

Locals from page E1

Starr of Novi on drums perform 9:45 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 6, on the Hudson's Live Jazz stage.

The trio have a steady gig at all Red Wings home games, playing 40 dates a year at the Joe Louis Arena Olympia Room and play once a month at Edison's in Birmingham.

In 1994 they released a CD, "The Key Player," but the music on the CD is only half the story.

"The stuff we do on record is classic piano trio, but we play another repertoire that uses electronic instruments. I have a large collection of keyboard instruments that I use when I play a concert," said Schunk.

Schunk, 44, was influenced by the music of Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea and others.

"The stuff I've written and compositions I like are in what they used to call fusion, actually I guess it's still called fusion music," Schunk said. "Combining jazz composition with rock and roll beats, different beats than the fusion, 4/4, wider ranging."

At Montreux, the trio will play both kinds of music.

"Fusion was an attempt by some jazz artists, mostly from the bands of Miles Davis, who wanted to seek a wider audience," Schunk said. "It had the energy of rock with the sophistication of jazz."

Schunk, who has been living in Redford since 1987, said he doesn't have the time he'd like to compose because it's always difficult to round up enough work.

"To be recognized on a national level, you have to be in that place which for jazz is New York and to a lesser extent the West Coast," he said.

Schunk said he looks forward to the Montreux festival to meet other musicians and to play for an interested audience.

"It's something to prepare for. I've played everyone since 1980. It's an enjoyable weekend," he said.

Schedule from page E1

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|---|-----------------|---|
| 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Vincent York Quartet | Monday, Sept. 7 | Band |
| Ford/Air Touch Cellular Stage | | 1:15 p.m. Central Michigan University Jazz Lab Band |
| Noon Wayne State Jazz Band | | 2:45 p.m. Northville High School Jazz Ensemble |
| 1:30 p.m. Chris Collins Quartet | | 4 p.m. Ann Arbor Community High School Jazz Band |
| 3:15 p.m. Ralphie Armstrong's International Detroiters w/Vernon Reid | | 5:15 p.m. Dee Dee McNell |
| 5 p.m. A la Carte Brass and Percussion | | 6:45 p.m. Herrold/Gordon Small Band |
| 7 p.m. Diane Schuur & the Duke Ellington Orchestra directed by Paul Ellington | | 8:15 p.m. Kenny Cox Sextet |
| 9:30 p.m. Regina Carter Quartet w/John Blake | | 9:45 p.m. Liquid Soul Pepsi Jam Academy |
| DTE Energy Stage | | 1 p.m. Jazz clinic with Vincent York |
| 12:15 p.m. Paul Abler Quartet | | 2:45 p.m. Harold McKinney's Jazz for a New Generation |
| 2 p.m. Houston Person & Etta Jones | | 3:45 p.m. Meet the Artist: Paul Ellington |
| 3:30 p.m. George Goldsmith & Endangered Species Live! | | 5:15 p.m. Student Jam session |
| 5 p.m. Henry Cook Band | | 7:45 and 9 p.m. Imperial Swing Orchestra |
| 7 p.m. The David McMurray Show | | Kowalski Riverfront Cafe |
| 9 p.m. Houston Person & Etta Jones | | 1:30 and 3 p.m. Cass Tech Jazz Combo |
| Hudson's/Live Jazz Stage | | 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. The WCC Jazz Combo |
| Noon Dearborn Edsel Ford Jazz | | 8:15 and 10:30 p.m. Dwight Adams Quartet |

Liquid Soul from page E1

It was expensive. The cost of the sampling clearance was so astronomical it almost killed us. It cost more to clear the samples than to record the music."

One of the motivations for the samplings was to pay homage to the jazz greats that have gone before. On "Make Some Noise," you hear bits of Dizzy Gillespie, Rashawn Roland Kirk, Eddie Harris, Ornette Coleman and Charlie Parker's famous intro to Gillespie's "Salt Peanuts."

Liquid Soul also pays homage with new performances of some great jazz standards including "Salt Peanuts" (with a scat vocal by Kurt Elling), Miles Davis' "Freddie the Freeloader" and John Coltrane's "Equinox." For many young listeners, this is a first introduction to these artists.

"A lot of our audience never heard that stuff," Williams said. "A story about 'Salt Peanuts.' Our rapper (Dirty M.F.) was like 'Salt Peanuts' what's that? He had never heard the song before. Then we did our version on it to 'Chocolate Covered Nuts' and he started listening to it and now it's his favorite tune. He went out and bought the original."

By keeping a foot in many musical camps, Williams has been attracting a new audience to jazz and attracting a jazz audience to other kinds of music.

"I like all styles of music, for me I don't like to define them," he said. "I like the energy of rock, the hard element of it. In jazz you have the same, but for me, jazz is the ultimate creativity outlet."

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live energy and studio innovation and clarity.

Diane Schuur

Singer Diane Schuur offers a more traditional approach to jazz. She has been hailed by critics for sustaining the legacy of the great female jazz singers — Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and Dinah Washington.

Schuur even paid tribute to her idols in her CD "In Tribute."

Schuur will perform 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 7, on the Ford/Air Touch Cellular stage with the Duke Ellington Orchestra under the direction of Paul Ellington, the great composer/band leader's grandson.

"I've always loved Duke Ellington and his work a lot," Schuur said in a telephone interview. "I grew up with it, listening to 'A My Solitude,' 'Rhapsody in Blue.' I worked with the Duke Ellington Orchestra at Carnegie Hall."

Schuur has also worked with the Count Basie Orchestra, winning a Grammy in 1988 for her album with the Basie ensemble.

"The Duke Ellington band is a bit more complex than Basie. Some of their stuff is not as upbeat as Basie. Basie really does swing," Schuur said.

The singer wasn't sure what she would be singing with the Ellington band, though she said it would not be a program of Ellington songs. She will sing songs by her other favorites — Gertrude, Porter and Kern.

"I like to be able to relate to a song I'm doing on an emotional level as well as musical. I like to be musically challenged," she said.

Schuur, blind since birth, began singing in clubs when she was 9 years old. Her first record, recorded when she was 18, was produced by country singer and producer Jimmy Wakely. In 1979, she was discovered by jazz great Stan Getz who arranged for her to record as a jazz singer. She has been nominated for five Grammy Awards.

She will be arriving in Detroit from Mackinac Island where she will perform at the Grand Hotel's annual jazz festival, Sept. 5-6.

"I'm looking forward to this date, it's a great band," she said.

Atomic from page E1

"You saw it isn't that weird?" Bunkley said excitedly. "We've been doing a lot of things for VH1. They've taken us under their wing. They just kind of like us and are willing to help us out and allow us to get some exposure before the new CD comes out."

Tom Buffalano, vice president of event marketing and promotions for VH1, said that VH1 was so impressed with The Atomic Fireballs that the channel hired the band to play a TCI Cablevision event in Colorado last weekend.

"Everywhere they go, people just go nuts. People are just dancing all over the place. I'm not sure how much airplay they get but that seems not to matter because they're so infectious," Buffalano explained.

"VH1 has been supporting the recent surge in popularity of swing music but a lot of the bands were working with — the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, the Brian Setzer Orchestra, Royal Crown Revue — obviously are becoming nationally known and we found that working with The Atomic Fireballs you can take a band who obviously is really good and put them on our stage and use them for some of our events and you get a huge crowd reaction off."

James Bostek came up with the idea to start a jump blues/swing band — long before swing bands like the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, Mighty Blue Kings, and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy hit the charts.

"I guess I just kept going back in time," he said. "I was really interested in old music — old soul and blues and jump blues. I was thinking about a pure jump blues thing. There are so many influences from the present that I wanted to bring those in as well. It's really pure '30s music, not '30s and '40s. But I love and respect the music form that era," Bunkley explained.

For research, Bunkley, who possesses a large record collection, looked to his friend Jason Schusterbauer, booking and promotions manager for Majestic Theatre Center, including the Garden Bowl.

"When John started talking about forming this band, the whole swing fad was not even on the map. It just wasn't there. The timing, I think, is incredible."

"When he sat down and listened to some old records, it just didn't seem like it would be viable," Schusterbauer explained. "All he wanted to do was start a band and play the music that he loved. The last thing I'm sure in his mind was to conquer the music industry. It seems like that's happening."

This summer, The Atomic Fireballs inked a multi-album deal with Lava/Atlantic Records. Jason Flom, president of Lava Records, was turned on to The Atomic Fireballs by a co-worker Rick Goetz who heard a track from "Birth of the Swerve" on a Des Moines, Iowa, radio station.

"The Fireballs' live show is one of the most exciting and fun live shows I've ever seen," said Flom, whose record company also signed Detroit rapper Kid Rock.

"It's highlighted by John Bunkley who, in my opinion, is a superstar in the making. He is charismatic. He's got style for days and his moves ... he's on a different planet than the rest of us. You can't help smiling."

"The band's musicianship is, I think, stellar and they maintain an energy throughout the show that's just impossible to resist. Every guy is a character in the band and then there's the most important thing which is the songs. With songs like 'Caviar and Chitlins,' I think they can emerge as one of the most important swing bands that's out there."

Schusterbauer agreed that The Atomic Fireballs' live shows, complete with the cane swirling Bunkley, are its strong points.

"When they (fans) actually see the band, they see a band that swings but it's a hard jump blues style that nobody else does, largely because John and what a showman he is. With his dancing and his singing, there's so much soul there. There's not a lot of that with what people call, swing bands today," he explained.

"That's what's going to propel them to crush and conquer all the swing bands. They're just a fun band to see. There really is no one else like them out on the horizon anywhere. They can go toe-to-toe with any hip stylish swing band on the planet. I'm astounded that VH1 and Atlantic Records (pay attention to them) and that they're actually being embraced by this music industry."

"Sometimes I think they couldn't find and sustain a talent if the heavens opened up and there was a neon sign in the sky. It's amazing. I'm really proud of him."

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ANGELS VATICAN

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