

For Immediate Release
July 1, 2014

NEWS RELEASE

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**RECORDING ARTIST CLAY HOWARD TO APPEAR AT DOWNTOWN HOLLAND
STREET PERFORMER SERIES THIS THURSDAY**

Holland, MI — Clay Howard, acoustic guitarist and singer, will be traveling to Holland from his home in Kernersville, North Carolina to perform at the Downtown Holland Street Performer Series this Thursday, July 3. The Street Performer Series, sponsored by Gentex Corporation, is held in Downtown Holland every Thursday night from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm during the summer. Each week features a variety of talented performing artists, including aerial acrobats, break dancers, face painters, jugglers, magicians, yo-yoers, and much more. The Series is free to attend, but tipping is highly encouraged.

Howard's passion for music began when he was a young child and came across an old ukulele that belonged to his older sister. The ukulele only had one string, but Clay was still determined to learn to play it. At the age of fifteen he received an acoustic guitar from his parents, and taught himself how to play. This led to his own purchase of an electric guitar at the age of twenty, which eventually led him to a professional career in music. Howard has been performing publicly for over 25 years, including a stint with the band Stratocruiser, but had not performed a solo show until his mother-in-law and Zeeland resident Nancy Rebhan introduced his wife to the Street Performer Series and encouraged him to play in Holland the following year. Since then, Clay has stepped out and played well over 500 shows as a solo artist.

“I love seeing all of the people walking the streets of Holland and enjoying all the varied talents,” said Howard. “My favorite thing now is to see faces from the year before stop by and listen to a few songs. There are many folks that I have seen now going on six years.”

Founded in 1974, Gentex Corporation (NASDAQ: GNTX) is the leading supplier of automatic-dimming rearview mirrors and camera-based active safety systems to the global automotive industry. Based in Zeeland, Michigan, the international company develops, manufactures and markets interior and exterior automatic-dimming automotive rearview mirrors that utilize proprietary electrochromic technology to dim in proportion to the amount of headlight glare from trailing vehicle headlamps. More than half of the company's interior mirrors are sold with advanced electronic features, and more than 98 percent of the company's net sales are derived from the sale of auto-dimming mirrors to nearly every major automaker in the world.

The 2014 Downtown Holland Street Performer Series is co-sponsored by Gentex Corporation with support from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs through the Holland Area Arts Council. For more information on the Street Performer Series, please contact the Downtown Holland Principal Shopping District at 616.796.1210.

The lineup for the Street Performer Series on July 3 includes:

Alec Haas

Alec will be entertaining his audiences with both covers of popular songs and some of his original music, often improvising and allowing his passion to control the sound. As a music enthusiast he plans on heading to Nashville in the fall to pursue a career in music.

Alex Perez

Alex is a long-time musician and songwriter, as well as a full-time music student. He started writing music when he was in high school and it quickly became one of his passions. He has performed at a wide array of events and has also released a full-length album.

Bangarang Circus

Bangarang Circus Arts is a collective of performance artists who share a passion for all things circus and a desire for community. It is their goal to offer the circus arts to everyone who seeks it. Bangarang Circus specializes in aerial arts, hooping and acrobatics.

Brucie Cooke

Brucie began taking piano and horn lessons when he was a child growing up in Holland. Since retiring from teaching, he enjoys pursuing his longtime appreciation for music by playing guitar and percussion and singing folk and blues. This is Brucie's sixth year performing in the Series.

Calico

Calico has been playing at an assortment of local venues for over 20 years. Members Peg Becker, Dave Kinsman, Gary Vruggink, Joe Thorstenson and Jack Dastoli sing and play an eclectic mix of genres on the guitar, banjo, harmonica and percussion.

Caricatures by Corey Ruffin

Corey is a nationally renowned caricaturist, having illustrated for events all over the country. Trained under MAD Magazine's Tom Richmond, his flair for comedy and exaggeration is guaranteed to tickle your funny bone.

Circle Junkeez Crew

The Circle Junkeez are a dynamic b-boy style dance crew from Holland who love to perform and entertain audiences. They travel throughout the Midwest and across the United States to battle in top-notch break-dancing competitions.

Connor Scholten "Flying Fingers"

Connor has competed in several competitions around the country and has won multiple awards, including the Michigan State Yo-Yo Championship and the 2nd annual Grand Rapid's Got Talent Competition. This is Connor's 10th year performing in the Series. He named his act Flying

Fingers, the name that was first coined when he performed in the inaugural Street Performer Series.

Dan Davis & Meredith VanWieren

Returning for his sixth year in the Street Performer Series, Dan has performed country, folk, pop, and Irish music for 50 years in a multitude of different venues. He will be accompanied this year on guitar and vocals by musician Meredith VanWieren.

Dan The Magic Man

Dan is a self-taught balloon artist who performs regularly at birthday parties, scouting events and art fairs. He also volunteers weekly at several nursing homes, performing card tricks and visiting with elderly residents.

Doug Marlink

Doug began playing banjo in the mid 1970's. He performs mostly bluegrass and some jazz music on the banjo. He is a regular performer both in Downtown Holland and at the Holland Farmers Market.

Dying Will Be Easy

Brothers James and Ben Woiwode, along with friend Cameron Hurd, have been playing music together on and off for more than 10 years. The three have compiled an extensive repertoire consisting of many originals along with covers of old blues tunes such as "Jesus Gonna Make Up My Dying Bed" by Blind Willie Johnson, their namesake song.

E2

E2 is made up of friends Emmalyse Kleyn, a keyboardist, ukulele player and singer, and Esther Pleune, a keyboardist, guitarist, ukulele player and singer. E2 started playing together six years ago and have performed in churches and camps around the area along with multiple Broadway productions.

Henna Tattoos by Anna Schierbeek

Anna Schierbeek is a junior at Kendall College of Art and Design with a Drawing major and a Painting minor. She started her henna tattoo business five years ago and is grateful for the continued opportunity to participate in the Street Performer Series.

Hoopin' Hales

Haylie has been hooping for a year and a half and wishes to spread the positivity that is emulated through hula-hoop dance. She will be demonstrating her dancing as well as various hula-hooping tricks during her Street Performer Series debut.

Jonathan Hulst

Jonathan is a young magician who has been performing for about five years. He relies on card tricks to impress his audience. His favorite thing to do is to perform, and he always has two decks of cards with him to leave even the adults in the audience puzzled.

Juggler Gerry Bose

Gerry has been a juggling enthusiast his whole life. Gerry is the former president of the Grand

Rapids Juggling Club and has hosted four juggling festivals at the UICA in Grand Rapids. He is a member of the International Jugglers Association who had performed at a number of festivals and events and is particularly proud of his interview on National Public Radio.

Karz Paintz

Kristen Zamora began face painting three years ago while living in Fort Lauderdale. Since then she has moved back to her hometown of Paw Paw, Michigan, and started her own business in 2012. Her favorite part of the job is seeing the kids grin from ear to ear after seeing their painting.

Kaylie McConnell

Kaylie has been playing violin for five years. She is in the top orchestra at her high school, and plays in the Holland Youth Symphony Orchestra. She loves performing for people and playing a variety of music, including fiddle tunes, pop and classical music. This will be Kaylie's third year in the Series.

Maciek the Magician

Maciek is an award-winning magician crowned by the community as Holland's favorite act. He has appeared on a variety of TV shows, and won the top award on AMC's original series "Showville." Maciek performs with a unique, energetic style that audiences of all ages can relate to.

Mady Buursma

Mady learned her balloon twisting talents from her mother when she was just 10 years old. She can make 25 different balloon animals, bracelets and swords and enjoys working with children at a variety of community and church events.

Mat Emerick

Mat engages the audience with a gift for comedy, mimicry and silent acting reminiscent of great mimes and physical comedians like Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Red Skelton. Mat tosses, balances and spins a variety of objects in a juggling show that will both excite and amuse an audience of any age.

Matthew Banas

Matthew, a student at Aquinas College, will be making his second appearance in the Series as he sings a collection of tunes accompanied by his acoustic guitar. He enjoys playing both in the Series and at the Holland Farmers Market.

Mystic

Maribel Garza has been a belly dancer for over 12 years and Middle Eastern dancing is her passion. She has attended many seminars where she gets to meet and continue learning more about the art form from professional dancers.

Randy & Darlene Schaap

Darlene plays a number of different instruments including, flute, Irish penny whistle and over 70 different hand percussion instruments. Randy plays cajon, Irish penny whistle, harmonica,

congas, djembe, bodhran, keyboards, bass guitar, udu drum and hand percussion. The two recently appeared on “Showville”, a reality TV show on the AMC channel.

Robert Engle

Robert is a puppet enthusiast and crowds love to watch his puppets dance to recorded ragtime music. Robert has performed his show at a variety of different venues, including two nights a week for a full year at street side evening markets in Lampang, Thailand.

Rose of eDance

Rose teaches, performs and competes in west coast swing, hustle, bachata, and Middle Eastern dance, and enjoys engaging her audiences by spreading the love of dance. She owns eDance LLC in Grand Rapids, and will be making her second appearance in the Series this year.

Steph Gillett

Steph has been performing publically since she was five years old. She enjoys playing the guitar and singing, and will be doing so for the crowds at the Series.

String Fury

Luke Westrate and Sky Lownds are a yo-yo duo out of Whitehall. They have been yo-yoing together for the past three years. On Thursday nights, they will be performing intermediate to advanced yo-yo tricks and skills to music.

The Irish Street Musician: Celtic Kilroy

Celtic Kilroy plays a variety of instruments, including guitar, banjo, harmonica, Irish penny whistle, Irish drum and rhythm bones. He was a member of the Kwils, a popular Celtic band, which was disbanded after a twenty-year musical journey. In 2012 Celtic Kilroy also began studying the art of human statue, which has become one of the most favorite attractions at many events.

Tunes ‘N Tales by Tricia

Tricia provides family interactive entertainment for all ages. The combination of her degrees in early childhood development and reading education with over 30 years of classroom experience, made Tunes n’ Tales seem like the natural next step. Kids are invited to sing along, interact with puppets, play along with musical instruments and enjoy the fun!

12 Feet Tall

Amanda Visser has been singing since the age of three, while Michael Terpstra has been playing the guitar for ten years. Both have been writing songs for a while and through conversation of their mutual love of songwriting and music, 12 Feet Tall was born.

Additional Information: [WEBSITE](#) | [FACEBOOK](#) | [TWITTER](#)

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