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GRandJazzFest announces 2014 lineup

Trumpeter Rick Braun headlines 3rd annual GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. – APRIL 30, 2014 – On International Jazz Day, GRandJazzFest presented by DTE Energy Foundation announces the performance lineup for the third annual festival being held Saturday, Aug. 16, and Sunday, Aug. 17, at Rosa Parks Circle in Grand Rapids. Ten diverse acts plus a student-jazz-jam session round out the free weekend-long event. The performance lineup:

- Headliner: Rick Braun
- Sunday night headliner: Alexander Zonjic
- Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra with Edye Evans Hyde
- Cooper Hay Van Lente Group
- Grupo Ayé
- In The Tradition
- Matt Marshak
- Evidence Jazz Group
- Demetrius "Krayon" Nabors
- The Robert Hurst Quintet

Headlining this year's event is trumpeter and vocalist Rick Braun. Nearly 20 years into his solo career, the Allentown, Pennsylvania-born Braun's first big break came when he composed *Here With Me*, a Top 20 hit for REO Speedwagon. He soon became a highly regarded pop sideman, touring and recording with Rod Stewart, War, Sade, Tina Turner, Natalie Cole and Tom Petty. Braun takes the stage in the prime performance slot Saturday evening during GRandJazzFest.

"Rick Braun is the real deal. He's a wonderful performer who knows how to play his instrument and make it sing. As a performer, he enjoys performing, and the audience always has a great interactive experience. I've seen him perform multiple times and always am amazed!" GRandJazzFest Founder Audrey Sundstrom said.

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The trumpeter became a fixture with his debut, *Intimate Secrets*. His records have ranked in the Top 10 of *Billboard's* Contemporary Jazz Chart with *Kisses in the Rain* reigning at No. 1 for 11 weeks. His singles have held the No. 1 position on the R&R NAC/Smooth Jazz album charts. This summer, he releases a brand-new album, *Human Nature*, along with Kirk Whalum and Norman Brown, which pays tribute to Michael Jackson. (More at rickbraun.com.)

Flutist Alexander Zonjic is GRandJazzFest 2014's Sunday-night headliner. Zonjic started as a guitarist but the story goes that at age 21, when home on hiatus from a rock tour, a stranger on the street who had seen him play guitar offered him a flute for \$50. Zonjic got it for \$9. He auditioned with it for the new University of Windsor music program and got in on a probationary basis, and that's where he started his classical training.

Over the years, Zonjic has performed with orchestras nationwide, including The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, The Windsor Symphony Orchestra, The Florida Symphony Orchestra and many others. On the jazz side, while playing at Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit, Zonjic met Bob James, who asked the young flutist to join his band. The collaboration began a decade's worth of international touring in the 1980s and two recordings in the 1990s.

His Warner Brothers debut, *Neon* (1990), featured James and Earl Klugh and was produced by Kirk Whalum. Zonjic's 1993 follow-up, *Passion*, which featured vocalist Angela Bofill, was an investigation of several musical periods and styles. Zonjic began recording in 1978 with a self-titled project that featured everything from Beatles tunes to jazz standards. Other recordings in his catalog include *Elegant Evening* (1982), *Romance with You* (1984) and *When Is It Real* (1987). (More at <http://zonjic.com>.)

In keeping with a tradition established with the first GRandJazzFest in 2012, the **Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra with vocalist Edye Evans Hyde** opens the 2014 event. For more than 35 years, the Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra 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. (More at <http://www.grjo.com>.)

2011 West Michigan Jazz Society Musician of the Year **Edye Evans Hyde** has been singing jazz, blues and pop music for more than 30 years in West Michigan, Los Angeles, Asia and Europe. Over the years, Evans Hyde has shared the stage with world-renowned blues singer Linda Hopkins, pop singer Michael Bolton, vocalist Maria Muldaur, actress Connie Stevens, the late Ray Charles and Cuban trumpet player Arturo Sandoval. (More at <http://edyeevanshyde.com>.)

Veteran vibraphonist, composer and educator **Jim Cooper** who leads **Cooper Hay Van Lente** has played vibes for 40 years, leading numerous groups, appearing as both soloist and sideman. He has performed with Ira Sullivan, Art Van Damme, Larry Vuckovich, Victor Goines, Chicago pianist Bob Dogan, Detroit clarinetist Dave Bennett, The Holland (Michigan) Jazz Orchestra, Buddy de Franco and Jon Faddis, and the Chicago Jazz Ensemble. (More at www.jimcooper.net.)

Grupo Ayé returns to GRandJazzFest 2014, having played in 2012 at the inaugural festival. Grupo Ayé specializes in Afro-Cuban music, which blends salsa, Latin jazz, bachata and merengue. The West Michigan 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. (More at grupoaye.com.)

In The Tradition got its start on Detroit's west side and made a name as a hard-swinging bebop ensemble. The band has performed at myriad festivals including the Detroit International Jazz Festival. In 2009, the group released its third recording, *The Tradition Continues*, to wide international acclaim. The band was selected Artist of The Week by SkyJazz International for the week of March 8, 2010. On the heels of this acclaim, in 2012 the band released its fourth album, *Sirius*. The double-disc recording has received global praise and play. (More at <http://www.inthetraditionjazz.net/>.)

Contemporary jazz guitarist Matt Marshak, a native of Long Island, New York, grew up on rock 'n' roll music in a home full of musicians. In his latest work, he taps into the wonderful diversity of music in *Colors of Me*, shading his classic and fluid style with jazz, blues, rock, pop and even down-home boogie. Marshak's seventh major release follows 2011's highly received *Urban Folktales*, which captured a sophisticated late-night vibe and boasted a No. 1 song, *Silent Knowing*, on the 2011 indie jazz chart. (More at mattmarshak.com.)

Evidence Jazz Group, started by saxophonist Michael Doyle upon moving to West Michigan from New York, has been a hard-bop haven for some of the state's best jazz players. Drawing upon his experiences in New York with such great musicians and teachers as David Leibman, Barry Harris, Milt Hinton and Branford Marsalis, Doyle and Evidence take an audience directly to "The City." The band's credits include performances with guitarist Mark Elf and Jim Cooper, as well as appearances at the annual Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp Jazz Festival, the Lansing Old Town Jazz Festival, and the Grand Rapids Jazz and Blues Festival. Band members also include Brad Fritcher, Steve Talaga, Tom Lockwood and Fred Knapp. (More at <http://www.livemusicgr.org/evidence.tm>.)

Pianist, arranger, composer and producer Demetrius "Krayon" Nabors was born and raised in Detroit. Nabors' musical journey has included gospel, jazz and blues. In 2010, he was one of 35 international jazz composers chosen to study at Columbia University in Manhattan for the Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute. He is a proud winner of the 2011 and 2012 Detroit Music Awards in the category of Outstanding Gospel/Christian Musician. In the midst of his musical journey, Nabors completed his bachelor of fine arts degree in jazz studies in 2011 and his master's degree in improvisation in 2013, both at the University of Michigan. (More at <http://dknmusic.com/>.)

A composer, bassist, educator and recording artist, **Robert Hurst**, who leads **The Robert Hurst Quintet**, has been part of Grammy-award-winning recordings featuring Sir Paul McCartney, Charles Lloyd, Wynton Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, Dave Brubeck, Harry Connick Jr., Terrence Blanchard, Tony Williams, Nicholas Payton, Sting, Carl Allen, Pharaoh Sanders, Barbara Streisand, Willie Nelson, Yo Yo Ma, Ravi Coltrane, Chris Botti and Diana Krall. To date, Hurst has won seven Grammy Awards, performed on several RIAA- Platinum and Gold recordings, and has received Top Ten and Five Star recognition around the globe. He was the bassist in the house band of *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* for eight seasons. His work in performing, directing, arranging and composing on the NBC program were highlighted with four Emmy Awards. (More at www.roberthurst.com.)

Additionally at GRandJazzFest, a **student jazz jam session** will be featured on Sunday, Aug. 17 (details to follow in a separate announcement).



GRandJazzFest, now in its third year, announced this year's lineup on International Jazz Day (April 30). Learn more about International Jazz Day at <http://jazzday.com>.

The two-day festival will again be free thanks to presenting sponsor DTE Energy Foundation, the City of Grand Rapids and other sponsoring organizations and individuals.

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 2014 is a FREE weekend-long event that runs Saturday, Aug. 16, from noon until 10 p.m., and Sunday, Aug. 17, from noon p.m. to 8 p.m., featuring jazz artists who are primarily 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. More information at www.grandjazzfest.org.