



Saturday, August 18, 2012
Rosa Parks Circle, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Media Contact:
Molly Klimas
616-443-4647
klimas@intentpr.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GRandJazzFest announces all six acts

Full day (and into the evening) of FREE performances for the public on Aug. 18

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. – MAY 30, 2012 – [GRandJazzFest](http://GrandJazzFest.com), presented by DTE Energy Foundation, today announces its full slate of performances for the FREE day-into-evening major jazz event coming to Rosa Parks Circle in downtown Grand Rapids on Saturday, Aug. 18. Festival organizers in April announced the headline act and two other acts.

GRandJazzFest is pleased to announce the additional three acts:

- [Grupo Ayé](#), formed by percussionist Robert Mulligan, brings Latin jazz and more. Grupo Ayé specializes in Afro-Cuban music, which blends salsa, Latin jazz, bachata and merengue. The group's experience spans performances with such noted artists as Pat Metheny, Tito Puente, Wynton Marsalis, Celia Cruz, Aretha Franklin, Harry Chapin Jr., Englebert Humperdink and Paquito Rivera.
- [The Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra](#) for more than 35 years has been one of Michigan's premier jazz ensembles, featuring some of the finest musicians in the area playing swinging original compositions and arrangements as well as traditional favorites. **Accompanying GRJO will be well-known vocalist [Edye Evans Hyde](#)**, who delights audiences of all ages.



Saturday, August 18, 2012
Rosa Parks Circle, Grand Rapids, Michigan

- **[The Steve Hilger Jazz Quintet](#)** of Grand Rapids plays versions of jazz standards as well as original works. Steve Hilger, who heads up the band, has been a singer-songwriter since the mid-1970s; he's joined by John Gist, Steve Talaga, Tom Lockwood, Randy Marsh, Deborah Richmond and Charlie Hoats.

The previously announced acts:

- **Renowned guitarist [Tim Bowman](#)** of Detroit will headline GRandJazzFest. Bowman, an extraordinary contemporary jazz guitarist who headlined the 2007 Guitars and Saxes Tour, was named Billboard's 2009 Top 10 Smooth Jazz Artist of the Year and, at the Dubai International Jazz Festival, was named Best Guitarist of 2010.
- **Saxophonist [Phil Denny](#)** is another major performer announced as part of the GRandJazzFest lineup. Denny, of Lansing, was a featured performer at the 2012 Dubai International Jazz Festival.
- **Walt Gutowski & The Bridge Street Band**, accompanied by vocalist Michelle Covington, will perform at GRandJazzFest. Grand Rapids' very own Gutowski and his band played at GRandJazzFest's April press conference, giving attendees a taste of the jazz fest to come.

"All six of our performing groups are Michigan-local. In this first year of our festival, the Michigan connection – supporting Michigan artists – is very important to us," Festival Founder Audrey Sundstrom said. "We're thrilled with the diversity of our lineup – we have all of the major jazz forms represented."

GRandJazzFest is organized by GR and Jazz, a nonprofit organization founded and led by Sundstrom and a board dedicated to jazz in Grand Rapids. GR and Jazz also has collaborated with a team of additional jazz aficionados including local business and community leaders and the West Michigan Jazz Society. The festival is being financed by generous sponsors and in-kind contributors so it



Saturday, August 18, 2012
Rosa Parks Circle, Grand Rapids, Michigan

can be FREE to the public. The Downtown Development Authority in March awarded GRandJazzFest a \$10,000 grant because of the festival's commitment to supporting downtown merchants.

More information on GRandJazzFest – including the schedule and sponsorship/volunteer opportunities – can be found at www.grandjazzfest.org, and at the festival's Facebook and Twitter sites – www.facebook.com/grandjazzfest and www.twitter.com/grandjazzfest.

###

MEDIA:

- An Electronic Press Kit, including images of performers and GRandJazzFest's new poster, can be found here: <http://grandjazzfest.org/newsroom/may-30-2012-electronic-press-kit/>
- Please contact Molly Klimas at 616-443-4647 or Klimas@intentpr.com if you would like to set up interviews with any of the GRandJazzFest performers and/or the festival organizers.

About GRandJazzFest

GRandJazzFest is a community event of the nonprofit organization "GR and Jazz" founded in 2012, with the purpose of promoting and bringing awareness of jazz and related arts to new and diverse audiences through educational programs and community events. GRandJazzFest is a FREE one-day event on Saturday, Aug. 18, 2012, from noon until 10 p.m., featuring jazz artists who are Michigan-based. GRandJazzFest brings together notable jazz performers as well as highlights up-and-coming artists for diverse audiences. GRandJazzFest is being held at Rosa Parks Circle, a central location in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, where attendees can enjoy music, support local businesses and visit other Grand Rapids attractions. The festival is FREE. GRandJazzFest has collaborated with the West Michigan Jazz Society (WMJS), which is the 501(c)3 fiduciary organization for the festival. More information at www.grandjazzfest.org.

About West Michigan Jazz Society

The West Michigan Jazz Society (WMJS) is one of the most successful jazz societies in the United States. With stable membership well in excess of 500, the WMJS is responsible for the organization of more than 20 major jazz concerts and events in Grand Rapids each year. The late Betty Forrest (former wife of the great saxophonist Jimmy Forrest) formed the WMJS 26 years ago as a mechanism for the promotion of live jazz and a means of supporting and fostering young jazz talent. For the past quarter of a century, the WMJS has carried out this mission with indubitable success, regularly employing hundreds of West Michigan's talented jazz musicians, and supporting dozens of student musicians through scholarships and performance opportunities. The major focus of the WMJS as promoters of live jazz over recent years has been the Jazz at the Zoo Series, which presents 10 weekly concerts throughout the summer in John Ball Park to audiences of 1,200-1,500 each night; and the Jazz Gumbo Series, which features monthly concerts through the winter. In addition, the WMJS arranges a live jazz holiday party and the Musician of the Year event each year. More information at <http://www.wmichjazz.org/>.

2526 Summit Ridge Drive NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Website: grandjazzfest.org Email: grandjazzfest@gmail.com Phone: 616-617-7720