For Immediate Release

July 2, 2013

NEWS RELEASE

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**RECORDING ARTIST CLAY HOWARD TO APPEAR AT DOWNTOWN HOLLAND STREET PERFORMER SERIES ON 4TH OF JULY**

# HOLLAND, MI — Recording artist and North Carolina resident Clay Howard will make a one-time appearance at the Downtown Holland Street Performer Series, sponsored by Gentex Corporation, this Thursday, July 4. The singer-songwriter will be joined all along 8th Street by musicians, caricature artists, aerial acrobats, belly dancers and a strolling stilt walker from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm that evening.

Howard has performed across the United States as a solo artist and a member of the band Stratocruiser. Every summer, he travels to Holland the first week of July to participate in the Street Performer Series while in town visiting his wife’s family. Over the course of his 10-year career, Howard has releases 11 CDs showcasing his talent as a singer and musician. Howard is also an accomplished author and has recently published a children’s book called “The Energy Thief.”

**“This year marks my sixth year playing in the Street Performer Series,” said Howard. “The support the people of Holland and the surrounding communities show for local and not-so-local local artists, like myself, is unmatched anywhere I play. This is honestly one of my favorite gigs, year after year.”**

# In addition to the Series, Downtown Holland will be hosting its first ever 4th of July Celebration on Thursday. Over 40 shops, restaurants and galleries will be open, with many of them participating in the “Celebrate and Save” sale. Participating businesses are offering 20% off a single item for patrons wearing red, white or blue. (Certain restrictions may apply.) Other special offers will be available too. Just look for the patriotic balloons on the door for big savings!

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 2013 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 line up for the Street Performer Series on July 4 includes:

**Alex Perez**

Alex is the leader of the band Alex & The Brave, which recently released its first full-length album. He plays folk rock music on the acoustic guitar with vocals.

**Anna Kremer & Rachel Szucs**

Anna and Rachel began playing music together in high school. Now that both performers are in college they are looking forward to reuniting this summer to sing old-time folk songs as well as popular favorites while playing the guitar and mandolin.

**Anna Schierbeek**

This will be Anna’s fourth summer participating in the Street Performer Series. She will be sharing her long-standing passion for the arts by drawing temporary henna tattoos.

**Bangarang Circus**

This entertainment troupe is filled with circus enthusiasts trained in a variety of acts, including aerial arts, fire juggling, hooping and acrobatics. Group members have opened for nationally touring bands, music festivals, variety showcases, street fairs and more.

**Caricatures by Corey Ruffin**

Corey has years of experience as a caricature artist, drawing exaggerated portraits in five minutes or less. Corey was taught how to draw caricatures by the lead artist for “Mad” magazine and spent two years drawing at the Mall of America.

**Clair De Lune**

Clare Freeman is an Egyptian and fusion dancer who performs at restaurants, in stage shows and at private events. She owns eDance LLC in Grand Rapids and will be joined at the Series by Emad Ibrahim, a professional musician from Egypt who has recorded with leading artists in Egypt and the US.

**Clay Howard**

Clay is a North Carolina resident who has been performing as a musician across the United States, both in bands and as a solo artist. Clay has released 11 CDs over the last 10 years showcasing his talent on the guitar.

**Dan Davis**

Dan is an experienced musician and Street Performer Series regular. He has been performing Irish, country and folk music for 40 years in venues ranging from pubs to rest homes and even truck stops.

**Devon Patterson**

Devon aka “Kid Dopeness” is a talented young break-dancer. You’ll be amazed at the skilled moves he performs using nothing but a piece of cardboard and a radio.

**Dixie Brass**

Dixie Brass is an instrumental music group consisting of nine local players who perform familiar upbeat Dixie and jazz music. Dixie Brass enjoys performing live music across West Michigan.

**Grace and Joel VanZanten**

Grace studies violin with Mary Hofland. She enjoys playing familiar tunes often heard in musicals and plans to donate her tips to complete a water tower project in Kenya. Joel takes private violin lessons and has performed with the Holland Youth Orchestra Junior Strings, in addition to being a Series regular. Joel will donate a portion of his earnings to Dorie’s Promise, an orphanage in Guatemala.

**Henna Art by Jahara Begum**

Jahara was first taught the art of henna at the age of three and has been practicing it ever since. Henna is a form of temporary body art using natural plant-derived dyes.

**Joe Heemstra**

Joe has been playing the electric guitar for five years. He enjoys classic rock and guitar instrumentals and his dream is to be the lead guitarist for a band someday.

**Joel Brogan**

Joel has been practicing magic for years and uses misdirection, slight of hand, card tricks and other common items from the audience to wow the crowd.

**John Den Uyl**

John is a multi-instrumentalist, a singer and a songwriter. He will be making his Street Performer Series debut this summer.

**Jonathan Hulst**

Jonathan is a young magician who relies on card tricks to impress his audience. Despite his age, his illusions will leave even adults puzzled.

**Kaylie McConnell**

Kaylie has been playing violin for four years. She loves performing for people and playing a variety of music, including fiddle tunes, pop and classical.

**Mady Buursma**

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

**Mallory & Grace**

Mallory and Grace met in the fall of 2012 and have been performing together ever since. They perform a vocal duet with ukulele and guitar.

**Mat Emerick**

Mat has been performing in West Michigan for 20 years. His wide array of fun and interactive skits include mime illusions, comedic juggling and balancing acts. His unique blend of art forms and charismatic personality draws his audience together for a shared experience of fun.

**Mystic**

Maribel Garza has been a belly dancer for over 12 years. Middle Eastern dancing is her passion and she enjoys exploring the many ways to express this beautiful form of art.

**Olivia Mainville**

Olivia is a young singer and songwriter, who is a natural on guitar and has written over 40 original songs. Her style is described as an atmospheric mix of indie, folk and blues.

**Randy & Darlene Schaap**

Darlene plays many 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 new reality TV show on the AMC channel.

**Roosevelt Jones**

Roosevelt Jones combines the musical talents of guitarist/vocalist Mike McCarty and drummer Joe Lehman. With a sweet spot for the blues, the Grand Rapids duo’s eclectic tastes also include covers of vintage pop, country and Celtic tunes.

**Sally Starr**

Sally was inspired by her artist mother in 1975 to use a child’s fingerprint to create a simple, but entirely unique drawing. She then creates a pin out of the drawing for the child to wear.

**Semeneck Body Art**

Renea Semeneck will create free-hand temporary ink tattoos that last up to a week and henna art designs that can last up to two weeks. She likes bringing joy to others by creating a piece of art directly on them.

**Songs Against Slavery**

The mission of Songs Against Slavery is to awaken hearts to the injustice of sex trafficking. Chris Maybury, Grace Theisen, Jon Underwood, Kevin Maybury and Catherine Liang are singers, songwriters and musicians who perform with acoustic guitars, vocals, the djembe hand drum, Tin whistle, harmonica and keyboard.

**The Magic Of Trino**

Trino has been performing close-up, street and stage magic for five years. He has done it all from simple card tricks to making a Harley Davidson motorcycle appear on stage.

**Time Out**

Time Out is a jazz trio featuring Tommy Pancy and Luke Dionise on the saxophone and Nick Sterenberg on piano. This trio of young men play everything from 40’s swing to modern jazz.

**Violin by Claudia**

Claudia is a talented violinist and performer who has a love for entertaining and interacting with her audience. Claudia began playing the violin in fifth grade and continues to challenge herself with private violin lessons. She is a member of the Holland Symphony Youth Orchestra.

**Zack Lindell**

Zack has been writing music for five years and is excited for a chance to share his passion during the Street Performer Series. He will perform original music and covers on the guitar and harmonica.

Additional Information: [WEBSITE](http://www.downtownholland.com) |[FACEBOOK](https://www.facebook.com/streetperformerseries)| [TWITTER](https://twitter.com/HollandSPS)

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