

What's Happenin': Thursday, February 6, through Wednesday, February 19

Written by Mike Schulz

Tuesday, 04 February 2014 06:00

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Music

Griffin House

The Redstone Room

Thursday, February 6, 8 p.m.

Folk, pop, and acoustic rocker Griffin House plays Davenport's Redstone Room on February 6, and from all accounts, music fans and critics alike are just crazy about the man's *Balls*.

Which, of course, is the title of the musicians's latest CD.

Which, of course, meant there was no way I was going to open with anything other than a *Balls*-related joke. (I mean, come on: How long have we known each other?)

What isn't a joke, however, is House's rather incredible ascendancy – over a mere decade and a half – from complete musical novice to acclaimed solo artist and concert headliner. After picking up his first guitar at age 18 and, motivated by his newfound love of music, turning down a golf scholarship, House instead earned a 2002 degree in English literature and writing, and was subsequently encouraged by one of his poetry professors to try his hand at songwriting in Nashville.

I imagine that professor will be the first person House thanks when accepting whatever awards inevitably come his way. Following the release of two independent CDs, the musician made his label debut with 2004's critically acclaimed *Lost & Found*, an album that led MTV and VH1 music journalist Bill Flanagan to deem him one of the country's finest emerging songwriters. And since then, House has shared his soulful vocals and thoughtful and insightful lyrics with audiences nationwide, touring extensively and opening for the likes of John Mellencamp, Josh Ritter, Patti Scialfa, and the Cranberries.

His most recent release is the aforementioned *Balls*, a Kickstarter-funded project that has evidently earned the trust (and dough) of fans, with

NoDepression.com

calling it “a beautiful new record” that “should please old fans and new,” and HuffingtonPost.com

calling House “one of the best musicians out there.” Not bad for a guy whose career inspiration came from writing a song that made his high-school sweetheart weep. “Then I was hooked,” says House on his

GriffinHouseMusic.com

bio. “I thought, ‘Oh, man, if I can make people cry, I’m gonna keep doing this. I’m gonna make as many people cry as I can!’” I know I’ve heard that sentiment before, but House sure doesn’t *look*

like my grade school’s bully

Griffin House performs locally with an opening set by David G. Smith, and more information and tickets are available by calling (563)326-1333 or visiting RiverMusicExperience.org .

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Music

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

Englert Theatre

Thursday, February 18, 8 p.m.

If you're familiar with the seminal Paul Simon album *Graceland*, you're likely familiar with the music-makers of the South African ensemble Ladysmith Black Mambazo, whose gorgeous, soaring vocal stylings can be heard on such classic songs as "Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes," "Homeless," and "You Can Call Me Al." And if you're familiar with world music in general, you're *definitely* familiar with the accomplishments of this thrilling male choral group, whose credits include platinum album sales, 17 Grammy nominations and three wins, and serving as the subjects for the Oscar-nominated documentary short *On Tiptoe: Gentle Steps to Freedom*.

But while you may know that Ladysmith Black Mambazo's latest tour will find them playing Iowa

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City's Englert Theatre on February 18, here are a few tidbits about the artists that you might not have known:

- The group's first incarnation was founded by Joseph Shabalala in 1960, when the ensemble was named Ezimnyama.
- While "world music" is the catch-all title used to define Ladysmith Black Mambazo's genre, they're principally known for singing in the vocal styles of isicathamiya and mbube.
- The musicians made a national splash in 1967 with a performance on the South African radio program *Cothoza Mfana*, and released their first three records in 1973: *Amabutho*, *Imbongi*, and *Ufakazi Tibheshu*.
- Their very first album for U.S. release on the Warner Bros. Records label won the Grammy for Best Traditional Folk Recording, and was titled *Shaka Zulu*.
- And since its inception, Ladysmith Black Mambazo has delivered more than 50 additional albums, with some of the most well-received including 1981's *Ulwandle Oluncgwele*, 1996's *Thuthukani Ngoxolo*, and 2010's *Kobuye Kulunge*.

So a big "Congratulations!" to all of the superb talents of Ladysmith Black Mambazo on creating a music-group touchstone that has endured for more than half a century. And a big "Thank you!" to my editor for all the spell-checking. I'm sure he'll get his revenge somehow.

For more information on Ladysmith Black Mambazo's Iowa City concert, call (319)688-2653 or visiting Englert.org.

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Dance

Hammerstep

Bettendorf High School

Saturday, February 8, 7 p.m.

I've heard from certain teacher friends of mine that, as the years go on, it becomes increasingly difficult to keep younger students in their seats. Prior to the group's February 8 public performance at Bettendorf High School, the Quad City Arts Visiting Artists of Hammerstep will spend the week showcasing their skills at numerous elementary schools in the area. Good luck, certain teacher friends of mine. There'll be no keeping those kids seated *now*.

That is, not if they're moved to move in the manner of Hammerstep, the invigorating, obscenely gifted artists of dance who received huge national recognition with their group's 2013 performance on *America's Got Talent*. Formed in 2009 by former Riverdance members Garrett Coleman and Jason Oremus (the latter of whom served as the group's principal male dancer for more than four years), Hammerstep is a groundbreaking ensemble that incorporates elements of traditional Irish step, tap, and hip-hop dance to create something startlingly new: a youth-driven explosion of styles that embraces aspects of stage performance and guerrilla

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street theatre to deliver biting social and political commentary. In gas masks. (Talk about startling.)

With the Brooklyn-based group's routines accompanied by a DJ and live band – the musicians for which include Irish fiddle champion Patrick Mangan and Grammy-nominated composer/instrumentalist Dave Eggar – the Hammerstep experience is one that dance-minded audiences of all ages will surely find irresistible, as the artists' international raves easily attest. The *Edinburgh Reporter* called the group "innovative and entertaining." The *Irish Post* wrote, "When it comes to the often conformist world of Irish dance, Hammerstep makes their own rules." The UK's

BroadwayBaby.com

raved, "Hammerstep's tap routines are like nothing you'll see in the West End."

And after Hammerstep's *America's Got Talent* audition, judge Howard Stern declared, "Your skill level is so high that you're impossible to ignore." A description that could be applied to a bunch of my old college friends, if you got rid of that bit about the skill set

Donations are encouraged during Hammerstep's public concert at Bettendorf High, and more information on both the group and the evening is available by calling (309)793-1213 or visiting QuadCityArts.com.



Theatre

The Addams Family

Adler Theatre

Tuesday, February 11, 7:30 p.m.

The latest area debut in the Adler Theatre's Broadway series is the musical-comedy smash *The Addams Family*, which lands in Davenport on February 11. That's a Tuesday, and I gotta admit, the choice of date seems a little weird. Wouldn't a Wednesday have been more appropriate?

Based on the creepy, kooky, altogether ooky creations of Charles Addams – comic-strip characters who inspired the beloved '60s TV sitcom – the Tony Award-nominated *The Addams Family* features your favorite ghouls-next-door in an original plot involving daughter Wednesday and what transpires after the sullen girl brings her new, “normal” beau and his family to dinner. In other words, it's kind of like *You Can't Take It With You* if Grandpa were a suave, pale weirdo with a pencil mustache. It's also a chance to see Gomez, Morticia, Pugsley, Uncle Fester, Lurch, and the rest of the gang in delirious song-and-dance mode, which they were for 722 performances during the production's Broadway run.

To get in the mood (*snap, snap*) for this new show (*snap, snap*), try your hand at some trivia based on the *Addams Family* TV series, courtesy of our friends at FunTrivia.com.

1) What language drives Gomez wild when Morticia speaks it?

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A) French

B) Italian

C) German

2) What is the name of Morticia's man-eating plant?

A) Esther

B) Anthony

C) Cleopatra

3) What is the name of Wednesday's favorite doll?

A) Victoria

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B) Marie Antoinette

C) Mary, Queen of Scots

4) Which pet most frequently scares people away from the Addams' home?

A) the dog

B) the lion

C) the moose

5) What's sticking out of the mouth of the swordfish on the Addams' wall?

A) another fish

B) a fishing rod

C) the remnants of Cousin Farouk

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For tickets to *The Addams Family*, call (800)745-3000 or visit AdlerTheatre.com.

Answers: 1 – A, 2 – C, 3 – B, 4 – B, 5 – C. And that's where they put the relatives they liked.

What Else Is Happenin' ...?

MUSIC

Thursday, February 6 – Luke Bryan. Country-pop superstar in concert, appearing with special guests Lee Brice and Cole Swindell. i wireless Center (1201 River Drive, Moline). 7 p.m. \$29.75-59.75. For tickets, call (800)745-3000 or visit relessCenter.com [iwi](#)

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Thursday, February 6 – Liverpool Legends. Multimedia concert with the internationally touring Beatles tribute musicians, featuring performances by the school's music students. Bettendorf High School (3333 18th Street, Bettendorf). 7 p.m. \$20-25, or \$50 VIP seating with reception. For tickets and information, call (563)332-4516 or visit Bettendorf.k12.ia.us

Thursday, February 6 – Becca Stevens. Jazz, pop, and folk singer/guitarist in concert. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 8 p.m. \$15. For tickets and information, call (319)688-2653 or visit Englert.org .

Friday, February 7 – Battle of the Bands: Round Three. Competition featuring 45-minute sets of original music by the Effie Afton, Echoes & Afterthoughts, and the Atlantis Dialogue. Rock Island Brewing Company (1815 Second Avenue, Rock Island). 9 p.m. \$3. For information, call (309)793-4060 or visit RIBCO.com

Friday, February 7 – Super Chikan. Blues Music Award-winning singer/guitarist in concert. The Muddy Waters (1708 State Street, Bettendorf). 9 p.m. \$5. For information, call (563)344-2516 or visit TheMuddyWaters.com .

Friday, February 7 – Naturally 7. Singers and vocal percussionists in a concert in Hancher Auditorium's Visiting Artists series. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 7:30 p.m. \$10-35. For tickets and information, call (319)335-1160 or visit <http://www.Hancher.Ulowa.edu>.

Saturday, February 8 – Déjà Vu Rendezvous featuring the Neverly Brothers. A "rock 'n' roll evolution" concert covering musicians from Buddy Holly to the Beatles. The Redstone Room (129 Main Street, Davenport). 8 p.m. \$10. For tickets and information, call (563)326-1333 or visit RiverMusicExperience.org

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Sunday, February 9 – Keb' Mo'. Concert with the Grammy-winning blues artist. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 7 p.m. \$35-50. For tickets and information, call (319)688-2653 or visit Englert.org.

Wednesday, February 12 – Gaelic Storm. Celtic musicians performing in support of their new album *The Boathouse*. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 8 p.m. \$35. For tickets and information, call (319)688-2653 or visit Englert.org.

Thursday, February 13 – Turkuaz. Brooklyn-based funk musicians in concert. Rock Island Brewing Company (1815 Second Avenue, Rock Island). 10 p.m. \$4. For information, call (309)793-4060 or visit RIBCO.com.

Thursday, February 13 – Rave on: A Night of Rock 'n' Roll. Cabaret celebration of the 50s and 60s, with performances by cast members of *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*, the Circa '21 Bootleggers, and the Old 57s. Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse (1828 Third Avenue, Rock Island). 7 p.m. \$15-18. For tickets and information, call (309)786-7733 extension 2 or visit Circa21.com.

Friday, February 14 – The Candymakers. Blues, funk, and soul musicians in concert. The Redstone Room (129 Main Street, Davenport). 8 p.m. \$10. For tickets and information, call (563)326-1333 or visit RiverMusicExperience.org.

Friday, February 14 – Home Free. Concert with the Minnesota-based musicians and competitors on the fourth season of TV's *The Sing-Off*. Central Performing Arts Center (519 East 11th Street, DeWitt). 7:30 p.m. \$5-25. For tickets, visit Midwestix.com.

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Friday, February 14 – Bret Michaels. Concert with the chart-topping rocker and frontman of Poison. Riverside Casino Event Center (3184 Highway 22, Riverside). 8 p.m. \$28-48. For tickets and information, call (877)677-3456 or visit RiversideCasinoAndResort.com

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Saturday, February 15 – Smooth Jazz Valentines Concert. Contemporary jazz, R&B, and classic funk with bassist Gerald Veasley and saxophone player Art Sherrod Jr. The Redstone Room (129 Main Street, Davenport). 8 p.m. \$70/person, \$130-150/couple. For tickets and information, call (563)324-4208 or visit

SmoothJazzSeries.com

or

RiverMusicExperience.org

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Saturday, February 15, and Sunday, February 16 – Quad City Symphony Orchestra. The *Masterworks IV*

concerts featuring conductor Mark Russell Smith, Roberto Diaz on viola, and Elissa Lee Koljonen on violin, with a repertoire including Faure's

Pelleas & Melisande Suite

, Mozart's

Sinfonia Concertante for Violin & Viola

, and Mendelssohn's

Symphony No. 4: Italian

. Saturday – Adler Theatre (126 East Third Street, Davenport), 7:30 p.m. Sunday – Augustana College's Centennial Hall (3703 Seventh Avenue, Rock Island), 2 p.m. \$10-55. For tickets and information, call (563)322-0931 or visit

QCSymphony.com

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Saturday, February 15 – Delorean. Scope Productions presents the Spanish alternative-dance band in concert, with opening sets by Until the Ribbon Breaks and Giant Question Mark. The Mill (120 East Burlington Street, Iowa City). 9 p.m. \$12. For tickets and information, call (319)351-9529 or visit

http://Scope.Ulowa.edu

Saturday, February 15 – David Cassidy. Concert with the pop star and former member of the Partridge Family. Riverside Casino Event Center (3184 Highway 22, Riverside). 8 p.m. \$25-45.

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RiversideCasinoAndResort.com

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Wednesday, February 19 – Eric Bibb & Ruthie Foster. Blues and roots stylings with the Grammy-nominated musicians. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 8 p.m. \$25-27.50. For tickets and information, call (319)688-2653 or visit

Englert.org

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THEATRE

Thursday, February 6, through Sunday, February 16 – *Makeover*. Darrah Cloud's and Kim Sherman's debuting musical inspired by the lives of Estée Lauder and Mary Kay, directed by Nick Demos. University of Iowa's David Thayer Theatre (200 North Riverside Drive, Iowa City). Wednesdays-Saturdays 8 p.m., Sundays 2 p.m. \$5-17. For tickets and information, call (319)335-1160 or visit

theatre.Ulowa.edu

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Friday, February 7, through Sunday, February 9 – *Under the Gun: Short Works on Gun Control*.

A collection of original and published works dealing with gun-control issues. Augustana College's Bergendoff Hall of Fine Arts – Potter Theatre (3701 Seventh Avenue, Rock Island). Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 1:30 p.m. \$3-5. For information and tickets, call (309)794-7306 or visit

Augustana.edu

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Friday, February 14, through Sunday, February 16 – *Love, Loss, & What I Wore*. The City Circle Acting Company of Coralville's presentation of Nora and Delia Ephron's comedy. Coralville Center for the Performing Arts (1301 Fifth Street, Coralville). Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m. \$12-27. For tickets and information, call (319)248-9370 or visit

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CoralvilleArts.org

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Friday, February 14, through Sunday, February 16 – *Love, Sex, & the IRS*. Billy Van Zandt's and Jane Milmore's romantic farce presented by the Peace Pipe Players. Ohnward Fine Arts Center (1215 East Platt Street, Maquoketa). Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m. \$10-15. For tickets and information, call (563)652-9815 or visit

OhnwardFineArtsCenter.com

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Saturday, February 15, through Sunday, February 23 – *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Musical adaptation of Jules Verne's adventure classic by author/composer Aaron Randolph III, directed by Tyson Danner. Davenport Junior Theatre (2822 Eastern Avenue, Davenport). Saturdays 1 and 4 p.m., Sundays 2 p.m. \$5 at the door. For information, call (563)326-7862 or visit

DavenportJuniorTheatre.com

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DANCE

Friday, February 7, through Sunday, February 9 – *StarQuest Dance Competition*. Young hoofers compete in dance styles including ballet, tap, jazz, and lyrical. Adler Theatre (136 East Third Street, Davenport). For information, call (563)326-8500 or visit

StarQuestDance.com

or

AdlerTheatre.com

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Friday, February 14, and Saturday, February 15 – *Carmen*. Bizet's ballet classic performed by the dancers of Ballet Quad Cities. Scottish Rite Cathedral (1800 Seventh Avenue, Moline). 7:30 p.m. \$12-22. For tickets and information, call (309)786-3779 or visit

BalletQuadCities.com

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Saturday, February 15 – UnityPoint Health's Day of Dance 2014. Listen to music, learn new dance moves, participate in health screenings, and learn about simple and fun ways to stay healthy. Davenport RiverCenter (136 East Third Street, Davenport). Noon-4 p.m. Free admission. For information, call (309)779-5000 or visit

UnityPoint.org

or

RiverCtr.com

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LITERARY ARTS

Thursday, February 13 – SPECTRA Reading: Local Lovers Open-Mic Show. Poems, songs, stories, soliloquies, and more performed by and for area sweethearts, co-presented by the Midwest Writing Center. Rozz-Tox (2108 Third Avenue, Rock Island). 8 p.m. Free admission. For information, call (563)324-1410 or visit

MidwestWritingCenter.org

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EXHIBITS

Saturday, February 15, through Sunday, May 18 – *Bittersweet Harvest*. Interactive, bilingual exhibition on loan from the Smithsonian Institution exploring the Bracero program, the largest guest-worker program in U.S. history. Putnam Museum (1717 West 12th Street, Davenport). Mondays-Saturdays 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sundays noon-5 p.m. Free with \$5-7 museum admission. For information, call (563)324-1933 or visit

Putnam.org

Saturday, February 15, through Sunday, May 25 – *Landscape: Ingalena Klenell & Beth Lipman* . Installation of sculpted-glass components by artists Beth Lipman of Wisconsin and Ingalena Klenell of Sweden. Figge Art Museum (225 West Second Street, Davenport). Tuesdays-Saturdays 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursdays 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Sundays noon-5 p.m. Free with \$4-7 museum admission. For information, call (563)326-7804 or visit [FiggeArt.org](#)

COMEDY

Friday, February 14, and Saturday, February 15 – *The Second City: Happily Ever Laughter*. Sketches, songs, and improvisations from the Chicago-based comedians' 53-year history. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 8 p.m. \$27.50-32.50. For tickets and information, call (319)688-2653 or visit [Englert.org](#) .

SPORTS

Saturday, February 15 – *Quad City Rollers*. Season-opening matches with the women's flat-track roller-derby team, with the Mississippi Massacre playing at 6 p.m. and the All-Stars playing at 7:45 p.m. Davenport RiverCenter (136 East Third Street, Davenport). \$6-12. For information, call (563)326-8500 or visit [QuadCityRollers.com](#)

EVENTS

Friday, February 7, through Sunday, February 9 – Iowa-Illinois Regional Auto Show. Annual event featuring new models on display, vendors, information, booths, and more. Davenport RiverCenter (136 East Third Street, Davenport). Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. \$3-8. For information, call (563)326-8500 or visit

RiverCtr.com

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Saturday, February 8 – Much Ado About Dessert. Fundraiser for the verse-theatre troupe the Prenzie Players, featuring a wide array of desserts, cash bar, silent auction, live performances, and more. River Music Experience (131 West Second Street, Davenport). 7 p.m. \$15. For tickets and information, call (309)278-8426 or visit

PrenziePlayers.com

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Thursday, February 13, through Sunday, February 16 – Outdoor Show. Annual event featuring fishing seminars and presentations, a trout pond, minnow races and archery at the Kids Kamp, and more. QCCA Expo Center (2621 Fourth Avenue, Rock Island). Thursday 4-8 p.m., Friday noon-8 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. \$1-7. For tickets and information, call (309)788-5912 or visit

QCCAExpoCenter.com

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Friday, February 14, through Saturday, February 22 – Bottom's Up Quad City Burlesque: Soul Train

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Stage shows with the area burlesque artists and comedians. Circa '21 Speakeasy (1818 Third Avenue, Rock Island). Fridays and Saturdays 8 p.m. \$18-20. For tickets and information, call (309)786-7733 extension 2 or visit

Circa21.com

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Sunday, February 16 – Spencers: Theatre of Illusion. Touring stage magicians perform a presentation in the Hancher Auditorium Visiting Artists series. Englert Theatre (221 East Washington Street, Iowa City). 3 p.m. \$10-30. For tickets and information, call (319)335-1160 or visit <http://www.Hancher.Ulowa.edu>.