

## Comic Artie Lange gives back with Detroit show Detroit Opera House gig benefits paralyzed Beverly Hills man

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DETROIT - Comedian and "Howard Stern Show" personality Artie Lange showed off his svelte new figure last week in a picture posted online in which he's wearing one of co-host Robin Quivers' old bras. "I've been clean for five months and I've lost a bunch of weight," said Lange, whose once-failing health due to obesity and drug addiction has long been a concern. "I'm doing really good." The notoriously troubled comic has had his share of ups and downs, and fans listen to the show not just for the shocking bits, the crass humor and the raw take on pop culture and world news, but also to follow Lange's tales of nefariousness.

"It's definitely rated R," Lange said of his stand-up act and the stories he shares on the "Howard Stern Show" on Sirius XM satellite radio. "It's got a lot to do with stories from my past, some crazy stories I do with some of the problems I've had I turn to comedy - drinking, drugs, my crazy opinions on stuff, stories of when I would screw up royally and in a real serious way. Sometimes if the story is bad - I do this on the air a lot - and it's in the past, you can learn to laugh at it. There are some crazy stories from my life. Some pretty insane sort of - some people might think politically incorrect - viewpoints on stuff going on in the world." Lange's troubled behavior can be traced back to his father's tragic fall off a ladder some 30 years ago, leaving him paralyzed and eventually leading to his death.

The experience has left Lange sympathetic to those in similar circumstances, like Adam **Niskar**, 26, of Beverly Hills, who became paralyzed 10 years ago after a diving accident on Walnut Lake.

A letter from **Niskar's** brother hit close to home for Lange, and he immediately agreed to do a benefit show Oct. 9 at the Detroit Opera House in his honor.

"His brother wrote me a very heartfelt, articulate letter that I got," Lange said. "Unfortunately, I don't see every fan letter, and there are a lot of requests and I try to do what I can. This letter was one that got in my hands. It was a very heartfelt, nice letter and it really did hit home because his brother became paralyzed much like my father was. I know first-hand that my family was broke and my mother had to apply for welfare and we could have used a benefit like this, and I agreed to do it. I called them back and agreed to do it that night." "The fact that he's willing to donate and help Adam out is unbelievably nice," said Ross **Niskar**.

"Adam lives independently, and there's a lot of necessities that go above and beyond insurance coverage," he said.

This won't be Lange's first time to Detroit; he said he adores his fans here. A 2007 appearance at the Fox Theatre gave him the chance to sign his name on the wall, right next to Frank Sinatra's signature.

"God, what a legendary place," Lange said of the theater.

"Detroit is a great city to do stand-up in," he added. "They're loyal fans. Howard has roots in Detroit because he did a stint as a DJ there. ... I love cities that get cold in the winter and they're into their sports teams - that's a town I relate to. I like going to cities like Detroit and doing references like old Tigers and Lions. They take their sports so seriously, which is like I am." Lange is currently at work not only on his sobriety, having kicked a heroine addiction five months ago, but also on his second autobiographical book. The first, "Too Fat to Fish," was released in late 2008 and became a nationwide bestseller. His follow-up is expected to be released late next summer. "I'm in the groove and my schedule is crazy, but it has always been," Lange said. "I don't know how to relax. I don't know anything but working, so I'm sort of happy working. I love my job, and I'm doing really good." And he's happy to help out the **Niskar** family, whose bills have mounted over the years since the accident.

"It's a good cause," Lange said.

"People, if they want to come out, it's money that's going directly to someone who needs it." Tickets to Lange's gig at the Opera House are available through Ticketmaster at (248) 645-6666.

Comedian and Southfield native Mike Young is opening the show.

For more information about Lange, visit [www.artie-lange.com](http://www.artie-lange.com). For more information about the Friends for Adam **Niskar** Trust, visit [www.friendsforadam.com](http://www.friendsforadam.com).

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