



The weekend: 'Marvel Universe Live,' Detroit tree lighting

Greg Crawford, Detroit Free Press

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(Photo: Marvel Universe Live!)

You've cheered them on in comic books. You've been dazzled by their exploits at the movies. Now you can thrill to the heroics of Captain America, Superman, Black Panther et al. live and in person when the touring **"MARVEL UNIVERSE LIVE! AGE OF HEROES"** rolls into Little Caesars Arena for eight performances starting Thursday. The stunt-filled arena show finds our heroes — the lineup also includes Spider-Man, Iron Man, Thor, Black Widow and Star-Lord and his "Guardians of the Galaxy" cohorts — going into battle to keep the mystical Wand of Watoomb out of the hands of the dastardly Loki and fellow Marvel villains Yondu and Green Goblin. Bringing it all to life are cutting-edge special effects, 3D video projections, pyrotechnics and performers engaging in motorcycle stunts, martial arts and feats of aerial derring-do.

7 p.m. Thursday, 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m. & 3 and 7 p.m. Saturday, noon & 4 p.m. Sunday, Little Caesars Arena, Detroit. 800-745-3000. 313presents.com. \$20 and up.

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That 60-foot Norway spruce that turned up last week at Detroit's Campus Martius has been adorned with 19,000 lights and will be the official star of the **DETROIT TREE LIGHTING** ceremony Friday evening. However, it will getting some stiff competition in the star department: Detroit-born gospel great CeCe Winans plans to lend some musical holiday cheer to the event, while Ann Arbor's Alex and Maia Shibutani, 2018 Olympic ice-dancing medalists, will be on hand for the annual opening of the Campus Martius ice rink at 9 p.m. The fun Friday night won't be confined to Campus Martius. Christmas cheer will be coming as well to Beacon Park, just a few blocks north, which has been adorned with 90,000 LED lights. Visitors there can watch a live stream of the Campus Martius tree lighting from a large heated tent and enjoy musical performances by Nadir Omowale and Joe Hertler and the Rainbow Seekers. Free shuttles will run nonstop from Beacon Park to Campus Martius and back.

5 p.m.-midnight Friday, Campus Martius and Beacon Park, downtown Detroit. downtowndetroitparks.com/events.

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The crowd cheered as the lights went on at last year's tree-lighting ceremony at Campus Martius. (Photo: Ryan Garza, Detroit Free Press)

The 2018-19 season rolls on at Northville's Tipping Point Theatre with this weekend's opening of "**A COMEDY OF TENORS**," playwright Ken Ludwig's sequel to his 1989 Broadway mega-hit "Lend Me a Tenor." The new play, like its predecessor, is a lightweight farce set in the world of opera, and its intricate and entangled plot involves mistaken identities and misunderstandings. Italian opera tenor Tito Merelli and his fiery wife, Maria, are again central characters, and in the words of Ludwig, "everything that possibly could go wrong does go wrong." The play is making its Michigan debut at Tipping Point with a cast that includes Melynee Saunders Warren, Nick Yocum, Richard Marlatt, Sarab Kamoo, Hope Shangle, Joe Zarrow and Dave Davies.

Opens at 8 p.m. Thursday at continues through Dec. 23, Tipping Point Theatre, Northville. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com. \$26 and up. This week's Thursday and Friday shows are preview performances.



Richard Marlatt, left, Sarab Kamoo, Hope Shangle and Nick Yocum in "A Comedy of Tenors" at Tipping Point Theatre. (Photo: Steve Fecht)

"**THE FEELING OF BEING WATCHED**," a documentary that explores years of FBI surveillance of a Muslim neighborhood in Chicago, gets its Michigan premiere Thursday at Dearborn's Arab American National Museum. The project from Arab-American filmmaker Assia Boundaoui, the daughter of Algerian immigrants, focuses on an FBI probe of her family's suburban neighborhood and its residents that began in the 1990s. Agents were suspicious that a mosque in the area was funneling money to Hamas and other terrorist organizations in the Middle East. Though the investigation turned up no evidence, several of Boundaoui's relatives were compelled to plead guilty to white-collar crimes and serve jail time. After making repeated Freedom of Information requests about the investigation, Boundaoui began to suspect that she, too, was an FBI target. She'll discuss her film during a talk-back session after Thursday's screening.

7 p.m. Thursday, Arab American National Museum, Dearborn. 313-582-2266. arabamericanmuseum.org. \$10, \$7 for museum members.



Filmmaker Assia Boundaoui pursued pages of FBI documents while making "The Feeling of Being Watched." (Photo: Jessica Devaney)

A wedding. A lesbian couple. A woman who bakes cakes. Those are the ripped-from-the-headlines elements that make up new play **"THE CAKE,"** opening Friday at the Ringwald Theatre. Written by Bekah Brunstetter, who has been working recently on Starz series "American Gods" and NBC's "This Is Us," it has been variously described as a dramedy and a bittersweet culture-clash comedy. The play's central character is Della, a woman who steers clear of judging others while doing lots of baking. Her life gets complicated, however, when her best friend's daughter heads home to North Carolina to get married with a wife-to-be in tow. Can Della bless this union with one of her famous cakes? Suzan M. Jacokes stars in the Ringwald production along with Joel Mitchell, Maggie Alger and Audrey Jai. Dyan Bailey directs.

Opens at 8 p.m. Friday and continues through Dec. 10, Ringwald Theatre, Ferndale. 248-545-5545. theringwald.com. \$10, \$20.



Suzan M. Jacokes, front, with Audrey Jai, left, and Maggie Alger in the Ringwald Theatre's production of "The Cake." (Photo: Brandy Joe Plambeck)

Who says art fairs are strictly warm-weather events held on weekends in the great outdoors? This week's third annual **ROYAL OAK MARKET: ART FAIR EDITION** brings together painters, sculptors, jewelry makers and more on two weekdays inside the Royal Oak Farmers Market. The juried affair, presented by the Guild of Artists & Artisans, features 65 artists and will afford attendees a chance to do some early holiday shopping in an atmosphere free of weekend distractions. No Chords Barred (Thursday) and Wych Elm (Friday) will provide live music in the evenings, and the Detroit Institute of Arts' DIA Away, a 53-foot trailer offering kid-friendly activities, will be on the premises Thursday. Wine and craft beer will be available, and food trucks (Nosh Pit Detroit, El Guapo Grill, Mac Shack) are on the menu.

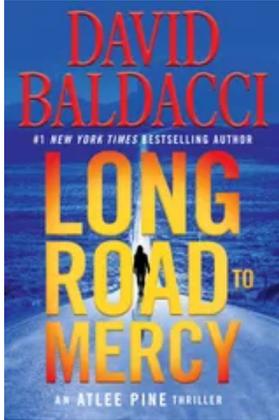
Noon-10 p.m. Thursday-Friday, Royal Oak Farmers Market. theguild.org. Free.



You can do some early holiday shopping at the Royal Oak Market: Art Fair Edition. (Photo: Brett Moyer)

DAVID BALDACCI, the crime-fiction writer whose name is seldom absent from the best-seller lists, will be in Detroit on Sunday to promote his latest novel, "Long Road to Mercy," which arrived in stores and online Tuesday. The book is built around a female protagonist and crime solver — a change of pace for Baldacci. New character Atlee Pine is an FBI special agent assigned to the western U.S. who's trying to figure out what happened to her long-missing twin sister when she's drawn into a curious case involving a rash of missing-persons cases in the Grand Canyon area. Baldacci will discuss his book and sign copies in the Clara Stanton Jones Friends Auditorium at the downtown Detroit Public Library. Literati Bookstore will be selling copies of the book at the library.

1:30 p.m. Sunday, Detroit Public Library – Main Branch, Detroit. detroitpubliclibrary.org.



David Baldacci's "Long Road to Mercy" has a female protagonist. (Photo: Grand Central Publishing)

Life during the first few weeks of motherhood, a topic rarely explored on the stage, is the focus of **"CRY IT OUT,"** a comedy opening Thursday at Detroit Public Theatre. The new work from playwright and TV writer Molly Smith Metzler ("Orange Is the New Black," "Shameless") focuses on three Long Island women who have decidedly different takes on postpartum life. Attorney Jessie doesn't want to return to work after giving birth, while her less-affluent neighbor Lina, a hospital worker, doesn't have a choice in the matter: For her, a job is an economic necessity. Meanwhile, the restless and affluent Adrienne feels distant from her new child and has become irate that other people judge her for being eager to be back at work. The play addresses the expectations being heaped on 21st-Century families and the ways social class can affect parenting and friendships. Courtney Burkett directs a cast that includes Breayre Tender, Dani Cochrane, Bryan Lark and Sarah Winkler.

Opens at 8 p.m. Thursday and continues through Dec. 9, Detroit Public Theatre, Allesee Hall at Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Music Center, Detroit. 313-576-5111. detroitpublictheatre.org \$25-\$47.50. Thursday-Friday shows are preview performances.

— Greg Crawford, *Detroit Free Press*

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