

CRAFTING A BETTER ROUND.

THE MICHELOB FAMILY OF BEERS. OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF THE PGA TOUR.

RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS
 ©2008 Anheuser-Busch, Inc., Michelob® Lager (Beer in TX) and Michelob Light® Beer, St. Louis, MO
 Official Beer

Asylum Street Spankers



Good Humor Bands

Traditions converge in Eugene

Jazz big bands all but died out after WWII, but since then, a few ample aggregations — Dave Holland’s large group, Either/Orchestra, Lincoln Center’s band, Sun Ra and Gil Evans’ ensembles, government subsidized European jazz orchestras, etc. — have somehow managed to defy economic pressure and present large-scale, improvised music of considerable complexity and heft. One of the more intriguing is the Portland/Southern California-based **Industrial Jazz Group**, whose very name hints at founder/pianist Andrew Durkin’s wry humor and ambition. Dismissing “jazz, the Institution,” Portland’s self-described “hack composer and pseudo intellectual” creates what he calls “avant-garde party music” that can

Another band that assiduously avoids capital-S Seriousness is Austin’s **Asylum Street Spankers**, who return to the McDonald Theatre on Sept. 1. The eclectic octet gazes back to vaudeville and old timey music for its multipart harmonies and stage schtick, but its yuks and satire are entirely up to date, and the band’s skilled musicianship allows it to throw a musical party without making a musical mess. For still more big-band fun, this time alfresco, catch the **Eugene Symphonic Summer Band**’s free “light classical” concert in Washburne Park this Sunday, Aug. 24, featuring music of Sousa, Joplin, film and stage tunes, and more.

Still more summer nostalgia is in the air as Vermont fiddler/singer **Lissa Schneckenburger** returns with old-time New England traditional tunes, some whose history stretches back a couple of centuries. For info on this Aug. 26 house concert, email paschalla@lanec.edu



remind a listener of anyone from Raymond Scott or John Zorn to kitschier parodies like Spike Jones — Kurt Weill meets Oliver Nelson, perhaps. Maybe Durkin’s doctoral studies at USC contributed to the sense of absurdity that produced his blog named “Jazz: the Music of Unemployment.” Heavily influenced by Frank Zappa, Charles Mingus, Duke Ellington and more, Durkin has scored film and stage works. The 15 member ensemble, which has recorded six albums, toured across the U.S. and last year ventured to Europe, plays spirited music that’s a lot of fun without descending into silliness. They’re crowding the stage at Cozmic Pizza on Sept. 3.

Music from an entirely different tradition — Southern Africa’s Shona people — alights at Cozmic Pizza this Saturday, Aug. 23, as our Zimbabwean summer continues with yet another pair of fabulous mbira players: **Cosmas Magaya** is a familiar and always welcome visitor to Eugene, where’s he’s often performed and taught workshops in Zimbabwean music. He’s taught all over the U.S. and helped research and write an important scholarly study of that magical, gourd-encased, plucked metal instrument. The harp-like mbira is especially well suited for playing interlocking melodies, and Magaya will be joined by another renowned mbira scholar-performer. **Musekiwa Chingodza** also dances and sings, and together, these two mbira masters should weave fascinating tapestries of sound. They’ll be preceded by Eugene’s own Zimbabwean large ensemble **Kudana**, whose upbeat, irresistible marimba, vocal and other percussion sounds will have everyone dancing in the heat. **EW**