

Greektown from page E1

awards. "I'm excited and a little nervous, but I'm looking forward to coming home and bringing my new work," said Park, owner of Pottery Central in Gulf Shores. "I call them my chicken pots. They're quite whimsical and storytelling. I'm a frustrated writer that uses his three-dimensional

work to put down what he can't say." Dark, who earned his bachelor of fine arts degree in ceramics from the University of South Alabama and a master of fine arts from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, does about 10 shows a year.

Fine Jewelry
Michael MacManus returns to the Greektown Arts Festival for a third year. A Bloomfield Hills jeweler, MacManus creates silver jewelry with and without semiprecious stones. He describes the work as "contemporary with simplicity in design and style."

"It's fun and people getting together," said MacManus. "I used to do sculpture but I switched to jewelry because I wanted to work in a smaller scale making adornments for people."
"Jewelry shows self-expression."

Bluesman from page E1

original set that's bound to include the crowd favorite "Pressure Cooker." Bassist Jim Simonson, a Clarkston native, said the festival is neither too big or too small, but offers a great reason for people to visit the city. Drummer Michael Caskey looked forward to the outdoor festival as well: "Playing bars all the time

can be pretty one-dimensional." "It's always a cool festival," said Codish, who performed with McCray in 1995-1997. Here's the line-up:
■ Friday, May 19
6 p.m. The Brothers Groove
7:15 p.m. Big Al and the Heavyweights

8:30 p.m. Larry McCray
■ Saturday, May 20
2 p.m. Chef Chris Blues Band
3:15 p.m. Al Hill and The Blues Insurgents with friend George Friend
4:30 p.m. The Sun Messengers
6 p.m. Catfish Hedge with Mystery Train featuring Jim McCarty

8 p.m. Sir Mack Rice
■ Sunday, May 21
1 p.m. Mighty Royal Lights of the Tru Light Temple
2:30 p.m. Thornetta Davis
5 p.m. Johnny Bassett's Detroit Blues Review, featuring Joe Weaver and Alberta Adams

Techno artists master building a loyal audience

BACKSTAGE PASS
As someone who has been on the receiving end of voluminous recording industry hype, I've always been intrigued by artists who reach their audience in a direct, non-mainstream way. There may be no greater example of media-resistant artists than those who create the Detroit area's biggest musical export — techno music. You may not be familiar with names like Carl Craig, Richie Hawtin, and Derrick May, but they have an incredible following in places like London, Belgium, and Amsterdam.

"Detroit's techno artists are big in Europe because radio stations in the United Kingdom and other European cities are given the freedom to play what their listeners want to hear. In London in particular, musical trends are created by the feedback from the clubs where techno music rules," said Ron Pangborn, music producer for Detroit Public TV's *Backstage Pass*.
Although it may seem on the surface that techno producers revel in their anonymity, they are masters at building a loyal audience. Derrick May, along with former Belleville High classmates Juan Atkins and Kevin Saunderson, is credited with originating the "techno" form. As an international DJ, electronic music producer and

founder of Transmat Records, he has total control in the creation and distribution of his music. While that may seem like a unique arrangement in the mainstream recording industry, it is not unusual in techno. Car Craig is CEO of Planet E Records, and has created music under various guises including Paperclip People, Innerzone Orchestra and his own name. Hawtin helped to establish Plus 8 Records and now records under his Minus label.
There are signs that techno artists are making themselves more accessible to those that aren't necessarily "plugged in." Craig will serve as artistic director for the Detroit Electronic Music Festival from noon to midnight, Saturday-Monday, May 27-29 at Detroit's Hart Plaza.
"Techno music really needs

these type of events if the artists want to broaden their visibility. They've been very successful in using the club scene to mobilize their audiences, and it seems like it is just a matter of time before major record companies realize their potential," said Pangborn.
A rare, if not unprecedented, television gathering of Detroit's techno artists will take place on the next edition of Detroit Public TV's *Backstage Pass* airing 7:30 p.m. Sunday, May 21. Carl Craig, Richie Hawtin and Derrick May will make appearances to reveal the ins and outs of their underpublicized segment of the music industry.
Hart Plaza festivals? TV appearances? It appears the reclusive days of techno music are over.



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Female comics stand up to be counted

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
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When Connie Ettinger and D'Anne Witkowski do stand-up, and a male heckler blurts out

opinions and mean sentiments, the female comics don't usually try to get the last laugh.
"That is, shoot back a witty, embarrassing comeback with shut-them-up impact."
Neither local comic is "there yet," they say of their development in stage comedy.
"I'm a 120-pound demeanor and female. I don't feel I can cut down some drunk guy and make it to my car that night," jokes Witkowski, whose "day job" is studying English at the University of Detroit-Mercy.
Anyway, embarrassing the heck out of a heckler may not be their comedic style.
"Though, Witkowski, a Clarkston native who now lives in Royal Oak, may be well on her way. When a heckler recently yelled out "take off your shirt," the 22-year-old comic came back with, "Settle down, Dad," and got a few laughs.
Witkowski and Ettinger are two of six women comics in *Sorry About the Apple*, an all-female showcase of stand-up acts on Sunday, May 21 at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle in Royal Oak.
The program deviates from stand-up's standard format — an MC warm-up followed by a 25-

minute feature performer and headliner, a model created by Mark Ridley.
There's no hierarchy of performance in *Sorry About the Apple*. Once more, it's all women, so the audience gets "a concentrated dose of women comics," says Ettinger, who came up with the format and pitched it to Ridley.
"And, I think they'll be delightfully surprised at the caliber of humor that they're going to see," says the Franklin resident, a "recovering attorney."
Under the standard format, audiences rarely see more than one comedienne, if even one female comic, leaving many comedy-goers with the impression women aren't as funny as men.
There's a stereotype about female comics, says Witkowski. "It's believed that men are fun-

nier, are more capable of handling a crowd and so forth. ... Male comics have to prove that they're not funny. Females have to prove that they are."
Audiences are also quick to conclude female comics only joke about menstrual cycles, pregnancy, relationships and housewifery. "I suspect that when people see a lineup of six women performing, they expect a night of man-bashing, and nothing could be further from the truth," says Ettinger. "While we all work, I don't think there have been many forums for women comics to showcase their talents. It is a male-dominated industry, not to say that we've been held back because of that. I've been treated very well. But it is a little bit harder. The networking is more difficult."
While Ettinger and company aren't really *Sorry About the Apple* their acts are far from Judy Tenuta-style stand-up.
And, as a group of performers, their subject matter runs the gamut.
"It's well-balanced," says Ettinger. There's a mix of humor directed at both women and men."

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