

## THE WEEKEND

### FRIDAY



The Plymouth Community Arts Council's teen drama club presents Moliere's timeless farce, "Tartuffe" 8 p.m. at the Joanne Winkelman Hulce Center for the Arts, 774 N. Sheldon at Junction, Plymouth. Admission is by donation. All proceeds benefit the teen drama club, call (734) 416-4ART.

### SATURDAY



Meet artists and enjoy a variety of entertainment during Plymouth is Artrageous, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. in downtown Plymouth on Main Street, Ann Arbor Trail and Penniman.

### SUNDAY



More than 100,000 flats of plants will be offered for sale at the 34th Annual Flower Day 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Eastern Market in Detroit. Performances by local musicians 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., mini art fair. Shuttle service available from the Detroit Institute of Arts 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (313) 833-1560 for details.

### HOT TICKET



Country music fans will be flocking to Hart Plaza in Detroit Friday-Sunday, May 19-21, for the Budweiser Downtown Hoe-down. Featured performers include Mark Wills (pictured), Montgomery Gentry, Tracy Lawrence, Joseph James and Chely Wright. Call (248) 788-6666 for information, or visit the Web site: [www.budweiserinc.com](http://www.budweiserinc.com)



Whimsical work: Steven Dark created this "Chicken as Waiter" pot in clay.

## SIGHTS, SOUNDS, FOOD WILL DAZZLE CROWDS FOR 10TH YEAR

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
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Blues, bachelors and art works—the Greektown Arts Festival brings out the best in all three, so it's no wonder crowds continue to flock to the historic area year after year in search of a good time.

The long and steady parade of visitors appeals to top artists from across the country and makes for a strong show of talent.

Presented by the Greektown Merchants Association and the Michigan Guild of Artists and Artisans, this year's festival features 128 exhibitors working in media ranging from painting to photography, sculpture, glass, clay, fiber and jewelry.

Friday-Sunday, May 19-21. "It's the intimate setting of Greektown. It's a special place with all the great restaurants, bakeries and fine shops," said Dave Roberts, festival coordinator. "It is the only art festival held on the streets of downtown Detroit with historic buildings from the 19th century."

It's no coincidence that visitors will find artists demonstrating their craft just as they do at the Ann Arbor Summer Art Fair because the Michigan Guild's been putting on

that show for 30 years. Now in its 10th year, the Greektown Arts Festival showcases many popular elements of the Ann Arbor fair. The Guild's Imagination Station is always a hit with children who enjoy making art and then taking it home.

The Festival Stage brings talented musicians to the streets and tours give a glimpse inside the historic Greektown buildings. The Laikou Cafe, Fishbone's, the Old Shillelagh and the Music Menu Showcase Bar & Grill offer a variety of ways for fairgoers to rest and refresh.

"There's new media and a lot of exciting new media and a lot of really great entertainment with Larry McCray and the phenomenal gospel group The Mighty Royal Lights of the Tru Light Temple," said Roberts. "Over the years, we've improved on the stage area and entertainment. In the early years, there were no headliners or big name draws."

### Wearable art

Celia Block looks forward to returning to the Greektown Arts Festival because of the atmosphere. The West Bloomfield artist began bringing her painted silk jackets, scarves and shawls to the show in 1996. Block designs, paints and sews every garment she sells.

"I grew up in Detroit and have been going to Greektown since I was a child," said Block. "I love the area. I like the restaurants, the street ambience. My whole family wants to visit me during the festival because it's in Greektown."

### Whimsical wonders

The Greektown Arts Festival is giving Steven Dark a chance to visit his family in Livonia. The Alabama potter hasn't been back for a few years so he's hoping to see some old friends and make new ones at the festival. A graduate of Clarenceville High School in Livonia, Dark primarily sells his stoneware vessels and table top fountains at shows in the south where he's won several

Please see GREEKTOWN, C7



On the prowl: Edward Andrzejewski of Calumet painted this work titled "Chavez."

## Bluesman's new material 'rocks harder'

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CAROLA  
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Nearly a decade since the release of *Ambition*, an album that launched Larry McCray's musical career, the Arkansas-born and Saginaw-bred guitarist confirms his status as one of the most powerful bluesmen around as he prepares to kick out new tunes at the 2002 Greektown Arts Festival.

With a new album in the works, the man who last declared he was *Born To Play The Blues* (1998) returns to Detroit to celebrate the 10th year of the festival. McCray is more than ready to showcase new songs like *Blues Is My Business*, *Love Gone Bad* and the tentative title track *Believe It*. While he said the music he's been playing for years hasn't changed much, it has shifted focus "in terms of what people are into at the time." Today, blues has to appeal to rock, reggae, soul and R&B audiences.

"People are into very rhythmic music," said McCray, in a telephone interview on May 9. "You have to do these things to continue to survive."

McCray's new material "rocks harder," contains a wide array of rhythms and strong vocals, but never strays from its bluesy origins. "I came from a history of it," said McCray. "My family were blues listeners and musicians before me. I always needed music with more of an inner soul."



Larry McCray

### Influences

Influenced by greats Jimi Hendrix, George Benson and Wes Montgomery, McCray will be featured as the opening night headliner for the Greektown festival. "We're just gonna try to have an intense show," he said. "I'm really anxious and happy to have new music available for the people. I think the time is right for the band."

The time is right in Detroit to celebrate spring and the beginning of outdoor festivals as well. As the Greektown Arts Festival begins to heat up, the musical line up is sure to emit sounds of cool blues and steamy funk. To kick off the festival Friday night, The Brothers Groove start their engines at 6 p.m. blending funk, jazz, rock and blues into something undefinably delicious. While singer/keyboardist Chris Codiah has played the festival with the likes of Johnnie Bassett and Thelma Davis—who also return this year—it's a first for The Brothers

Please see BLUESMAN, C7

## SPECIAL EVENT

# Comic book convention more than kids' stuff

BY NICOLE STAFFORD  
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The silver age of comic books may have passed long ago—thanks to video games and computers—but the genre is far from dead.

In reality, it's branched out, creating new categories and targeting different audiences, particularly older readers.

Otherwise, attracting more than 300 comic artists from across the country to participate in an event like Motor City Comic Con, Friday-Sunday, May 19-21 at the Novi Expo Center, would be impossible.

There are quite a few comic books written for the mature reader today," said Michael Goldman of Farmington Hills, president of Motor City Conventions and the founder of Comic Con. "One of the biggest stereotypes about comic books is that they're for little kids. There are comic books for 6-year-olds and 60-year-olds."

In its 11th year, Comic Con focuses on two aspects of popular culture: comic books and television and film with a science-fiction angle. The event began as a comic art convention and gradually grew to encompass other areas of pop culture.

### Cult favorites

So, in addition to the hundreds of comic illustrators and writers who come to talk about their craft or sell and promote their work, Goldman tries to bring in stars from cult favorites like *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*.

**What:** Motor City Comic Con featuring hundreds of comic creators and collectors, an appearance by actor Jonathan Frakes, who plays Commander William Riker on *Star Trek: Voyager*, pop culture collectibles and more.  
**When:** Friday-Sunday, May 19-21  
**Where:** Novi Expo Center, 43700 Expo Center Drive  
**Tickets:** \$15 per day with three-day and children's passes available at a discount; call (248) 645-6068

Jonathan Frakes, who plays Commander William Riker on *Star Trek: Voyager*, is this year's featured celebrity guest.

Surely, avid readers and collectors of comic books, budding strip illustrators and sci-fi fanatics have been anticipating Comic Con for months.

However, the general public may find the event of interest, too.

To begin with, there's a hodge-podge of pop culture merchandise and activities at Comic Con.

Film scripts, both signed originals and reproductions, are available for purchase. Other finds include Pokemon

games, toys, action figures and other collectibles.

The Anime Club of Michigan (anime refers to Japanese animation) will run features of the form in a private screening room.

Once more, the show may even convert a few non-believers into comic book lovers. The Friends of Lulu, a group of comic book fans who promote the form to women, plan to attend.

Others may simply discover how the form has evolved, according to Goldman.

"The stories are really written for adults," he said. "There's been a big place in the market for comics that are intelligently written. They're not just about the guy in spandex flying off to save someone. They're comics for thinking."

### Entertainment experience

Besides, comic books offer a unique entertainment experience, said Goldman.

"When you take great art and great storytelling and put it together, there's nothing like it. Not even television. For me, comics have always allowed me to use my imagination. It's not like television, which is kind of mindless. Comics still require you to think."