

# Zoo

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the responsibility to do something about it.

Over the years, the zoo played a role in the community by growing truck gardens to help alleviate food shortages during the Depression and providing jobs such as building the animal hospital and administrative buildings via the Federal Works Project Administration from 1935-39. Today, the community is giving back.

If you haven't visited the zoo lately, you'll be surprised by the changing landscape. The Detroit Zoological Society and its contributors play a major role in the park's new lease on life. The community-supported Society contributed \$1.6 million to the \$6.6 million raised by the City of

Detroit through bond sales for the renovation of the Bird House built in 1926. The Wildlife Interpretive Gallery offers visitors the chance to learn more about animals and the zoo by viewing art, attending a film, or exploring the butterfly/hummingbird garden and coral reef aquarium. But the gallery is just one part of a master plan according to Detroit Zoological Society president Randall Stubbs.

A new River Otter Exhibit is opening in 1997. They're building a home for red panda bears that's scheduled to open in about four weeks. They're sure to attract visitors just as the California sea lions and harbor seals frolicking in the pool do now.

The zoo is becoming a big part

of the community," said Stubbs. "When asked why people come here, why people donate, they say what the zoo means to them and their families. Proof of the zoo's importance to the community is our volunteers. Our education program couldn't run without volunteers. We had more than 700 volunteers last year donating 42,000 hours."

The world's first amphibian conservation center is scheduled for groundbreaking in June. It will house nearly 14 of the zoo's 450 amphibians, including the tiny mantella frog that sounds like a cricket. The Amphibian Conservation House will cost approximately \$3 million and be completed by summer of 1999. The frogs and salamanders are

now located in the Holden Museum of Living Reptiles and Amphibians.

"We decided to focus on amphibians because very few zoos do," said Andy Snider, curator of herpetology. "Amphibians are generally considered second class citizens."

At the end of this year, ground will also be broken for the Arctic Ring of Life polar bear exhibit, scheduled for completion in December of 1999.

"It's probably the largest polar bear exhibit in the world and will have an underground tunnel where polar bears will swim around visitors," said Stubbs. "No one's ever done it before for marine animals."

In the next five years, the zoo

will build a new animal hospital. Chief veterinarian Dr. Dalton Agnew said the design will combine elements from state-of-the-art animal hospitals across the country. Already the hospital has acquired a teaching microscope and ultrasound machine thanks to the generosity of the Southeast Michigan Veterinary Association. On the ultrasound screen, the bladder of a Maine wolf helps diagnose an obstruction. From Siberian tigers to waxy tree frogs, the staff performs surgery and runs diagnostic tests frequently after sedating the animals with a blow dart gun.

In the meantime, there's a two to three year plan to refurbish the Penguinarium, the first facil-

ity in the country devoted to tuxedoed birds. According to Tom Schneider, curator of birds, the Penguinarium will receive an updating of the ventilation and cooling system for the public and a new floor. Originally opened as an escape in 1968, the Penguinarium was renovated in 1985. Today, the Rockhopper, Macaroni, King, and blue penguin waddle around a Stonescape resembling an Australian shoreline much like their natural habitat. Buckets of mackerel and smelt are supplemented with vitamins and minerals.

"We're trying to find more and more ways to bring people in and not compromise the animals," said zoo director Ron Kugan.

## Success

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making sure eight performance venues are properly prepared with grand pianos and makeshift stages.

And, of course, that's not even mentioning a publicity schedule, which Okun described as based on the principle "if it can go wrong, it will."

With a big-name artistic director, James Tocco, an impressive list of internationally known musicians, an acclaimed composer-in-residence program and a growing list of corporate sponsors, not much is going wrong.

### Not a far stretch

Despite likely competing on some days with Red Wings play-

off games, Okun expects an unprecedented response to this year's festival.

Attendance is expected to surpass last year's where about 5,000 tickets were sold.

Considering that many of the performances are in venues that seat less than 300, that would be an impressive turnout.

"Chamber music is a flexible medium. You don't need 100 people on stage," said Okun. "Our goal has been to stretch further into the community."

The strategy to perform at community venues, including Protestant and Catholic churches, chapels, synagogues, museums and the Detroit Zoo makes good marketing sense.

"We plug into the different constituencies of the religious and cultural communities," said Okun. "Collaboration is central to attracting an audience."

### International stature

This year, the festival has expanded from two to three weeks. In just five years, the festival has grown from six musicians playing five concerts to 17 international musicians collaborating on 20 performances.

The result has been heightened international stature for the festival. These days, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival is often mentioned along with other top festivals in Sent-

tle, Santa Fe, Norfolk and Sarasota.

"Our stars are James Tocco and Ruth Leredo," said Okun, referring to the world-acclaimed pianists from Detroit.

"Having James works on so many levels. Many musicians come here for an opportunity to play with him."

Tocco will make his festival debut next Saturday, June 6, in a program of Debussy and Rachmaninoff at St. Hugo's Sanctuary in Bloomfield Hills. Over the subsequent two weeks, he'll be scheduled to play in nearly all the concert halls.

In addition to a repertoire filled with the works of Russian composers, the festival's compos-

er-in-residence program has attracted top American composers.

Last year, John Corigliano, who had just won three Grammys, was the guest composer.

This year, the music of Jean Tower, considered one of the leading international composers, will be featured in a June 14 concert at Temple Beth El Chapel.

### Taming influence

The festival's opening performance on Sunday will be held at the Detroit Zoo's Wildlife Interpretive Gallery. It is one of the two family concerts in the festival lineup.

In the rotunda at the restored

neo-classical building where an exhibit of butterflies and hummingbirds flutter, pianist Laredo, Stephen Dubov and the Detroit Chamber Winds will perform a concert with a decidedly zoo-like appeal, including "Animal Ditties" by Plog and "Peter and the Wolf" by Prokofiev.

At the only zoo in the world with a permanent art collection, the concert is a way to further diversify the type of cultural events at the zoo, said Gerry Craig, curator of the zoo's interpretive gallery.

Likewise, at many of the other venues, the festival provides an opportunity for people to explore a music no longer relegated to the chambers of the aristocracy.

## Sounds of Spring

Concert Series SEASON FINALE

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May 21, 1998

4:00 p.m.

Mass - Opus 4 for Choir, Soloists,

Orchestra and Organ

by Camille Saint-Saens

Organ Concerto

by George Frideric Handel

Concerto for Organ, Harp and Strings

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Music

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5 Tickets for the Spring Concert are \$15 (\$10 seniors and students).

Tickets may be purchased in the parish office or at the door.

Christ Church Cranbrook is a Long-List Parish, one mile

west of Cranbrook Avenue in Bloomfield Hills. For further information call the Church at (248) 644-5210.

## Debut

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"It was incredible to have Kool Keith on the record. Working with him blow the song up," Chris Peters said.

"Having a guest rapper on a song, it's sometimes difficult to make it work. He worked really hard to make it cohesive," Drew Peters added.

For the first single, "I'm Fine (I Find)" Chris and Drew Peters went to New York where Hill's bandmate Pras agreed to free-verse rap during a break in the song.

"Ironically, that song was not supposed to be on the record. Drew and I (produced) that one by ourselves one weekend," Chris Peters said.

The normally collective, self-assured Chris Peters admitted that he was awestruck when Pras walked in the room.

"It's like, he's a star," he said with a smile.

### Switching gears

Growing up in West Bloomfield, the Peters brothers found themselves inspired by the diversity of Detroit radio. The duo slipped between the urban sounds of Run-D.M.C. and rock.

"Our generation is the first generation of white kids to grow up surrounded by those heavy urban sounds. Where we grew up, before we might still cite the Beatles as the most influential band of their time, for us it's more like Run-D.M.C.," explained Chris Peters.

"We're kind of like the Electric

Who: Getaway Cruiser

What: Opens for Sverdriv

er

When: Sunday, June 7.

Doors open at 8 p.m.

Where: The Shelter below

St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit.

Why: In support of its self-titled debut for Store 550 Music which hits stores Tues-day, June 2.

How: Tickets are \$10 in advance for the allages show. For more information call (313) 961-5117 or visit <http://www.563melit.com> or <http://www.getawaycruiser.com>.

Other related events:

Getaway Cruiser will appear on "The Ralph Vaidez Program" from 10 p.m. to midnight Monday, June 1, on WDET 101.9 FM. The band will perform songs from the album and give away copies to listeners.

Flying Mojo meets Arthur Penhaligon, Drew Peters added with a laugh, referring to the former WJLB and current WRIF DJ.

A fan of jazz and showtunes, Harrison was studying opera at the University of Michigan when she met the Peters' brothers, along with drummer Dan Carroll and bassist Mark Dundon.

"At the time I joined the band, I was really unhappy in school. I

was going to the University of Michigan music school in a classical conservatory that looked down on pop and rock music and anything that isn't taught in a classroom," Harrison explained via telephone from her mother's home in Saginaw where she Retired.

"I was having a lot of problems like not wanting to be in school and wanting to be in a band."

That desperation is captured in the words of Harrison, who had never written lyrics until joining Getaway Cruiser. In many of the songs including "I'm Fine (I Find)" and "Not Yet Gone," Harrison is trying to persuade listeners to believe that she's OK.

"It came from a number of things. I was constantly reassuring myself that everything I was doing was good. And partially it came from relationships. Anytime you lose someone you care about, you reassure yourself that you're a valid person."

### Driven by rock

All those musical influences are wrapped into the vehicle known as "Getaway Cruiser."

Lead by Chris Peters' sultry guitar, "Something About You" is topped off with a bluesy harmonica solo. "Come to Stay" carries the feel of an early 1980s synth-pop song. "Bad Time" teases the listener with a simple beat and an accordion.

"Getaway Cruiser" also

includes a cover of Tony Toni Tone's "Let's Get Down," which infuses drum loops, turntable scratching and, of all things, an accordion. One cover song that didn't make the cut was a version of Depeche Mode's "Stripped" with Getaway Cruiser joining rapper Schooly D.

"We couldn't figure out where it fit in. It was really cool. It wasn't goofy at all," Chris Peters explained.

The band's version of Aaliyah's "If You're Gonna Love Me" and a remix of its own "Taking Away" by Livonia's Warren Delever pops up on a four-track self-titled EP that will be sold at performances.

Despite its guest stars and hip-hop influences, "Getaway Cruiser" is a rock record.

"A lot of people focus on the fact that we use turntables, like in the studio, and things like that in our record, but we really see ourselves as an American rock band. Rock 'n' roll has always been an amalgam of a lot of things, and we're building on that tradition," explained Chris Peters.

## OU presents children's opera

Oakland University's Department of Music, Theatre and Dance presents Engelbert Humperdinck's spooky opera, "Hansel and Gretel," through May 31 in Warner Recital Hall.

Performances 10 a.m. Thursday-Friday, May 28-29; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 29-30; and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 31. Tickets for matinee performances are \$5, tickets for weekend performances are \$12 general admission, \$10 seniors, \$8 students. Call (248) 370-3013.

This adaptation of the original German opera features English lyrics and spoken dialogue. Characters speak directly to the audience, and the climactic scene between the witch and the children offers the opportunity for bewitching technical effects.

Michael Gillespie, head of the theater program, is the state director for the opera. Michael Mitchell, newly appointed head of choral activities, is the musical director, and John-Paul White, head of the voice program, is the vocal coach.

Alternating casts of "Hansel and Gretel" include talented singers and dancers from the department's musical theater and vocal music programs.

The role of Hansel is sung by Lisa Agazzi of Rochester Hills. David Havasi of Rochester sings the father role. The Sandman is sung by Andrew Owen of Beverly Hills, and the Dew Fairy is played by Kelley Bonner of West Bloomfield.

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