



The Arch Stanton Quartet will perform at 9 Maple Avenue in Saratoga Springs on Friday. The members of the band are Chris Macchia, left, Roger Noyes, Jim Ketterer and Terry Gordon.

Quartet's name a nod to iconic film

BY BRIAN MCELHINEY
Gazette Reporter

Contrary to the way most jazz quartets are named, The Arch Stanton Quartet is not led by Arch Stanton.

In fact, Arch Stanton is not a real person, as those familiar with the Clint Eastwood-starring "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" know. In the film, he's not even a living person, Arch Stanton being the name found on a gravestone.

"People are either — they want to know who Arch is in the band, like, which one of us is Arch, or they'll come up to us and start quoting lines from the movie," guitarist Roger Noyes said recently while at a coffee shop in his hometown of Albany.

"So it's kind of a mix, half-and-half, between those experiences, and I love both sides of that. You get people in the audience just yelling lines from the movie and stuff."

When Noyes, drummer Jim Ketterer, bassist Chris Macchia and trumpeter Terry Gordon first began playing together roughly two years ago, they realized that the band had no specific leader like most jazz groups — including Gordon's own Terry Gordon Quartet. However, they found that clubs still wanted the "quartet" in the name. The band members, being Eastwood fans, gravitated toward Arch Stanton.

FUNKY VIBE

"There's a sort of mystery about the character in the movie, and it sounds like a jazz musician's name," Noyes said. "It's got this sort of — well, there's Stanton Moore, who's a great drummer, and he's a modern drummer, so we've got that vibe; we sort of have a little bit of that funky vibe. And Arch has got that kind of mid-'60s jazz-bop kind of name. It just seemed perfect."

Not coincidentally, the instrumental group has pursued an edgy take on post-bop jazz in both their original and cover material, bringing Latin and funk grooves and modern pop influences to the mix. The band has quickly found its footing on the local scene, playing regularly at clubs such as 9 Maple Avenue — their next show at the venue is Friday night.

This show is something of a turning point for the group. Drummer Ketterer, also known for his work with alt-country group The Tern Rounders, is moving to Cairo, Egypt, to run an educational exchange program, and Steven Partyka will be making his debut with the group.

"We're gonna miss [Ketterer] terribly, but we have a drummer coming in, Steven Partyka, who I've worked with before," Noyes said, "and we're really thrilled to have him sort of change up the sound a little bit, go in a little bit of a new direction and see how it works out."

Noyes, also a member of instrumental trio Efbom and rock group Diego, had jammed with Ketterer in a few projects before forming The Arch Stanton Quartet with him. Ketterer brought in Gordon, who lives in Sharon Springs, and Macchia, who lives in New Paltz. Partyka lives in Cohoes, maintaining the band's Capital Region roots.

NATURAL CHEMISTRY

Due to the spread-out nature of the group's members, they rarely practice — Noyes estimates they've had about four practice sessions to work out material. The band members rely heavily on improvising and their natural chemistry with one another.

"Really from the first rehearsal, we all hit it off," Noyes said.

Though all of the band's members come from varied musical backgrounds, they draw

Arch Stanton Quartet

WHEN: 9 p.m. Friday

WHERE: 9 Maple Avenue, Saratoga Springs

HOW MUCH: \$2

MORE INFO: 583-2582, www.9mapleavenue.com

from the same influences when it comes to The Arch Stanton Quartet's music — including Thelonious Monk, Freddie Hubbard, Miles Davis, Charles Mingus and McCoy Tyner, among others in the post-bop tradition.

"I think we also like things to be kind of edgy, and that's another thing that I don't think that a lot of audiences expect when they say, 'Oh, there's a jazz band playing tonight,'" Noyes said. "Like, I'm a big Jimmy Smith fan, and he's got that bluesy side to him. ... I think we all like something that's a little edgier, and is rooted in something sort of bluesier, and something that is going to have audiences sort of listen in and be excited about."

RECEPTIVE AUDIENCES

With originals primarily written by Noyes and Gordon, as well as songs from such artists as Tyner and Wayne Shorter, the band has found audiences receptive to their sound.

"We have people come up to us that say, 'I never thought I liked jazz; I thought I hated jazz, but I like what you guys are doing,'" Noyes said. "You don't have a lot of audiences hearing what we really like, which is that stuff from the late '50s to the mid '60s, kind of post-bop era. ... And I think when audiences hear that stuff, it's kind of an undiscovered jewel for them; they really dig it."

Reach Gazette reporter Brian McElhiney at 395-3111 or mcelhiney@dailygazette.net.