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For Immediate Release

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Thingamajigs.org announces the 11th Annual Music for People & Thingamajigs Festival

Who: Thingamajigs.org

What: 11th Annual Music for People & Thingamajigs Festival

Where: The Luggage Store Gallery, San Francisco (\$10-\$15 sliding scale); 21 Grand, Oakland (\$10-\$15 sliding scale); Headland Center for the Arts (free event); Oakland Museum of California, Oakland (free with museum admission)

When: September 18th, 19th, 20th, & 21st, 2008

Tickets: \$15 General / \$10 Students/Seniors

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August 1, Oakland. The Music For People & Thingamajigs Festival is an annual event dedicated to promoting experimental music that incorporates made/found instruments and alternate tuning systems. Each year, MFP&T invites artists who design their own musical instruments to join in a festival of workshops, music making, and performances with the goal of reaching a larger audience than they might usually connect with. It is also a festival where the public can participate in instrument building and tuning educational workshops, as well as hear unique sounds and compositions from up and coming artists. Now in its 11th year, thingamajigs.org's MFP&T Festival is the only annual event of its kind. Past participants include Karla Kihlstedt, Walter Kitundu, Peter Whitehead, Brenda Hutchinson, William Winant, and Laetitia Sonami.

Entering its second decade of unusual sound explorations, The 11th Annual Music For People & Thingamajigs Festival has expanded its output and reach from its previous ten

festivals by scheduling events in three Bay Area counties (Alameda, Marin, and San Francisco). This year, the festival will include two evening concerts and two daytime events. Below is this year's schedule:

Thursday, September 18th 8pm: The Luggage Store Gallery, 1007 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 (\$10-\$15 sliding scale).

Friday, September 19th 8pm: 21 Grand, 416 25th Street, Oakland, CA (\$10-\$15 sliding scale).

Saturday, September 20th 1-4pm: Headland Center for the Arts, 944 Fort Barry, Sausalito, CA 94965 (free event)

Sunday, September 21st 1-4pm: Oakland Museum of California, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, CA 94607 (free with museum admission)

On Thursday and Friday evenings, The Luggage Store and 21 Grand will be transfixed with the unusual sounds and sights of artists from The Bay Area and beyond working with made/found objects. Preceding these concerts, we will offer a free artist talk/demonstration where community members can talk with the artists and interact with the musical instruments. Saturday we will host a marathon concert and picnic at The Headland Center for the Arts including a concert by Headlands artist in residence Ellen Fullman and friends. On Sunday, the Oakland Museum of California (in conjunction with this year's festival) will host a special Family Explorations! program to welcome some of Bay Area's most interesting new music groups and artists to its monthly Sunday family event. The "Gallery of Thingamajigs" will fill the Natural Sciences Gallery with a collage of sounds produced by extraordinary instruments including hand-cranked instruments, custom built synthesizers, an electric Indian Sarod, and an orchestra made of toys.

With concerts, artist talks/demonstrations, and two free community outings, we expect the 11th Annual Music For People & Thingamajigs Festival to be our biggest and most accessible event to date –an event that will catapult us through our next ten years.

History and Mission Statement:

Music For People & Thingamajigs (Thingamajigs.org) began in 1997 at Mills College. Originally conceived as a forum for composers/performers who develop new and unique ways of producing sound, it soon broke out of the college environment and into a large public offering. As of 2004 a permanent board of organizers and parent organization (thingamajigs.org) was created, by which many events in addition to the Thingamajigs Festival are produced. In addition to our annual festival Thingamajigs.org offers a variety of arts, educational, and cross-cultural events such as *The Pacific Exchange Series*, *Thingama-kids!*, and *The Work Light Series*.

Our mission is to develop and nurture the exploration of alternate materials and methods of creating sound, as well as promote collaborative efforts within other artistic disciplines not generally associated with festivals of music. With open workshops and performances, we welcome audiences/participants of all ages and backgrounds to join in a wonderful tradition started here in the Bay Area by such composers as Henry Cowell, Harry Partch, Lou Harrison, and John Cage.

Artists involved:

(September 18th)

Chris Brown's music has evolved within the intersections of many different traditions and styles. Chris took from branches provided by the American Experimentalists by inventing and building a personal electronic instrumentation. Chris will perform excerpts from "Alternating Currents" (1983) and "Conjunction" (1983) that feature my electroacoustic instruments "Gazamba" and "Wing", which I invented during the early 1980s.

The Wreck of the Old Number 10 (Stewart Port and Karen Celia Heil) –Stewart has made musical (and mute) things for 35 years. He began making instruments out of tin cans and other found objects for comic relief from his usual work of building and restoring expensive guitars, and became intrigued with their potential for teaching kids,

teachers, artists and aspiring instrument makers the physics and mechanical principles of musical instruments, and the rudiments of hand tool use. Stewart will perform with Karen Celia Heil and play tunes from the vernacular traditions of Appalachia, Eastern Europe and the American South on instruments made from found or repurposed objects.

The Norman Conquest is a composer, performer, and improviser of music influenced by the art of sound engineering. Feedback is a constant source of musical, psychological, and philosophical inspiration for TNC. For this festival, TNC will present "Feedback for Percussion Solo", is a work written for percussionist Shayna Dunkelman utilizing "speaker microphones" as both amplified percussion instruments and as microphones for creating feedback.

(September 19th)

Pauline Oliveros' life as a composer, performer and humanitarian is about opening her own and others' sensibilities to the many facets of sound. Since the 1960's she has influenced American Music profoundly through her work with improvisation, meditation, electronic music, myth and ritual. Many credit her with being the founder of present day meditative music. All of Oliveros' work emphasizes musicianship, attention strategies, and improvisational skills.

Ian Power was born and raised in Rochester, N.Y. on or after 1984, completed a B.M. in composition at Ithaca College in 2006 and am currently pursuing an M.A. in composition at the University of California, San Diego, where I study with Lei Liang. He will perform a recent composition: "I seem to be a verb," for reciter, table, ceramic coffee mug and butter knife. More information and music can be found at www.myspace.com/ianhpower

Jesse Olsen is a bay-area based composer, performer, improviser, teacher, and activist. His diverse artistic background includes work and study in music, dance, performance art, and film. His performance work brings together music, movement, video, text, and visual art. Jesse will present excerpts from *Makings*, an evening-length musical adaptation of writings by my grandmother, noted writer/activist Tillie Olsen. *Makings* is a

song-cycle incorporating varied instrumentation and musical styles, and many of the songs use found and home-made instruments.

Tom Djill studied music at Berklee School of Music, the Colorado College, the Creative Music Studio, and Mills College. He is the recipient of an MFA from Mills College in Electronic Music (1995) as well as a Deep Diploma from the Deep Listening Organization (1991), and was awarded the Paul Merritt Henry Prize for Composition while at Mills. Tom has spent over twenty years (ab)using the trumpet as an analog flesh synthesizer. His musical language incorporates gritty textures and percussive plosives. For this program he will unconstruct and reconstruct the instrument, recombining trumpet and other parts into new instruments which speak their own idiosyncratic dialects.

(September 20th)

Ellen Fullman has collaborated with engineers and instrument builders, experimenting with wire, resonator boxes, and tuning systems to produce an installation, the Long String Instrument, which fills her warehouse studio. She has been the recipient of several awards and commissions including a 1999 Artist Trust/Washington State Arts Commission Fellowship, a Meet the Composer, Reader's Digest Consortium Commission, a NEA Artist's Projects: New Forms Grant, and a NEA Visual Artists Fellowship in New Genres. Ellen plans for the Music for People and Thingamajigs Festival include a revised version of her string quartet in just intonation, "Stratified Bands, Last Kind Words", which premiered in the Other Minds Festival, 2002, performed with Kronos Quartet. Also performing with Ellen will be Theresa Wong, cello; Luciano Chessa, dan bau; William Allaudin Mathieu, just intonation tuned sampler; Edward Schocker, tuned glass.

Tom Duff started doing experimental electronic music in high school in Toronto in the 1960s. He sings in the Cornelius Cardew Choir and play fretboard instruments (banjo, guitar, cumbus), but mostly builds his own instruments (acoustic, analog hardware or digital software). Tom will perform *construction for Music on (several) Long Thin Wire(s)*, a multiplication of Alvin Lucier's recipe for sonic phenomena.

(September 21st)

Toychestra is an all-women musical ensemble that plays toys. Some are actual instruments like toddler sized pianos and xylophones and drums. Others just make great sounds. Toychestra will play a set of new compositions for toy instruments by Lexa Walsh as well as older pieces reworked for her 4-piece group.

Ramin Zoufonoun was born into a family of musicians in Tehran, Iran. Ramin's primary focus in music is improvisation on Persian-tuned piano, inspired by Morteza Mahjoobi. A resident of Northern California, Ramin is the founder of Z Venue, www.zvenue.org, a non-profit organization aiming to inspire and educate through artistic expressions and community involvement. For MFP&T11, Ramin will perform *Chaharbagh* for Persian-tuned piano. It is based on the Iranian modal system referred to as Radif. Radif is a collection of motifs each of which is characterized by the melodic and/or rhythmic pattern, each motif is referred to as a 'gusheh' which literally means corner or bit. In this case, *Chaharbagh*, literally means Four Gardens, is a gushe which is made of four phrases.

The Crank Ensemble will perform using hand-cranked instruments made by Larnie Fox. Each has a contact microphone (piezo) mounted on it so it can be amplified. The crank is the mechanical version of a loop. By using cranks, musicians are able to create rhythmic and repetitive patterns easily. They alter the sound by altering the crank's speed and direction, and can also use plucking and scratching. By working in an ensemble, they create layers of sound. This performance will create improvised hand-cranked music in response to the Natural Sciences exhibitions and dioramas at the Oakland Museum.

With The Timeless and the Timely duo of **Lisa Sangita Moskow and Tom Nunn**, classical North Indian music meets West Coast Avant Garde. Moskow plays electric sarod (Indian lute with electronic modifications) and Nunn accompanies on original experimental percussion instruments including the T-Rodimba. Together they create a structured improvisation incorporating eastern and western rhythms infused with a

gamelan (Indonesian orchestra) sensibility. Moskow and Nunn draw from ancient, modern, and shamanic sources. Their music moves easily between delicate and hard-driving emotional timbres and into uncharted landscapes.

Saul Stokes will perform a set titled "Night Painting." The performance will center around Stokes' hand forged electronic instruments combined with a video montage of paintings from Pacific Northwest Artist Charles Stokes (Saul Stokes' father). Saul Stokes is an electronic musician and composer. He creates music that most would consider ambient, using an array of modular synthesizer equipment that he builds from scratch. His "hand forged electronics" include handheld synthesizers, rhythms pads, and tabletop modular synthesizers. His music is largely improvisatory in nature, especially when playing live.

Calendar Editors Please Note

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