



## Paul Keller, Bassist

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Paul Matthew Keller was born March 11, 1962. He began studying the string bass at age 12. By age 16 Paul had played his first jazz gigs in his hometown of Grand Rapids, MI. He continued his classical music education at the University of Michigan and moved to Ann Arbor permanently in 1986.

Today, Paul is one of the busiest jazz bassists in the Detroit area. He has earned the nick-name "The House Bass Player For The State Of Michigan" as each year, he logs so many miles traveling across the state to perform at various music venues. At his home-base, the Firefly Club in Ann Arbor he leads the 15-piece Paul Keller Orchestra, which plays original, obscure and classic big band material from

all periods of jazz history. Under Paul's expert leadership, the PKO (formerly known as the Bird of Paradise Orchestra) has garnered critical and popular acclaim, accepting Washtenaw Council for the Arts <sup>3</sup>Annie Awards<sup>2</sup> and Detroit Music Awards for excellence in performing arts. Their CDs are: ***Hallelujah Train, Project X, BINGO!, Paris Blues, A Tribute to Count Basie*** and ***A Tribute To Benny Goodman***. These recordings spotlight Paul's fine compositions and arrangements. The Paul Keller Orchestra has enjoyed two tours of Europe. The PKO performs every Monday night at the Firefly Club in Ann Arbor.

The Paul Keller Ensemble is a three-horn sextet that features creative arrangements by Keller and his bandmates. Their CD, ***Tall Corn***, includes seven original Keller compositions and showcases the band's extraordinary improvising skills. The PKE performs every Wednesday night at the Firefly Club in Ann Arbor. PKO big band Monday nights at the Firefly Club are a beloved Ann Arbor tradition! Check out [www.fireflyclub.com](http://www.fireflyclub.com).

Paul is co-leader of the popular Keller/Kocher Quartet. Together since 1987, the KKQ has recorded *Midnight Sun* and ***Pipe and Slippers***. This group features the vibraphone wizardry of Cary Kocher. The KKQ tips it's hat to George Shearing, Nat King Cole and Lionel Hampton.

The Paul Keller Ensemble is a three-horn sextet that features creative arrangements by Keller and his bandmates. The PKE's 2005 CD ***Steady Gig*** features their vocalist (and Firefly Club owner) Susan Chastain singing 11 of her favorite standard with memorable arrangements by Keller. The PKE's 2003 CD ***Christmas Songs For Jazz Lovers*** contains 12 joyful performances of Holiday classics. The PKE's 1997 CD, ***Tall Corn***, includes seven original Keller compositions and showcases the band's extraordinary improvising skills. ***Tall Corn*** celebrates the season of harvest and the beauty of autumn. The PKE performs every Wednesday night from 8:00 till midnight at the Firefly Club in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Check out [www.fireflyclub.com](http://www.fireflyclub.com).

Keller's groups are well known and highly regarded throughout Michigan. His jazz groups have appeared at many regional music festivals, including the Ford Detroit International Jazz Festival, the Ann Arbor Summer Festival, the Ann Arbor Jazz and Blues Festival, The Michigan Jazz Festival and the Flint Jazz Festival. They have presented successful concerts for the Thunder Bay Arts Council, the Crooked Tree Arts Center, the West Michigan Jazz Society, The Dennon Museum Center at NWMU, the Windsor/Detroit Jazz Club, Bay City's State Theatre, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

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Keller is a member of trumpeter Marcus Belgrave's Salute to Louis Armstrong. This group plays about 30 dates a year in concert venues across the US.

Keller tours with his long-time bandmates drummer Pete Siers and vibraphonist Cary Kocher as members of clarinetist Dave Bennett's Benny Goodman Tribute band. This band travels to all parts of the US and performs about 30 dates a year as a sextet as well as with various symphony orchestras. Keller wrote 13 original arrangements for full orchestra for Bennett's 75-minute, Benny Goodman Symphony Pops Show. Together they have performed this spectacle with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, the Kingston Symphony, the Windsor Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the San Antonio Symphony. For more information about this symphony show contact Hugh Leal at [lealjazz@cogeco.ca](mailto:lealjazz@cogeco.ca).

Paul travels frequently to Jazz Festivals and Jazz Parties throughout the U.S. including the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee, Dixieland Monterey (Monterey, CA), The Summit Jazz Party (Denver, CO), The West Coast Jazz Party (Irvine, CA), The Newport Beach Jazz Party (Newport Beach, CA) and The Cape May Jazz Festival (Cape May, NJ).

Paul has been recognized internationally for his association with pianist/singer Diana Krall and guitarist Russell Malone. From 1993 to 1997 he toured the world, first with Malone, then with with Krall and Malone. Together they performed at the North Sea Jazz Festival, the Blue Note Jazz Clubs of Japan, the Algonquin Hotel and the JVC, Newport and Playboy Jazz Festivals, among many others. In 2006, Paul performed with Diana Krall for former US President Bill Clinton. Paul has played with Diana on national TV on The Late Show with David Letterman (CBS), The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson (CBS), The Tavis Smiley Show (PBS) and The Tonight Show with Jay Leno (NBC). Keller appears on Malone's CD *Black Butterfly* (Columbia) and on Krall's Grammy-nominated recording *All For You* (GRP/Impulse).

In 1999, Paul formed BOPO Records, his own recording label. In 2002, the Bird of Paradise Orchestra became known as the Paul Keller Orchestra and BOPO Records became PKO Records. The PKO Records catalog has now grown to include 36 CDs by Keller and many other outstanding Midwest jazz performers. For more information about Paul Keller, his jazz groups and the other featured artists on the PKO Records label, log onto [www.pkorecords.com](http://www.pkorecords.com).

Paul has played on over 60 CDs with artists such as Diana Krall, Russell Malone, Tom Saunders, Chuck Hedges, Eddie Higgins, Larry Fuller, Johnny O'Neal, Bess Bonnier, Jon-Erik Kellso, Dan Barrett, Rebecca Kilgore, Phil DeGreg, Mr. B, Steve Wood, Rick Roe, Ellen Rowe, Marcus Belgrave, Franz Jackson, Pete Siers, Dan Faehnle and Larry Nozero. Paul has also performed in concert with jazz greats Joe Williams, Cab Calloway, Oliver Jones, Clark Terry, Red Holloway, Gene Bertoncini, Jeff Hamilton, Scott Hamilton, Ken Peplowski, Jake Hanna, Terry Gibbs, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Mark Murphy, Doc Cheatham, Byron Stripling, Jay McShann, Barry Harris, Mulgrew Miller, Jessica Williams, Bill Mays, Kenny Drew, Jr., Herb Ellis, Bucky Pizzierelli, Mark Elf and James Moody.

Paul was honored by the West Michigan Jazz Society as their 2001 Jazz Musician of the Year and by the Detroit Music Awards as the 2002 Outstanding Jazz Instrumentalist.

Paul and his wife Michelle have two beautiful kids: a five-year-old daughter named Leah and a two-year-old boy named Nathaniel. They live in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

# Paul Keller Biography/Discography

1977 Discovered Jazz at the Foxhead Inn Ada, MI

1978-80 Played first steady gig with Harold "Popeye" Booker and Tom Strang at the Foxhead Inn

1980 Graduated from East Grand Rapids High School

1980-82 Student University of Michigan School of Music

1982 Member of Bennie Carew and His Fabulous Two

1982-87 Member of the John Shea Trio

1985 John Shea Trio *John Shea Trio and Friends*  
Teaspoon Records

1986-89 Member of the Eddie Russ Trio

1988 Formed and continues to co-lead the Keller/Kocher Quartet

1988-96 Performed extensively with Detroit pianists  
Chuck Robinette and Eddie Russ, continues to work with  
Bess Bonnier

1989 Formed the Bird of Paradise Orchestra

1991 Ray Kamalay and His Red Hot Peppers *The Joint Is  
Jumpin'* Ray Kamalay

1992 Larry Nozero *Kaleidoscopin'* Dominic Records

1993-present Midwest All Star at the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee

1993 Jack Brokensha Quartet *Xmazz* AEM Record Group

1993 Larry Nozero *Grand Hotel* Dominic Records

1993 The Keller/Kocher Quartet *Midnight Sun* Paper Bag Records

1993 Tom Saunders' Detroit All Stars *Jazz Is Jazz* Parkwood Records

1993 Russell Malone *Black Butterfly* Columbia Records

1993 *The Return of Sampler Claus* (with Russell Malone) Columbia Records

1993-94 Toured with Russell Malone Quartet: US, Europe, major jazz festivals

1994 Formed and continues to lead the 7 piece Paul Keller Ensemble

1994 Larry Nozero *Street of Dreams* Suncoast Jazz

1994 Scott Petersen *E-Dog Oriko* Corona Music

1994 Janet Tenaj/Sven Anderson *At Last* J's Way Jazz

1994-95 Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival, Davenport Iowa

1994 Voted MVP at the Montreux Detroit Jazz Festival

1995 Mr. B Meets the Bird of Paradise Orchestra *Hallelujah Train* Schoolkids Records

1995 Tom Saunders and the Wild Bill Davison Legacy *Call of the Wild* Arbors Records



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- 1995 Mark Moultrup ***Just Suppose*** vonMoultrup Music
- 1995-96 Toured with Diana Krall Trio: US, Europe, Canada, Japan, Mexico, major jazz festivals
- 1996 Diana Krall ***All For You*** Impulse!
- 1996 The Keller/Kocher Quartet ***Pipe and Slippers*** Schoolkids Records
- 1996 The Bird of Paradise Orchestra ***Project X*** Schoolkids Records
- 1997 Voted Best Jazz Bassist by the Detroit Music Awards
- 1997 Jon-Erik Kellso ***Chapter 2: The Plot Thickens*** Arbors Records
- 1997 Sheila Landis ***The Bird Inside*** SheLan Records
- 1997 Bess Bonnier Quartet ***Love Notes*** Noteworks Records
- 1997 Ray Kamalay and His Red Hot Peppers ***Love's Hope*** Perfect #
- 1998 Formed BOPO Records
- 1998 The Bird of Paradise Orchestra ***BINGO!*** BOPO Records
- 1998 Mr. B Trio ***Joybox*** Joybox Records
- 1998 Franz Jackson ***The Fabulous Franz Jackson*** Parkwood Records
- 1998 Michael Kasehammer ***Tell You How I Feel*** Alma Records
- 1999 Bess Bonnier ***Suite William*** Noteworks Records
- 1999 Pete Siers Trio ***Those Who Choose To Swing*** BOPO Records
- 1999 Paul VornHagen ***Swing As You Are*** BOPO Records
- 1999 The Paul Keller Ensemble ***Tall Corn*** BOPO Records
- 1999-present Adjunct Professor of Bass, University of Michigan Jazz Studies Program
- 2000 Mark Moultrup ***Man Of The OOs*** vonMoultrup Music
- 2000 Steve Wood Quartet ***Deep Woods*** Corridor Records
- 2000 Dan Barrett/Rebecca Kilgore ***Being A Bear*** Arbor Records
- 2000 Ray Kamalay and His Red Hot Peppers ***Meet Me Where They Play the Blues*** Perfect #
- 2001 The Bird of Paradise Orchestra ***Paris Blues*** BOPO Records
- 2001 Ellen Rowe ***Sylvan Way*** BOPO Records
- 2001 Rick Roe/Paul Keller/Gerald Cleaver ***The Late Late Show*** BOPO/Unknown Records
- 2001 Doug Horn ***Hornithology*** BOPO Records
- 2001 Chuck Hedges ***Just for Fun*** Arbors Records
- 2001 Marcus Belgrave ***In The Tradition*** Jazzology Records
- 2001 Marcus Belgrave ***Tribute To Louis Armstrong*** Jazzology Records
- 2002 Formed PKO Records
- 2002 Paul Keller Orchestra ***A Tribute To Count Basie*** PKO Records
- 2002 Bop Culture ***Bop Culture*** PKO Records/Unknown Records