

The Detroit News

Michigan Design Center puts on a 'Celebration' with table vignettes - The Detroit News

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By Susan R. Pollack, Detroit News Design Writer

Anyone can throw plates on a table, pile on some food and call it a celebration. And that's fine if you're entertaining your beer-swigging brother-in-law or anything-goes old friends. But when it comes to life's special moments and milestones, special effort is required.

That's where the vision and creativity of some of Metro Detroit's top designers can serve as inspiration. More than 30 are coming together Oct. 6 to present "Celebrations@home," an entertaining event — literally and figuratively — at the Michigan Design Center in Troy.

A benefit for Variety The Children's Charity, the third annual open house, will showcase original tabletops and "celebratory" vignettes designed to put the oomph in entertaining. Here's a sneak preview of some of them....

Dining with Zen

Lee Jean-Gilles, owner of Pierre Paul Art Gallery in Ann Arbor, injects a calming note with his inventive design for a contemporary Asian dinner party. He used European plywood to build a Zen dining table with a columned canopy, then hand-stained it a light gray. A 30-year-old Bonsai jade plant "Money Tree" is the Zen garden table centerpiece, surrounded by an assortment of hand-washed stones visible under the glass tabletop. The table is flanked by acrylic, Philippe Starck-designed Louis Ghost Chairs. Handblown glass dinner plates and glass chopsticks complete the tablescape, while a Beta fish swims in an IKEA vase within a vase on a credenza. The furniture making its debut at the



Celebrations event can be adapted to various themes, Gilles says, such as "Dining with Bling" (replacing the rocks with crystals); "Dining Modern" (art glass); and "Dining Country" (driftwood). A water feature could sub for the jade tree.

Celebrations@home

What: Celebrations@home, a free open house at the Michigan Design Center in Troy, with more than 30 tabletop displays and room vignettes. Bring a new unwrapped toy donation for Variety, the Childrens Charity.

Special presentations, \$10 each:

10 a.m.: "Menus: Food Designed for Entertaining," by chef Pete Loren, Nino Salvaggio's director of culinary development

Noon: "The Details: Celebrating at Home," by Jerome Raska, owner of Blumz by JRDesigns

2 p.m.: "The Garb: Celebrating Chic," by Joe Faris, designer of Motor City Denim Co. and Project Runway season 5 finalist

Where: Michigan Design Center, 1700 Stutz Drive, Troy

When: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday

Reservations, information: Call (248) 649-4772; www.michigandesign.com
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