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Local productions promise to entertain

By: Maria Allard (/reporterbio/maria-allard) | **Grosse Pointe Times** (<https://www.candgnews.com/newspaper/grossepointetimes>)
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GROSSE POINTES — Anyone looking for a night out at the theater or to see a concert in the upcoming weeks might want to check some local shows that will take center stage in the Grosse Pointes and Detroit.

Some productions will include talented members from local theater groups, while other shows will feature students from neighborhood schools. Each show performer has rehearsed for weeks to get ready for opening night.

Grosse Pointe North Performing Arts will present the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical "The Secret Garden" March 3-6 at the Grosse Pointe Performing Arts Center, 707 Vernier Road in Grosse Pointe Woods. Performances are set for 7:30 p.m. March 3-5 and 1 p.m. March 6.

According to show organizers, "The Secret Garden" tells the story of Mary Lennox, whose parents have died. She moves in with her widower uncle Archibald, who stills mourns his late wife, Lily. The story continues as the Mary character gets to know her cousin Colin and chambermaid Martha.

Tickets cost \$15 for main floor seating, \$12 for balcony seating, and \$9 for students and senior citizens in the balcony. Gold Cards are welcome. Tickets can be purchased online at gpnd.booktix.com, in person at Wild Birds Unlimited on Mack Avenue, or in person if still available.

The University Liggett School Players will present "Young Frankenstein: The Musical" at 7:30 p.m. March 3-5 and at 2 p.m. March 6. General admission costs \$6, and reserved seats cost \$10. For tickets, visit www.seatyourself.biz/uls. ULS is located at 1045 Cook Road in Grosse Pointe Woods. For more information about the production, contact Phillip W. Moss at pmoss@uls.org.

According to Moss, chair of the creative and performing arts department at ULS, more than 52 students in grades seven through 12 are in the production. That includes student designers, directors, musicians and performers. In addition, the orchestra is made up of students from the high school grades.

In an email, Moss said "Young Frankenstein: The Musical" mocks the 1950s horror genre and features caricatures and over-the-top treatments of the themes found in Mary Shelley's novel.

"This production features a set design by Lucy Mott, lighting by Dawson Mauck and costumes by Emma Leonard," Moss said. "The cast is led by Antoni Cipriano, John Petersen, Catey Elliott, Lucy Mott, Jackson Wujek and Quinn Ercolani. Kayla Strong and Hunter Wang are responsible for choreography and movement. There are a number of musical selections, and the dance styles are primarily jazz, tap and musical theater. The choreography was completed by seniors Hunter Wang and Kayla Strong. Maddie Wu is our student musical director and plays the piano in the orchestra."

The sun will come out March 12 when local favorites the Sun Messengers perform at 7 p.m. at Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, 19950 Mack Ave., at Torrey Road in Grosse Pointe Woods. The concert is open to the public and will be held in Rauth Hall, with a dance floor and refreshments available for purchase. Tickets cost \$10 per person \$5 for students. For more information, call (313) 886-4301 or visit www.gpwpres.org.

Formed in 1980, the Sun Messengers have served as the house band for the Detroit Pistons, backed up Martha Reeves and The Drifters, opened for Jay Leno, and performed more than 6,000 concerts for public and private events.

If you're looking to have your funny bone tickled, the Theatre Arts Club of Detroit will present the comedy "Always a Bridesmaid" at 8 p.m. March 18 and 2 p.m. March 19 at the Players Playhouse, 3321 E. Jefferson Ave. in Detroit. The T.A.C. of Detroit is a nonprofit organization established in 1910 as an all-women's theater group.

In "Always a Bridesmaid," four friends have sworn to keep the promise they made on the night of their senior prom to be in each other's weddings no matter what. More than 30 years later, they are still determined to honor that vow. Marianne Shrader is directing the show with Lisa Lechniak wearing the producer's hat. In an email, Lechniak said the oldest member of the theater troupe is 98.



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Grosse Pointe North student Andrew Hallam plays Major Holmes in the school's production of "The Secret Garden." The musical is among many shows coming to local theaters.
Photo by John McTaggart

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"We have a nice group of women who are trying to keep this tradition going and are always looking for new members to assist in all aspects of production, fundraising for our Wayne State scholarship student or just wanting to be a part of a fun group," Lechniak said.

For tickets to see "Always a Bridesmaid" or to become involved with the group, visit www.theatreartsclub.com. It is suggested to purchase tickets by March 13.

On March 20, the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club, under Eugene Rogers, will perform at the auditorium at Brownell Middle School, 260 Chalfonte Ave. in Grosse Pointe Farms. Showtime is 5 p.m. Tickets cost \$12 for adults and \$8 for students. For tickets, visit www.gpschools.seatyourself.biz. Some tickets will be available at the door if not sold out in advance.

According to a press release, the glee club is known for incorporating music of different styles and from various periods, including Renaissance motets, Romantic anthems, opera choruses, folk songs, music spiritual in nature, and contemporary works.

The instrumental music program from Grosse Pointe North High School will hold a fundraiser concert at 7:30 p.m. April 10 at Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave. in Detroit. Admission costs \$20 for general seating, \$12 for students and seniors, and \$30 for box seats. Tickets are available at Wild Birds Unlimited, located on Mack Avenue, or in the lobby of Orchestra Hall on concert night.

The North bands and orchestras will perform on the stage. Works will include "Prelude, Siciliano & Rondo," by Malcolm Arnold; "The British Eighth March," by Zo Elliot; "English Folk Song Suite," by Ralph Vaughan Williams; Beethoven's 1st Symphony; "Critical Mass," by Todd Stalter; "The Picadore March," by John Philip Sousa; and more.

"This is a tradition that dates back a few decades," North Director of Instrumental Music David Cleveland said in an email. "It is our most prestigious concert of the year, and we will take this music to the Dixie Classic Festival in Chicago the following week."

Money raised at the event will help fund expenses associated with the instrumental music program at North. Additional donations can be sent to: Grosse Pointe North Band & Orchestra, Grosse Pointe North High School, 707 Vernier Road, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236. For additional questions regarding the concert, contact Cleveland at dave.cleveland@gpschools.org or at (313) 432-3322.

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