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PHOTOS OF 2017 PERFORMERS: <https://goo.gl/YfNkZG>

PRESS KIT WITH PHOTOS OF PAST GRANDJAZZFESTS: <https://goo.gl/QDXfMQ>

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GRandJazzFest ready for 6th annual festival presented by DTE Energy Foundation

- > *Richard Elliot headlines 6th annual GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation*
- > *FREE festival Aug. 19 & 20 features 11 jazz acts over two days; also features activities for kids and an After Party for adults*
- > *Grand Rapids Mayor proclaims August 2017 Jazz Month*

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. – Aug. 9, 2017 – **The 6th annual GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation** brings 11 diverse jazz performance acts to the Rosa Parks Circle stage this Aug. 19 and 20 in downtown Grand Rapids at West Michigan's only free, weekend-long jazz festival. The sixth annual festival is expected to draw more than 10,000 people over the two days. GRandJazzFest 2017 also includes a Family Guitar Tent and guitar giveaways, free face painting for the kids (and kids at heart), a beverage area and VIP area provided by the Grand Rapids Art Museum, an After Party and more.

Holding the festival in the center city is by design, to enable festival-goers to take in all that downtown has to offer: restaurants, clubs, museums, microbreweries and shops. The festival occurs during Restaurant Week in Grand Rapids.

Grand Rapids Mayor Rosalynn Bliss has proclaimed August 2017 as Jazz Appreciation Month in the city. The proclamation notes that GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation was first held in August 2012 and has been held every August since, drawing thousands downtown for the free event.

Saxophonist Richard Elliot headlines the 6th annual GRandJazzFest presented by the DTE Energy Foundation. The complete performance lineup for the event in order of appearance:

SATURDAY, AUG. 19

1. Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra with Edye Evans Hyde, 12:30 p.m.

2526 Summit Ridge Drive NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505
Website: grandjazzfest.org Email: grandjazzfest@gmail.com Phone: 616-617-7720



2. Terry Lower / Jazz Expedition Sextet, 2 p.m.
3. Ed Stone and the Flowmasters, 3:30 p.m.
4. Tumbao Bravo, 5 p.m.
5. Bryan Lubeck, 6:30 p.m.
6. **HEADLINER - Richard Elliot, 8 p.m.**

SUNDAY, AUG. 20

1. Jazz Student Band - Blushing Monk, 1 p.m.
2. The Isaac Norris Project, 2:30 p.m.
3. organissimo, 4 p.m.
4. Four80East, 5:30 p.m.
5. Nate Harasim & NILS featuring Brandon Willis, 7 p.m.

"We're so excited for Richard Elliot to take the stage at Rosa Parks Circle – he's a huge name in the jazz and R&B world and beyond – an exceptional musician and performer!" GRandJazzFest Founder Audrey Sundstrom said. "In addition to Richard, we have some incredibly diverse talent – jazz music for everyone, even those who think they don't like jazz – plus additional activities for an amazing weekend of free entertainment for the entire family."

Scotland-born, L.A.-based Elliot – called "the James Brown of Contemporary Jazz" – is among an eclectic array of jazz performers whose genres include big band, swing, straight-ahead, contemporary, Latin-Cuban and much more.

"The great thing about jazz is there are so many types. Our goal is to spread the love of jazz in all its forms," Sundstrom said.

In addition to kicking off the festival as always with the acclaimed Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra and Edye Evans Hyde performing vocals, several acts make return appearances at GRandJazzFest: Tumbao Bravo, organissimo, Nate Harasim and Bryan Lubeck. A student jazz band also will perform.

"GRandJazzFest is truly a hallmark event for the Grand Rapids community, and this year's proclamation further demonstrates the value this event brings to the city – from boosting local businesses to drawing visitors downtown to enjoy world-class jazz music," said Faye Nelson, vice president, DTE Energy, and president and board chair of the DTE Energy Foundation. "The DTE Energy Foundation's support ensures this festival continues to enliven the community and provides people with free access to renowned music, arts and cultural activities that are integral to a strong quality of life."



Thank you to GRandJazzFest sponsors

The two-day GRandJazzFest festival free for the sixth year in a row thanks not only to presenting sponsor DTE Energy Foundation but also to the City of Grand Rapids, GR and Jazz, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI), IntentPR and many others (see <http://grandjazzfest.org/sponsors/>). The festival also is grateful to the many volunteers who help to organize the event.

THE FEST HAS MORE THAN MUSIC!

Refreshment area at Grand Rapids Art Museum

Under an agreement with GRAM, the festival's VIP area will be located on the GRAM front terrace where refreshments and snacks will be provided. The VIP area is for sponsors of GRandJazzFest. Additionally, GRAM will have an outdoor bar area set up at the base of its front steps adjoining Rosa Parks Circle for attendees who would like to purchase and consume refreshments and enjoy the festival.

Family Guitar Tent

Hosted by GRandJazzFest performer Bryan Lubeck and sponsored by Godin and Guitar Center, this fun family-friendly tent will be a chance for people of all ages to try out different kinds of guitars. There will be guitar giveaways during the weekend (must be present to win).

Free face painting for the kids

The kids can get their faces painted for free by Fancy Faces! Face-painting artists will be at Rosa Parks Circle throughout the weekend.

Join the After Party!

Adult jazz lovers are invited to keep the jazz going by stopping by The B.O.B. – just a block away from Rosa Parks Circle – for the GRandJazzFest After Party and jazz jam session on Saturday, Aug. 19. The party takes place in The B.O.B.'s Brewery, located on the lower level. Party-goers are encouraged to bring their GRandJazzFest event program to get into The B.O.B. with no cover charge. The club is featuring special meal deals that night.

Tips for fest-goers:

Location

GRandJazzFest will be held at Rosa Parks Circle in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan. Rosa Parks Circle is located at 135 Monroe Center NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. You can find Rosa Parks Circle on Google Maps.

Get there early – especially if you love big band music. Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra with Edye Evans Hyde kicks off the festival, which starts at noon on Saturday, Aug. 19. The fest goes until about 10 p.m. that night and then continues Sunday, Aug. 20, starting at 1 p.m. and going until about 8:30 p.m.

Pedal to the fest with bike rack provided by Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition



A bike rack provided by the [Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition](#) will be at the Rosa Parks Circle venue for stowing and self-locking bikes.

WHAT TO BRING

Bring **lawn chairs**, **mini-coolers** if you want, and **sunscreen** – the venue is a sunny, open area with some shady areas around the perimeter. The fest's main tent will have bottled water for sale, the adjacent Grand Rapids Art Museum will be featuring a special refreshment area, and there are plenty of places surrounding Rosa Parks Circle to grab a quick bite and beverage. **Plus, it's Restaurant Week during GRandJazzFest!** Learn more here: <http://www.experiencegr.com/restaurants/restaurant-week/>.

Also: Bring your smart phone if you have one – GRandJazzFest's website is mobile-optimized, which makes it easy to find the fest schedule and more. Plus, you'll want to take photos while you're at the fest! And you'll be able to take our online survey with your phone to help us keep producing great fests (there's free wifi at Rosa Parks Circle via iserv, compliments of The City of Grand Rapids).

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel special the weekend of GRandJazzFest!

GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation is Aug. 19 & 20 — make a weekend of it! The [Amway Grand Plaza Hotel](#) is offering special rates those nights. This beautiful hotel, with a contemporary tower along the Grand River and a classic historic section located at Monroe and Pearl avenues, is just steps away from Rosa Parks Circle where GRandJazzFest takes place. Book your visit with the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel at <http://group.curiocollection.com/GRandJazz-Fest> (you might need to copy and paste the link into a separate browser). The link entitles GRandJazzFest attendees to a 10 percent discount off the Best Available Rate when booked using the website link. The Group Code is JAZZ.

For additional local hotel information, please visit [experienceGR.com](http://www.experiencegr.com). Hotels within walking distance of Rosa Parks Circle:

- Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
- City Flats Hotel
- Courtyard by Marriott Downtown
- Holiday Inn Grand Rapids Downtown
- JW Marriott Grand Rapids

More information on GRandJazzFest 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.

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About GRandJazzFest

GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation is a community event of the nonprofit 501(c)(3) 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 2017 is a FREE weekend-long event that runs Saturday, Aug. 19, from noon until 10 p.m., and Sunday, Aug. 20, from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., featuring notable jazz artists, including many who are Michigan-based. GRandJazzFest brings together acclaimed jazz performers as well as highlights emerging 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. More information at www.grandjazzfest.org.

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About the DTE Energy Foundation

The DTE Energy Foundation is the philanthropic arm of DTE Energy, continuing the legacy of community support and involvement of its electric and natural gas utilities, which serve 2.2 million electric customers in Southeast Michigan and 1.3 million natural gas customers in Michigan. In 2015, the DTE Energy Foundation provided \$15 million in grant support to nonprofits throughout the company's service territories. As one of Michigan's leading corporate citizens, DTE Energy is a force for growth and prosperity in the 450 Michigan communities it serves in a variety of ways, including philanthropy, volunteerism and economic progress. <http://www.dteenergy.com/foundation>.