



WITH RESIDENT ARTS PARTNER  UMS

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Media Contact: Sara Billmann

UMS Vice President for Marketing & Communications

[sarabill@umich.edu](mailto:sarabill@umich.edu) / 734-763-0611

[Photos](#)

## **UMS and Ypsilanti Freighthouse Announce New Partnership**

**Twice-Annual Residencies Starting in April 2023**

**Pilot Program Week of April 22 -29, 2023**

**Month-long Residencies to Follow in Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Fall  
2024**

Ann Arbor, MI (February 21, 2023) — The University Musical Society (UMS) and City of Ypsilanti announce a new, two-year partnership that will result in arts programming for Ypsilanti residents, families, and schoolchildren beginning with a week-long pilot program in April 2023. Subsequent residencies will run for four weeks with expanded programming for the Ypsilanti community. A community-informed programming process is the catalyst for these dynamic residencies, activating the unique and historic civic space for performances, arts learning and participation, and creative exploration.

“We are delighted to partner with the University Musical Society in this new way, with UMS serving as a resident arts partner for our community,” said Christopher Jacobs, Community

Development Director for the City of Ypsilanti. “What really impressed us when UMS came forward with this idea was that they were putting the Ypsilanti community first and foremost, thinking about how they could share their resources to build community in, through, and around the arts.”

“We are so thrilled to be working with the City of Ypsilanti to develop a new model for programming residencies at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse,” said Matthew VanBesien, president of the University Musical Society. “We envision a deep commitment to the community of Ypsilanti that will include performances by local, regional, and national artists; workshops and opportunities for the community to participate in art-making activities; and special activities designed for families and school groups. We see our April and September residencies as a way to animate a community space while still preserving the other roles of the Freighthouse throughout the year, including its use as a warming center in the winter and a cherished venue for weddings in the spring and summer.”

These residencies are a natural extension of UMS’s engagement in Ypsilanti over the past several years. At the Freighthouse, UMS presented the International Contemporary Ensemble in a Secret Show in 2018 and dancer Caleb Teicher in 2019, as well as an interactive event related to Parable Path A2Ypsi, which was developed in conjunction with last season’s theatrical presentation of *The Parable of the Sower* by Toshi Reagon. Additional partnerships have included free You Can Dance workshops at the Riverside Arts Center, a post-pandemic series of workshops for teens with Corner Health, and providing dance instruction for summer camps at the Parkridge Community Center.

Cayenne Harris, UMS Vice President of Learning and Engagement noted, “As a relatively new Ypsilanti resident myself, I’ve enjoyed making new connections in the community and hearing directly from people at the two community planning forums that we hosted about the upcoming pilot residency. Our goal is to create community-driven programming that responds to the needs and interests of Ypsilanti residents, co-creating a set of activities that are relevant and accessible. This first residency in April is a pilot program that will just hint at what’s possible — and what we learn in April, alongside ongoing dialogue with the public, will help inform the month-long residency coming in September.”

As part of the Freighthouse residency, UMS will prioritize access for Ypsilanti residents through both early registration for free ticketed events and a pay-what-you-wish structure for live performances. **A full schedule of the initial April residency follows; tickets and**

registration will be available on Tuesday, March 14 for Ypsilanti residents and will open up more broadly on Tuesday, March 28.

“The City of Ypsilanti is thrilled to welcome UMS to the Freighthouse and we look forward to supporting this work and building a lasting partnership that will support the Ypsilanti Arts Community”, said Frances McMullan, Ypsilanti City Manager.

*The Ypsilanti Freighthouse residency is made possible with support from Menakka and Essel Bailey, Matt and Nicole Lester, and the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.*

## Schedule of Ypsilanti Freighthouse Activities & Ticketing Information

Saturday, April 22

7:30 pm

***Come Together: An Evening of Community and Song***

Participatory Public Event

The Ypsilanti Freighthouse residency begins with an invitation to community members to share their voices through a Community Sing, led by Detroit native Dr. Brandon Waddles, a transcriber of Black gospel music whose choral compositions and arrangements have been performed around the world. Led by Dr. Waddles, and featuring four solo singers and piano, keyboard and electric bass, this event brings the community together to sing both familiar and new songs. The house will open at 6:30 for participants to enjoy food and social interaction before the Community Sing.

***Free ticketed event, no prior singing experience or training required. Registration open to Ypsilanti residents on Tuesday, March 14 and the general public on Tuesday, March 28.***

Sunday, April 23

11 am

## Power Moves: Breakdancing & Graffiti Art with Maurice Archer

### Family Workshop

Local movement artist Maurice Archer performs a breakdancing demonstration and then leads families in an interactive workshop. Immediately after, families participate in an art-making activity with a graffiti artist who will guide them through developing their breakdancing names and create their own unique signature (or tag).

*Free event (advanced registration required) . Recommended for ages 9-13 and their parents or guardians. Registration opens to Ypsilanti residents on Tuesday, March 14 and the general public on Tuesday, March 28.*

Tuesday, April 25

Morning

### Breakdancing Workshops for K -12 Schools

Invitation only, scheduled through UMS Learning and Engagement for Ypsilanti -area schools

7:30 pm

### Kaleigh Wilder Trio : *The Story Cuts Across What the Map Cuts Up*

Public Jazz Concert

Kaleigh Wilder was born to a musical family, but she was the only one to pursue music professionally. She primarily studied classical saxophone — playing jazz and improvising on the side — but, at the crossroads between her undergraduate and graduate degrees, she changed her trajectory to improvisation. Improvisation allowed Wilder to access her true creative voice and empowered her to take creative risks she never would have imagined. Wilder has performed around the world, led her first album release, and now has plans to release two more albums as a bandleader with a New York-based record label — among several other ongoing projects. Her artistry continues to unfold. She'll perform with Jaribu Shahid on bass, drummer Ben Hall, and dancer Alexandria Davis.

*Pay-What - You-Wish Ticketed event. Tickets go on sale Tuesday, March 14 at [ums.org](https://www.ums.org) for Ypsilanti residents and Tuesday, March 28 for the general public.*

Wednesday, April 26

Morning

[Breakdancing Workshops for K -12 Schools](#)

Invitation only, scheduled through UMS Learning and Engagement for Ypsilanti -area schools

7:30 pm

[The Regenerate! Orchestra](#)

Participatory Public Event

The Regenerate! Orchestra is made up of community members of every stripe, coming together to bring Ypsilanti a one-of-a-kind musical experience. Participants will meet twice to engage in sonic meditations, conversations about listening, and structured improvisations. Featured music may include classical, ambient, folk, and noise music, all orchestrated for each unique event based on the instrumentation of those who sign up. Register to perform with the group (all skill levels are welcome, with one rehearsal before the event, plus a second on the evening of April 26 before the performance), or join in as an audience member for the free, ticketed performance.

*Register to join the orchestra at [ums.org/YpsiFreighthouse](https://ums.org/YpsiFreighthouse) (registration deadline of March 10); no prior musical experience or training required.*

*Free ticketed event , with reservations open to Ypsilanti residents on Tuesday, March 14 and the general public on Tuesday, March 28.*

Thursday, April 27

Morning

[Puppetry Workshops for K -12 Schools](#)

Invitation only, scheduled through UMS Learning and Engagement for Ypsilanti -area schools

6 pm

[Reconnecting Currents \(Huron\) with Marsae Lynette](#)

## Participatory Public Event

In this participatory public event, Marsae Lynette presents *Reconnecting Currents(Huron)*, an evening of film, performance, and community. This interactive event invites the local community to reconnect with freshwater sources such as the Huron River, as well as with one another through reflection, restoration, and jubilation. Audience members are invited to both witness and engage in rituals of reconnection.

Kresge Gilda Award Recipient Marsae Lynette is a dancer, educator, and ethnochoreologist whose research explores the ecological interdependence of women of the African diaspora and freshwater sources through the lens of embodied intelligence and spirituality.

***Pay-What - You-Wish Ticketed event.** Tickets go on sale Tuesday, March 14 at [ums.org](http://ums.org) for Ypsilanti residents and Tuesday, March 28 for the general public.*

Friday, April 28

Morning

[Puppetry Workshops for K -12 Schools](#)

Invitation only, scheduled through UMS Learning and Engagement for Ypsilanti -area schools

7:30 pm

[Open Mic at the Freighthouse](#)

Public Concert

This local artist showcase and open mic will be hosted by Ypsilanti resident and singer/songwriter Rochelle Clark. Those who wish to perform — music, dance, comedy, poetry, juggling, or whatever unique creative contribution you can offer — will sign up for a ten -minute slot upon arrival; names will be randomly selected for a starring moment on the stage of the Ypsilanti Freighthouse.

***Free event, no tickets or advanced registration required***

10 pm

## Late Night DJ Set with Todd Osborn

Public Concert

Ghostly International artist Todd Osborn has been championed by everyone from Gilles Peterson to Aphex Twin...but he really just wants to have a little fun and get in some time on the dance floor. Break out a few moves in this late night DJ set.

*Free event, no tickets or registration required*

Saturday, April 29

11 am

## Puppetry Workshop: The Power of Light & Shadow with Detroit Puppet Company

Family Workshop

This workshop for families begins with the Detroit Puppet Company's presentation of *The Carnival of the Animals*, a series of shadow puppet scenes depicting different members of the animal kingdom, from the majestic lion to the venerable tortoise, all set to music by classical composer Camille Saint-Saëns. The performance tells stories of love, hope, fear, and joy, all through the power of light, shadow, and your imagination. Immediately following the performance, participants can learn more about puppetry by using the DPC's shadow puppets and then getting instruction on how to make their own.

*Free event (advanced registration required) . Recommended for ages 7-10 and their parents or guardians. Registration opens to Ypsilanti residents on Tuesday, March 14 and the general public on Tuesday, March 28.*

7:30 pm

## Closing Performance: John E. Lawrence & The Power Band

Public Concert

A lifelong resident of Ypsilanti and one of Michigan's most talented and respected guitarists, John E. Lawrence and The Power Band take the stage for a sophisticated evening of jazz in the closing performance of the April Ypsilanti Freighthouse residency. Featuring John E. Lawrence (guitar), Rayse Biggs and Eddie Taylor (trumpet), Don Whyte (saxophone), Ted Brannon (bass

guitar), Ike Phippen and Ernest Tolbert (keyboards), Jeff Canady (drums), and Jill Hamilton and Kimberly Wright (vocals).

***Pay-What - You-Wish Ticketed event.** Tickets go on sale Tuesday, March 14 at [ums.org](http://ums.org) for Ypsilanti residents and Tuesday, March 28 for the general public.*

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### **About the Ypsilanti Freighthouse**

Located next to Frog Island Park on the north side of Depot Town , the Ypsilanti Freighthouse was built in 1878 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Sites. The Freighthouse originally served as a distribution center for rail -bound goods, and is now owned and operated by the City of Ypsilanti as a gathering space for many community and private events.

### **About UMS**

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS is an independent non -profit organization based in Ann Arbor and affiliated with the University of Michigan. The organization presents dozens of music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with many free public and private educational activities throughout Southeast Michigan. Since 1990, the organization has co-commissioned and supported the production of nearly 80 new or reimagined works. Matthew VanBesien became the organization's seventh president in July 2017.