on a chile pepper spice up a traditional tree.

Great little stocking stuffers are dot earrings set with different stones. A pendant pair costs \$9. Horn said these are popular with people who have more than one hole in their ear.

The best time to visit the Native West is during their annual Holiday Art & Jewelry Festival Thursday-Sunday, Dec. 3-6 when the Horns bring in trader Jonathan Cox with a trunk full of jewelry. Navajo silversmith Jerry Nelson will be available throughout the show to talk about his inlay necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and rings. Michael Atkinson's art continues on display through the end of December.

Please see GIFTS, C2



Into the woods: This lithograph by Jane Dyer is from the "Random House Book of Bedtime Stories" and available at the Elizabeth Stone Gallery in Birmingham.

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Functional to sculptural: The Village Potters Guild offer an array of clay art at their annual holiday show and sale in Plymouth.

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DANCE

Dancers trumpet arrival of 'Nutcracker'

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN

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Like Clara dreaming about the Nutcracker Prince and dancing in the "Kingdom of Sweets," Rose Marie Floyd's excitement grows with the approach of the holiday season performance of Tchaikovsky's classic ballet. Floyd and her Contemporary Civic Ballet Company began performing "The Nutcracker" in 1956. Over the years, the company has presented the ballet, based on a fairy-tale by E.T.A. Hoffman, with a number of orchestras including the Livonia Symphony. The first "Nutcracker" delighted audiences in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1892.

This year, the Contemporary Civic Ballet will be joined by Christopher Stowell of the San Francisco Ballet who will dance the role of the Cavalier and Samantha Shelton, the Sugar Plum, 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13 at the Scottish Rite Cathedral Auditorium in Macomb Temple, 600 Temple, Detroit. Tickets are \$5. A second performance with Stowell, and Emily Hastings as the Sugar Plum takes place 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19 at Troy High School. Tickets are \$8, and available for both shows by calling (248) 641-9083 or (248) 646-7484.

"It gives my advance dancers a chance to perform," said Floyd. "Many have gone on to Broadway, the Joffrey and Houston Ballet."



Sweet dreams: Dawnell Dryja, a dancer with the Cincinnati Ballet, and Tim Smola of the Peter Sparling Dance Company perform the roles of the Sugar Plum Fairy and Nutcracker Prince with the Plymouth-Canton Ballet.

Local dancers from a number of companies in western Wayne and Oakland counties look forward to donning their costumes to twirl across the stage in the "Waltz of the Flowers."

Family affair
Hilari Smith played one of the mice in "The Nutcracker" when she was just three years old. Now age 13, Smith dances the role of Clara with the Plymouth Canton Ballet Company. More than 150 musicians from the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra and the Plymouth-Canton Ballet come together to perform this classic with guest artists Dawnell Dryja and Cameron Caldwell from the Cincinnati Ballet Company 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11 and 3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 12-13 at the Plymouth-Salem High School Auditorium, 46181 Joy Road, Canton.

Dryja is the daughter of Dawn Green, artistic director of the company. Smith plays the young girl who receives the Nutcracker doll for Christmas from her eccentric uncle Herr Drosselmeyer. This is the eighth year the company joins with the Plymouth-Canton Ballet Company to present this timeless tale.

Tickets are \$17 adults, \$10 students K-12th grade, \$5 Sugar Plum Fairy and Nutcracker Prince with the Plymouth-Canton Ballet.

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All in the family: Hilari Smith dances the role of Clara in "The Nutcracker" performed by the Plymouth-Canton Ballet Company and the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra.

Please see NUTCRACKER, C2