

Arts

Hundreds of artworks go on view Friday at RoCo. Page 10c

KISS BOOKS DARIEN LAKE SHOW FOR ITS FAREWELL TOUR. PAGE 4C

STARLINE



Fagan honors one of the greatest people to call Rochester home



Movies and more

Jack Garner
Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

Above: Norwood Pennewell, a member of Garth Fagan Dance, dances in the premiere of Garth Fagan's *The North Star*. JULIE LEMBERGER

Frederick Douglass is being honored in his adopted hometown this week, first, with an event spotlighting a book on Douglass, and offering speeches and music, then a few days later with a significant new Garth Fagan Dance work.

It will be a major week in what has been a year of bicentennial celebration. Douglass was born into slavery in 1818, though the exact date is lost in the vagaries of that horrific institution.

Douglass is, along with Susan B. Anthony and George Eastman, one of the three greatest persons to ever adopt Rochester as home. He lived here for some 25 years, more than in any other locale. New Geva Theatre staged a play about Douglass and Anthony — *The Agitators* — at the end of 2017.

Douglass was a great American, a famed and fiery orator, a publisher of a leading abolitionist newspaper and author of several books, and the iconic father of the fight against slavery and for human rights. He was also, reportedly, the most photographed American of the 19th century (though Mark Twain may demand a recount).

See GARNER, Page 4C

Frederick Douglass — Prophet of Freedom by David W. Blight, a Yale University historian. PROVIDED IMAGE

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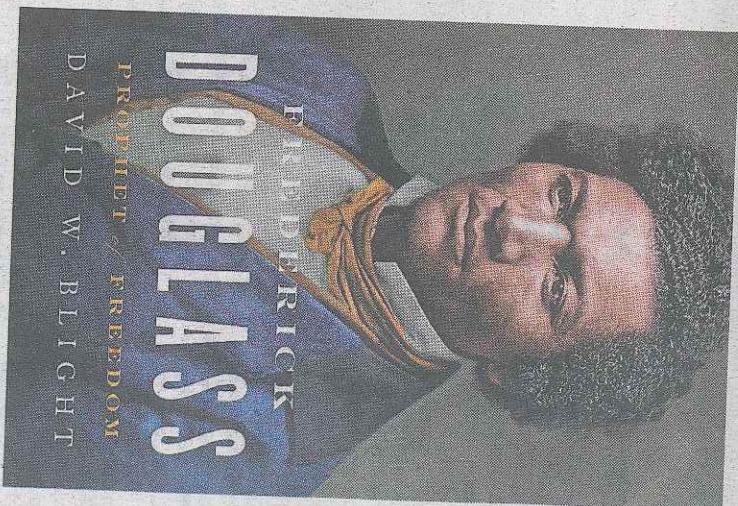
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"Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory" was the first movie to be projected at a public screening. PROVIDED PHOTO

Garner

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Hochstein event

The week's activities start with a lecture and music at 7 p.m. Monday on the stage at the Hochstein School, coincidentally the former site of a church where a Douglass funeral service was held in 1895. Speaking will be Yale University historian David W. Blight, author of a powerful, highly praised new biography, *Frederick Douglass — Prophet of Freedom*.

Eastman School of Music students Jonathan Rhodes, tenor, and Lee Wright, pianist, will perform a rare Douglass song from 1847 (for which only two copies survive). It has not been performed in more than a century. Spirituals will also be performed. The event is co-sponsored by both the University of Rochester and Rochester Institute of Technology.

Admission to the Hochstein event is free, though people wishing to attend are asked to register in advance under calendar of events at hochstein.org, or bit.ly/2ElE492. Blight will sign copies of his book.

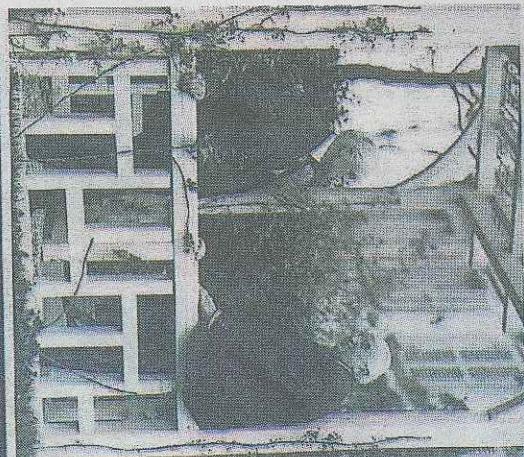
I am currently deep into *Frederick Douglass — Prophet of Freedom*, a richly detailed and beautifully written examination of Douglass, as a slave, a free man, an orator, a writer, a thinker, a husband and a friend. Both the icon and the human come sharply into focus. The book is riveting, thank goodness, since it's 888 pages long.

Nazareth event

Next, Garth Fagan will honor Douglass with *The North Star*, the great choreographer's tribute to the abolitionist. It's the centerpiece of his company's annual **Hometown Season at Nazareth Arts Center, Dec. 5 through 9**. Though various members of Fagan's troupe perform, the younger and older Douglass are portrayed in dance by Vitojo Jeune and Norwood Pennewell.



Self-portrait by Paul Cézanne. PROVIDED



George Eastman and Louis Lumière talk in Lyon, France, circa 1930. PROVIDED PHOTO

I've seen segments of *The North Star*, previewed during the summer Fringe Festival, and I'm very eager to see more.

The other new work on the program will be *Distant Kin*, the latest piece choreographed by principal dancer Pennewell, who continues to distinguish himself as the company's second choreographer.

For information and tickets, go to garthfagandance.org/calendar.

On my travels

My wife and I recently finished a two-week vacation in France, including a week spent drinking wine on a cruise on the Rhone River, under the guidance of Rochester wine expert Holly Howell.

But I also savored two French locales of intense creativity, one at the start and the other at the end of the trip.

This lifelong movie lover had a real thrill in Lyon, France. Most film aficionados define the original movie as the first one to be projected at the first public screening in a salon in Paris in 1895. It was *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*, shot at the Lumière Brothers Factory in Lyon. The factory and the attached family villa are now a wonderful

museum of early film.

I stood on the exact spot where the factory doors opened for the creation of the 45-second film. That very first movie projector and the camera that shot the film, and much, much more, are also exhibited.

The museum also has plaques honoring other film pioneers, including Edweard Muybridge, Thomas Edison and, ta-da, George Eastman! (After their early landmark experiences in filmmaking, and other scientific experiments, Louis and Auguste Lumière settled into a camera and photography business that ruled in Europe until it was eventually surpassed by Eastman Kodak in the 1950s and 60s.

Later, in Aix-en-Provence, we were honored to step into the last studio of the great Post-Impressionist painter Paul Cézanne. To his specifications, a great window allows much natural light, and many of the props he used for still-life paintings and other works are scattered about, as are palettes and his painting jackets and hats. We also took a path to the ridge of a nearby hill, from which he painted landscapes, particularly his Mont Sainte-Victoire pictures of a distant peak.